

Can I use more than one option for generating comparison cohorts?

You may need to use different options based on the program of study, but we recommend that each grantee try to stick to one source type per program of study for comparison students.

Can I add someone to a cohort later, or remove someone if I change my mind?

No. After a cohort training start date passes, the participant and comparison cohorts for that program of study are fixed. Once a participant is in the cohort, he or she stays in the cohort until the grant ends. Also, no one can be added to the cohort at a later time or replace anyone else in the cohort.

Is there any flexibility on the requirement that cohort students having the same start date?

If you have rolling admission or there are other considerations that make it unfeasible for all students in your cohort to start training on the same date, you may be able to use the same starting quarter for your participants instead. Please contact your FPO, who will assist you with receiving approval for this deviation from the requirements.

How many students should be in my cohorts?

For your participant cohorts, the Department does not specify a minimum number of participants. If you provided this information in your Statement of Work, that is the number you should provide. We encourage you to exceed your targets. Ideally, for evaluation purposes, you should select a minimum of 300 people into your participant cohorts, or, if you plan to enroll more than 3,000 people, you should select at least ten percent of your enrollees. For your comparison cohorts, the number of people included should be the same as or higher than the number of people in each of their corresponding participant cohorts.

My grant is part of a consortium. Do I need a different cohort for each college?

No, you do not need to break out your cohorts by college for the Department's requirements.

Am I allowed to set up a different cohort for each college anyway?

Yes, however, for reporting purposes, you will still need to provide one aggregate count across all of your colleges for each program of study, and your cohort design must follow all of the other requirements. For example, across all of the colleges with students in cohorts for a particular program of study, the students all must have the same start dates and program lengths.

If my consortium grant does not need a different

cohort for each college, how do I select my cohorts?

You will need a multi-stage strategy. Because each TAACCCT project is different, there is no one method that is guaranteed to work with every grant, but here is a general two-stage approach. The first stage of selection is at the college level. You should determine all of the grant-funded programs that are being offered by your grant, even if not all of the colleges are offering a program. For each program, list the colleges offering it, the class start dates, the timeline for when the college plans to enroll students in the program, and the length of the program. Using this information, select the colleges from which your students will be drawn for the cohorts for each program of study. The second stage of selection is at the student level. Using the requirements for selecting individuals for the cohorts, students should be selected from these colleges to be in cohorts for specific programs of study.

Where can I get more information on or assistance with the comparison cohorts?

This FAQ is one technical assistance resource, and grantees should review the SGA, the reporting package, the recorded trainings, and other materials for more information. If you have any follow-up questions, please contact your FPO.

Performance Training Webinar Links

Module 1: General Reporting Requirements Overview & Quarterly Narrative Progress Report
<https://www.workforce3one.org/view/5001132660296309185/info>

Module 2: Participant and Comparison Cohorts
<https://www.workforce3one.org/view/5001132660492168532/info>

Module 3: Annual Performance Report
Forthcoming in March 2012

TAACCCT Participant and Comparison Cohorts FAQ

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TAACCCT Participant and Comparison Cohorts

FAQ

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For TAACCCT grants funded in 2011

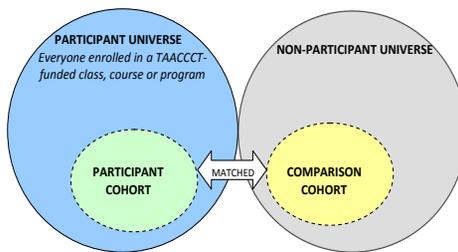
TAACCCT
TRADE ADJUSTMENT ASSISTANCE COMMUNITY COLLEGE AND CAREER TRAINING GRANT PROGRAM

Participant Cohort Basic Requirements

- Each grant-funded program of study (or combined program of study) will have its own participant cohort.
- Participants in the cohort must start training on the same date and the training program length must be the same.

Comparison Cohort Basic Requirements

- Every participant cohort should have a corresponding comparison cohort of students who are not grant-funded.
- The comparison cohort must match the participant cohort on the following characteristics:
 - same or similar program of study (or credential type, with approval)
 - start date (or start quarter, with approval)
 - length of the training program
 - percent male
 - average age
 - duration of time in cohort
 - information collected
 - reporting intervals



Every participant cohort should have its own comparison cohort.

Participant and Comparison Cohort FAQ



What is the difference between a participant and a comparison cohort?

Participant and comparison cohorts evaluate the differences between two groups that are essentially the same except for one key characteristic, usually called a "treatment." The participant cohort receives the treatment, and the comparison cohort does not. The purpose is to find out if the treatment made a difference. The treatment in this case is "TAACCT-funding."

Will all of my TAACCT participants be in my participant cohort?

In most cases, no. Your participant cohort will likely only be a subset of all of the students who enroll under the grant. If you are not enrolling students until the last year of the grant, however, then all of your participants may end up in your participant cohort.

How will I report on my cohorts to the Department of Labor?

You will report on a series of data elements that are contained in Table 2 of the Annual Performance Report. In general, you will report on each program of study separately and the number of tables that you submit will be equivalent to the number of programs of study you are offering.

When should I select students for my participant and comparison cohorts?

Selection should take place as early in the period of performance as possible, consistent with the timeline in your Statement of Work. You should attempt to select your cohorts from your initial enrollees. Ideally, for best results, your cohorts should start training no later than the first quarter of Program Year 2. Please note that all of the students who will be in a cohort together should be selected at the same time.

How many cohorts do I need to have?

Each grant-funded program of study (or grouped program of study) will have its own participant cohort, and you should have a corresponding comparison cohort for each participant cohort. In most cases, you should have the same number of programs of study, participant cohorts, and comparison cohorts.

What is a "program of study"?

For the purposes of the cohort requirement, a program of study is broadly defined as an educational program in which a degree or certificate is granted. Grant-funded programs or courses that do not lead to a credential (e.g., remedial coursework), will not require cohorts, and students in these programs or courses will only be eligible to be included in cohorts if they later enroll in a program in which credentials can be earned.

Can I combine programs of study for the purpose of establishing my participant cohorts?

Yes, as long as the programs are similar in educational material or occupational outlook (e.g., industry type, etc.), and by combining them, all of the other requirements for establishing cohorts can still be met.

What are the advantages and disadvantages of combining programs?

Combining programs may be a good idea if the number of people in your cohorts would otherwise be very small, or if you would otherwise have a difficult time finding a comparison cohort to correspond to your participant cohort. Combining has the downside, however, of being less precise, possibly leading to less meaningful conclusions about what your cohort data show.

of the training program must be the same for all students).

How do I select students for a comparison cohort?

There should be at least as many students in the comparison cohort as in the participant cohort. Any student that is enrolled or was formerly enrolled in the same program of study (or combined program of study) as the students in the corresponding participant cohort can be in the comparison cohort. However, the comparison students cannot be enrolled in a version of the program that was funded in any way with grant funds. In addition, the participant and comparison cohorts should match on percent male, average age, and training program length.

What if I don't have any versions of a program of study that were not grant funded from which to draw students for a comparison cohort?

In a case like this, you may select comparison students from a similar program (e.g., occupational outlook, education material, industry type) from which to draw your comparison students. If there are special circumstances that make this unfeasible as well, you may be able to use the students whose program has a similar credential type as your comparison students. Please contact your FPO, who will assist you with receiving approval for this deviation from the requirements.

Can I use recent or former students for my comparison cohort?

Yes. There are three basic ways your comparison cohorts can be generated: (1) Your comparison cohort can be a current group of students that starts a program, a similar program, or a combined program simultaneous to its corresponding participant cohort; (2) Your comparison cohort can be a current group of students that starts a program, a similar program, or a combined program earlier than its corresponding participant cohort; or (3) Your comparison cohort can be a recent or former group of students in a program, a similar program, or a combined program (within the last five years) to the participants. Depending on the individual circumstances of your grant, not all of these options may be feasible for your project. If you are planning to use option (2) or (3), you must take into account the following:

-**Duration of time:** The duration of time a comparison cohort is or was tracked should be equivalent to the length of time between the start date of the corresponding participant cohort and the period of performance end date.

-**Data elements required:** You must have available enough information on the comparison cohort students to report on all data elements in the Annual Performance Report Table 2.

-**Reporting intervals:** The information available for the comparison cohort students must be captured in a way that allows you to report snapshots after each reporting year equivalent.

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