

# EMPOWER Reports

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## OVERVIEW

EMPOWER includes hundreds of prepared reports, queries and extracts meant to provide a very wide range of information to constituents, stakeholders, outside agencies, and the college at large. In EMPOWER terms, *reports* are output to paper, *queries* are output to a screen and generally contain drill-down or further selection choices, and *extracts* are output to a file for further processing in other packages like Excel or Word. For this discussion, “reports” will mean all three formats.

No matter how many “canned” reports come with a software package, some specific formats, data juxtapositions, or break-downs will be needed by users. To make developing these reports as simple and as fast as possible, EMPOWER includes several ad-hoc reporting features for the end-user and the IT analyst. This document presents the many reporting tools and capabilities provided by EMPOWER.

Training in database access and assistance in report creation are both provided as services of EMPOWER. We teach formal classes designed to assist report developers in gaining an understanding of the structure of data storage and retrieval in EMPOWER. Some colleges may prefer to have us design and produce the complete report according to its specifications. We are happy to quote this sort of work for you.

## REPORT RESOURCES

As a fully open ODBC-compliant database, all information in EMPOWER is available for reporting. To make data more accessible, every field in the database is identified within its HELP screen by name, table, and application. Further, the Oracle views feature is used to group related data elements and tables for ease of use. (An example of this might be to group all data elements that relate to an address into one table name so that a report developer would not need to deal with each element individually.) This is *not* a static data extract or copy for reporting as used in some other systems where the potential for “stale” data is a danger. The real-time nature of views assures that reports reflect the current state of the database.

EMPOWER is largely written using Compuware’s UNIFACE development system. We have implemented the UNIFACE Query Tool for end-users as an option. The interface and general features will be familiar to Crystal Reports users. This additional capability will make ad-hoc

reporting even more straightforward as it presents EMPOWER sources in an easy-to-use format. This tool offers the additional benefit of operating within EMPOWER and of having native access to its tables and fields.

Many EMPOWER users choose Crystal Reports as their primary reporting tool. It is well-known and respected both by end-users and information technology professionals. There are many commercial sources for training and assistance with the product itself. We present a special set of courses to assist report developers in understanding the EMPOWER database for easy access to any information. The courses offer both a detailed discussion of the data and hands-on practical assistance in writing your production reports.

## RUNNING EMPOWER REPORTS

In order to deliver as much flexibility as possible, EMPOWER reports are requested through selection screens which present the user with choices and criteria which define and delimit the data to be reported. Please note the example below which requests an **Admissions Report** of candidates by several selection criteria.

Report Selection Criteria Screen  
 AT / ECSATR01 Candidates by 1st Major TUE 05/17/2005

Report ID: ECSATR83

Term>	2005SP	2004FA	2004SU		
Territory>	EAST	WEST	INIL		
Counselor>	AHRENS	GERSTN	WHETST		
Entry Type>	IS	TS	ND		
College>	ED	LSA			
Major>	BUSA	CHEM	EDUC		
From H.S.>					
Admis Status>	A	AD	E	P	
Zip/Postal					
Source>	CH2	SHHS			
Interest>	ART	BIOL	EQUI	FENC	
Activity>	CHOIR	HOCKEY	JBAND	CROSS	
State>					

Job Name+ Candidates by 1st Major

Sort By Maj, Name  Sort By Maj, Zip

Inquire Start Report

Supplying multiple selection criteria will produce virtually unlimited variations of the report or query. The logic of “and/or” is supported with “and” expressed in the columns, and “or” expressed by the rows for the selection screen. Reports are further customized via wildcard expressions (less than, greater than, not, etc.) attached to the criteria.

## SCREEN REPORTS

Screen reports are a special feature of EMPOWER. Not to be confused with common “screen prints,” these reports are clearly formatted information resources which present the user with all of the data encompassed by a given screen, even if the data not visible. For example, if a user queries for students in the admissions process for a given term who live in a given state, the screen will show the first record and indicate others that meet the criteria by a scroll bar. Printing this query as a **screen report** will produce all student records meeting the criteria set in a clear format with labels and appropriate spacing.

Screen reports are an effective tool for every user, but are particularly welcomed by staff members who may need a quick, complete, report with little effort.

## REPORT PRE-VIEWER

Every report in EMPOWER includes a user-selectable pre-view feature. This feature allows for verification of choices and criteria before the report is printed or processed further. In the case of reports like group transcripts or statements, the user is alerted to records where a problem exists (such as a hold or a missing address element). The user can either eliminate these records or correct them. Similarly, the user has the option of simply de-selecting any record prior to final processing.

## FULFILLING FEDERAL AND STATE REQUIREMENTS

It is the policy of EMPOWER to provide for the completion of all mandated Federal, State and Provincial reports and filings which come under the purview of student information as supported by EMPOWER. Many reports, such as FISAP, 1098T, W2, and Revenue Canada 2202, are formatted and ready for submission by the institution. Other data is provided by a series of EMPOWER reports corresponding to the sections of more extensive or complex government filings such as IPEDS. Where feasible, the derivation of numerical reporting is provided to enable simplified audits. For example, the contents of the student group making up a given statistical fact (count by program, for example) is readily available for review.

## TRANSCRIPTS

Transcript production in EMPOWER is supported by a specialized selection system which allows institutions to develop as many unique transcript formats as desired. These may be designed for differing purposes such as official transcripts or advising copies, or for differing programs of study. In all, there are sixty-two data choices and six print format choices. All AACRAO data elements are available and many specialized requirements are met for seminaries, career colleges and others. Once set up, transcript formats are saved as system defaults. (Additionally, there are about fifteen transcript formats that were developed prior to this process enhancement.)

We believe the **EMPOWER Transcript Sub-system** to be the most advanced found in any student information system. We acknowledge the input and assistance of many EMPOWER clients in creating the specifications and methodology used in this unique feature set.

### **3RD PARTY REPORTING TOOLS**

Any ODBC-compliant reporting tool can be used. Here are some other examples:

- Crystal Reports
- Oracle Discover
- Business Objects
- Pronto
- Cognos
- Brio
- Access

### **DATABASE COPIES**

In addition to the standard production (PROD) and test (PLAY) databases within EMPOWER, a simplified procedure has been developed to copy the database for special purposes and testing. For example, some entities require that data be reported as of a particular date. The database copy feature produces a fixed date image of the database so that reports can be re-run and data audited without concern for daily production changes. Similarly, this feature can be used by an analyst to test a complex report against known data.

