

The Census Bureau plans to conduct a usability study under the generic clearance for questionnaire pretesting research (OMB number 0607-0725). We will be conducting usability interviews with the online version of the 2010 National Survey of College Graduates (NSCG), sponsored by the National Science Foundation.

We will be testing two different versions of the NSCG online survey to identify which one is more user-friendly. The difference between the forms is the way in which the job background codes, degrees and fields are laid out on the screen. Half of the participants will be randomly assigned to one version, and the other half will be randomly assigned to the second version. Findings and recommendations for the “best” design will be reported.

During September and October 2009, staff from the Census Bureau’s Usability Lab will conduct a maximum of 30 usability sessions in the Census Bureau's Usability Laboratory. Participants will be recruited to be diverse in age, race, ethnicity, and gender. Based on self-reports, each participant will be a college graduate and will have at least one year of prior experience in navigating different Web sites. Participants will have no known disabilities. Participants will be recruited from the Usability Lab database, which is composed of people from the metropolitan DC area who volunteered to participate after reading a Craig’s List (www.craigslist.org) posting or an ad in a local daily newspaper.

Each session will include a test administrator and one participant, who will be asked to complete the online survey. Participants will be provided with a user name and a password to log onto the site, and they will attempt to complete the survey with no instruction from the test administrator. Preliminary screen shots of the NSCG survey are enclosed. Participants will be asked to think-aloud while they are completing the survey, and they will also provide feedback about the survey during a debriefing at the conclusion of the session. Participants will be prompted to think-aloud when they fall silent. Participants will be asked to fill out an initial questionnaire on their experience with computers, the Internet, and Census Bureau terminology as well as a final questionnaire designed to garner final thoughts about and satisfaction with the survey. Copies of these questionnaires are enclosed.

Participants will be told that their participation is voluntary and that the information they provide will be confidential. We will provide a \$40 stipend for expenses to each participant who completes a session.

The estimated time for completion of each usability session is one hour. Thus, the total estimated burden time for testing is a maximum of 30 hours.

The contact person for questions regarding data collection or statistical aspects for this project is:

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