

The Census Bureau plans to conduct research under the generic clearance for questionnaire pretesting research (OMB number 0607-0725). We will conduct a feasibility test and respondent debriefing with a newly-developed post Census enumeration census coverage measurement questionnaire designed for assessing the coverage of residents in universities and colleges residence hall, dormitories, sororities and fraternities in 2020. This is one of many types of group quarters.

Group quarters is defined as “a place where people live or stay, in a group living arrangement, that is owned or managed by an entity or organization providing housing and/or services for the residents. It is not a typical household-type living arrangement. These services may include custodial or medical care as well as other types of assistance, and residency is commonly restricted to those receiving these services. People living in group quarters are usually not related to each other. Group quarters include such places as college residence halls, residential treatment centers, skilled nursing facilities, group homes, military barracks, correctional facilities, and workers’ dormitories.”

The Census Coverage Measurement (CCM) Program has not included the evaluation of group quarters (GQ) populations since the 1990 Census, which only included the non-institutional GQ population in its coverage measurement survey operation (Killion, 1997; Waite, 2004). The 2010 Census is an important environment for the Census Bureau to explore the feasibility of conducting a second enumeration using a standardized questionnaire. Due to limited resources, this pretest study only focuses on one type of group quarters (university residence hall) as it has been shown that student populations are one of the most challenging for enumerators (U.S. Department of Commerce, 2006) and field interviewers of the American Community Survey (Belton, 2009). Additionally, a recent focus group study with college residence hall administrators provided sufficiently positive information to proceed with the current project to conduct a CCM-like study with this population (Morton, Flanagan and Park, 2006.) This test is also particularly relevant for this population, given that administrative data for student populations are least likely to contain crucial data such as race and Hispanic origin, which renders the use of administrative records less useful (U.S. Department of Commerce, 2006.) And finally, student populations are least likely to have literacy issues with CCM-like surveys, making a self-administered mode of data collection most plausible for a field test in this type of group quarters.

This study serves several purposes. It: (1) examines the feasibility of conducting an independent post enumeration survey with sampled college students for future Census Coverage Measurement for residence halls; (2) pretests the content of the questionnaire; (3) explores the response rates of students; (4) examines the ability to match self-reported data to administrative records provided by the university and to actual decennial data; and (5) explores the appropriate the timing of this study; that is, whether it is operationally feasible to conduct the interviews so quickly after the decennial census. Given that dormitories close for the academic year beginning in mid-May in some place, the ability to conduct the survey promptly is key to the success of the entire operation.

From the end of April through mid-June, the questionnaire will be pre-tested with college students who are currently living in university residence halls and or Greek housing at two public universities in the United States. By prior arrangement with the university at the first site, staff from the University residence hall will distribute the questionnaire to residents from selected halls after the official census has been completed. The students will be asked to fill out the questionnaire and to return the questionnaire to the residence assistants. Arrangement has not been made with the second university. Researchers intend to make similar arrangement will staff at the second site by the end of March, 2010. The dormitories selected from the two universities will house a total of 500 students. A copy of the information sheet and the draft questionnaire are enclosed. No monetary incentive will be provided to the subjects for their participation.

Participants will be informed that the information they provide is confidential and will be seen only by employees involved in the research project.

The estimated time for completion of the interview is about ten minutes. Thus, the total estimated burden for this test is at most 84 hours (500 x 10 minutes).

The contact person for questions regarding this data collection is:

Anna Y. Chan
Research Social Scientist
Statistical Research Division
U.S. Census Bureau
Washington, D.C. 20233
(301) 763-8462
anna.y.chan@census.gov

References:

Belton, Judy. (2009). Unpublished internal meeting notes from the September 24, 2009 Group Quarters Field Test Study Meeting.

Killion, Ruth A. (1997). "Group Quarters and the Integrated Coverage Measurement," *Internal Memorandum for the Census 2000 Committee on Statistical Policy*, August 7, 1997.

Morton, Jeremy, Tim Flanagan, and Hyunjoo Park. (2006). "Final Report: Assessment of Group Quarters Definitions and Classifications: University Student Housing." United States Census Bureau, Department of Commerce: Washington, DC 20233

U.S. Department of Commerce, Office of Inspector General, (2006). "U.S. Census Bureau: Enumerating Group Quarters Continues to Pose Challenges. Final Inspection Report." October 19, 2006. Accessed on September 9, 2009, <http://www.oig.doc.gov/oig/reports/2006/Census-ipe-18046-09-06.pdf>

Waite, Preston J. (2004). "Evaluation of Census Quality and Coverage," Joint UNECE-Eurostat Work Session on Population Censuses, Conference of European Statistician, Working Paper No. 3. November 20, 2004.

ATTACHMENT

Draft Questionnaire

Information letter