

**Response to AAUW Public Comment on the Beginning Postsecondary Students Longitudinal Study (BPS) Component of the 2011-12 National Postsecondary Student Aid Study (NPSAS:12), OMB Control Number 1850-0666**

**December 28, 2010**

Public Comment:

**From:** Scott, Beth [mailto:scottb@aauw.org]

**Sent:** Tuesday, December 21, 2010 4:13 PM

**To:** IC DocketMgr

**Subject:** AAUW Comments on the Beginning Postsecondary Students Longitudinal Study, OMB Control Number: 1850-0666

Attached please find comments from the American Association of University Women (AAUW) regarding the Beginning Postsecondary Students Longitudinal Study, OMB Control Number: 1850-0666. Since its founding in 1881, AAUW has been committed to making the dream of higher education a reality for women. AAUW's 2009-2011 Public Policy Program affirms our commitment to — a strong system of public education that promotes gender fairness, equity, and diversity... and advocates increased support for, and access to, higher education for women and other disadvantaged populations (and) increased access to higher education.

With changes in the workforce over the last century, higher education is becoming less of a luxury and more of a necessity. By 2018, an estimated 15 million jobs will likely require postsecondary education. As the skill requirements of jobs continue to increase, so too should access to postsecondary education for all students. This is very important to women, who now make up the majority of college students, comprising 57 percent of undergraduates and 60 percent of graduate students in 2009. AAUW places particular importance on the three following areas: ensuring students can access an affordable education; managing debt; and protecting students.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit comments on this important issue. I look forward to working with you on postsecondary education issues. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me.

Regards,  
Beth

Beth Scott  
Regulatory Affairs Manager  
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Response:

Thank you for your interest in and support of NPSAS and BPS. We are endeavoring to make our postsecondary longitudinal and sample studies better able to address the questions that you and others have about higher education. For instance, the NPSAS:12 sampling plan has been improved to allow more detailed analysis of students attending for-profit institutions. Specifically, the sampling plan for NPSAS:12 contains separate strata for 2- and 4-year for-profit institutions and students. These strata

were combined in previous cycles of NPSAS. This change was made in light of the increased need to separately analyze NPSAS data by all institution types.

The new sampling design in NPSAS:12, also follows through to the BPS:12 cohort. Analysts will be better able to examine persistence of first-time beginning students at all levels of for-profit institutions. In addition, for students who are followed as part of the BPS:12 cohort, we will also attempt to capture detailed financial aid data on these students from all the institutions they ever attended over the course of the study. This will allow analysts to examine the complete financial aid history of these students while they were enrolled in postsecondary education. Previous cycles of BPS only had complete financial aid information for the first year of enrollment of beginning postsecondary students, and only federal aid information in subsequent years. Similar to BPS:04/09, we will once again collect postsecondary transcripts from all the institutions that the BPS:12 cohort ever attended.

Another possible enhancement to BPS is to increase the periodicity of the study. Currently, BPS captures enrollment and graduation rates over a six year period. We would like to expand this to an eight year period. Overall, we believe that these planned changes to BPS will significantly enhance the ability of our studies to help analysts understand persistence and early post-schooling outcomes, including debt, repayment, and employment/earnings.