

**Attachment I**

**Scripts/Screeners for Institutional Representative  
Focus Groups**

**Attachment I  
Recruitment Scripts/Screeners for Institutional Representatives**

Institution Name: \_\_\_\_\_

**SCREENER QUESTIONS FOR 2-YEAR INSTITUTIONS FOR  
DISCLOSURE FOCUS GROUP (rev. 1/06/12)**

**Disclosure Focus Group with Institutional Representatives from 2-Year  
Postsecondary institutions near Philadelphia, PA, generally for schools with  
no more than 2,000 students, offering Associate degrees and/or Less-than-4-  
year Certificates**

**SECTION A. [INITIAL CONTACT IS IPEDS KEYHOLDER]**

**INTRO:**

Hello, my name is Jessica Eshghi and I'm calling from Westat, a social science research firm in Rockville, Maryland, on behalf of the U.S. Department of Education. I am NOT a telemarketer. We are working with the National Center for Education Statistics of the U.S. Department of Education on a study focused on disclosing postsecondary information to consumers.

**SECTION A.**

Q1. You have been identified as the person who submits IPEDS (Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System) data to the U.S. Department of Education for your school. Is this correct?

Yes.....1 (CONTINUE TO Q2)

No.....2 (SKIP TO Q4)

Q2. Are you also the person who is responsible for your institution's disclosure responsibilities or are you familiar with the disclosure responsibilities? Disclosure information covers a range of consumer information that should be available to prospective and current students and their families (e.g., graduation rates, net price calculator, job placement rates).

Yes, in charge of disclosure responsibilities.....1 (SKIP TO SECTION B)

No, not responsible but familiar with the disclosures.....2 (GO TO 2a)

No, not responsible or familiar.....3 (GO TO Q3)

2a. Do you know who is responsible for providing disclosure information about the institution?

Yes..(obtain name and contact information)...1 (FILL OUT INFO BELOW)

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Title \_\_\_\_\_

Phone number \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail address \_\_\_\_\_

[If the person is familiar with the disclosure responsibilities, ask if we can put them on a hold list and call them back if we are unable to locate the person responsible or that person is unavailable to participate.]

Thank you for your time. [END CALL].

No..... 2 (CONTINUE TO Q3)

Q3. Could you tell me who I can contact at the institution to find out who has this responsibility?

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Title \_\_\_\_\_

Phone number \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail address \_\_\_\_\_

For respondents that answered Q2: No, not responsible but familiar with the disclosures.

[If the person is familiar with the disclosure responsibilities, ask if we can put them on a hold list and call them back if we are unable to locate the person responsible or that person is unavailable to participate.]

Thank you. We will contact him/her directly. [ END CALL].

IF THE PERSON IS NOT AN IPEDS KEYHOLDER, ASK:

Q4. Who has primary responsibility for coordinating, collecting, reporting, or submitting IPEDS data about your institution to ED or collecting or reporting institutional data for the State?

(obtain name and phone number and contact that person and end call)

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Title \_\_\_\_\_

Phone number \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail address \_\_\_\_\_

Thank you. We will contact him/her directly. [END CALL]

**SECTION B.**

The National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) of the U.S. Department of Education is undertaking a study to ensure that the information institutions are responsible for disclosing to students and others under the Higher Education Act (as amended) is useful and easily accessible to consumers, without placing an undue burden on institutions.

Therefore, we are asking institutional representatives, like yourself, to participate in a 90-minute focus group to help NCES learn about specific tools and/or strategies they might adopt to assist you in meeting your disclosure responsibilities. You will be helping other postsecondary institutions, especially smaller ones that have fewer resources to devote to this task. Participating in this group is very important and will provide you with an opportunity to make suggestions to NCES about how they can help, share data reporting challenges facing your institution, and learn more about postsecondary institutional disclosure responsibilities.

Your participation in the study is voluntary and the information you provide will be combined with the responses of others in a summary report that does not identify anyone as an individual. Your answers may be used only for statistical purposes and may not be disclosed, or used, in identifiable form for any other purpose except as required by law [Education Sciences Reform Act of 2002 (ESRA 2002) 20 U.S.C., § 9573]. Additionally, your name and the name of your school will not be shared with NCES. If eligible, we will invite you to participate in our focus group to be held in Philadelphia, on Thursday evening, Feb 23, 2012. We are offering a \$75 incentive and a light meal to participants as a thank you for your help. The session will be audio recorded; recordings will only be shared with Westat staff involved in the research.

Are you willing to participate in the group if you and your institution are eligible?

Yes.....CONTINUE

No..... [TRY TO CONVINC THEM TO RECONSIDER SINCE THE PURPOSE OF THE GROUP IS TO HELP THEM MEET THE DISCLOSURE RESPONSIBILITIES. THEY WILL ALSO LEARN MORE ABOUT THEM.]

Comments/Questions:

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First, I would like to ask you a few questions to ensure that you are eligible for our focus group.

1. Does your school offer a bachelor's degree?

YES.....1 (**TERMINATE. This focus group is limited to schools that offer less than a bachelor's degree. Thank you for taking the time to talk with me.**)

NO.....2 (CONTINUE)

2. Which of the following types of programs does your institution offer? (ANSWER YES OR NO TO EACH QUESTION AND **CONTINUE TO Q3**)

- a. Associate degrees ..... YES NO (circle one)
- b. Diplomas (e.g., nursing)..... YES NO (circle one)
- c. Certificates..... YES NO (circle one)
- d. Less than 2-year degree, but not a diploma or certificate....YES NO (circle one)
- e. Other (Please specify) \_\_\_\_\_ (CONTINUE)

3. Approximately how many undergraduate students are enrolled in this school in fall 2011 or whenever most recent data are available? [NOTE: IF RESPONDENT INDICATES THEY ONLY HAVE DATA READILY AVAILABLE FOR ALL STUDENTS, THAT'S FINE, BUT PLEASE NOTE THIS]

\_\_\_\_\_ # of undergraduate students [includes full- and part-time]

If 2,000 or less.....1 (CONTINUE)

If over 2,000.....2 (**TERMINATE**)

Not sure.....3 (CONTINUE)

4. Is your institution a public, private not-for-profit, or private for-profit institution?

Public.....1 (CONTINUE)

Private, not-for-profit.....2 (CONTINUE)

Private, for-profit.....3 (CONTINUE)

5. What is the highest degree you have received?

- Less than a high school diploma.....1 (**TERMINATE**)
- High school diploma.....2 (CONTINUE)
- Associate's degree .....3 (CONTINUE)
- Bachelor's or higher.....4 (CONTINUE)
- Master's degree.....5 (CONTINUE)
- Higher than a master's degree.....6 (CONTINUE)
- Other (specify \_\_\_\_\_).....7 (**Only terminate if less than a high school diploma**)

6. How long have you worked at this institution?

\_\_\_\_\_ # OF MONTHS OR YEARS (**If less than 1 year, ask contact if you may place them on a hold list to contact at a later date to qualify.**)

7. Are you employed at this institution:

- FULL-TIME.....1 (CONTINUE)
- PART-TIME.....2 (CONTINUE)

8. Would you please briefly describe your primary job responsibilities? **{Probe contact for key responsibilities of coordinating, collecting, and/or submitting data for the school.}**

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9. Does your institution currently have a consumer information portal page on your website (i.e., a web page that functions as a point of access for all/most consumer information)?

- Yes.....1 (CONTINUE)
- No.....2 (CONTINUE)
- Don't know.....3 (CONTINUE)

**IF GENDER NOT APPARENT BY NAME OR VOICE OF RESPONDENT, ASK THE QUESTION:**

10. PLEASE CONFIRM YOUR GENDER AS:

Female.....1 (CONTINUE)

Male.....2 (CONTINUE)

Thank you for agreeing to participate in the focus group. In the next few days, we will send you a confirmatory e-mail detailing the date, time and location of the focus group. Please contact me directly should you be unable to attend the group.

Institution Name: \_\_\_\_\_

**SCREENER QUESTIONS FOR 4-YEAR INSTITUTIONS FOR  
DISCLOSURE FOCUS GROUP (rev. 1/06/12)**

**Disclosure Focus Group with Institutional Representatives from 4-Year  
Postsecondary institutions near Philadelphia, PA, with enrollments of no more  
than 6,000 students, offering Bachelor's degrees**

**SECTION A. [INITIAL CONTACT IS IPEDS KEYHOLDER]**

**INTRO:**

Hello, my name is Jessica Eshghi and I'm calling from Westat, a social science research firm in Rockville, Maryland, on behalf of the U.S. Department of Education. I am NOT a telemarketer. We are working with the National Center for Education Statistics of the U.S. Department of Education on a study focused on disclosing postsecondary information to consumers.

**SECTION A.**

Q1. You have been identified as the person who submits IPEDS (Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System) data to the U.S. Department of Education for your school. Is this correct?

Yes.....1 (CONTINUE TO Q2)

No.....2 (SKIP TO Q4)

Q2. Are you also the person who is responsible for your institution's disclosure responsibilities or are you familiar with the disclosure responsibilities? Disclosure information covers a range of consumer information that should be available to prospective and current students and their families (e.g., campus crime statistics, graduation rates, net price calculator).

Yes, in charge of disclosure responsibilities.....1 (SKIP TO SECTION B)

No, not responsible but familiar with the disclosures.....2 (GO TO 2a)

No, not responsible or familiar.....3 (GO TO Q3)

2a. Do you know who is responsible for providing disclosure information about the institution?

Yes..(obtain name and contact information)...1 (FILL OUT INFO BELOW)

Name \_\_\_\_\_



Title \_\_\_\_\_

Phone number \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail address \_\_\_\_\_

[If the person is familiar with the disclosure responsibilities, ask if we can put them on a hold list and call them back if we are unable to locate the person responsible or that person is unavailable to participate.]

Thank you for your time. [ END CALL].

No..... 2 (CONTINUE TO Q3)

Q3. Could you tell me who I can contact at the institution to find out who has this responsibility?

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Title \_\_\_\_\_

Phone number \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail address \_\_\_\_\_

For respondents that answered Q2: No, not responsible but familiar with the disclosures [If the person is familiar with the disclosure responsibilities, ask if we can put them on a hold list and call them back if we are unable to locate the person responsible or that person is unavailable to participate.]

Thank you. We will contact him/her directly. [ END CALL].

[IF THE PERSON IS NOT AN IPEDS KEYHOLDER, ASK]:

Q4. Who has primary responsibility for coordinating, collecting, reporting, or submitting IPEDS data about your institution to ED or collecting or reporting institutional data for the state?

(obtain name and phone number and contact that person and end call)

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Title \_\_\_\_\_

Phone number \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail address \_\_\_\_\_

Thank you. We will contact him/her directly. [END CALL]

**SECTION B.**

The National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) of the U.S. Department of Education is undertaking a study to ensure that the information institutions are responsible for disclosing to students and others under the Higher Education Act (as amended) is as useful and easily accessible to consumers, without placing an undue burden on institutions.

Therefore, we are asking institutional representatives, like yourself, to participate in a 90-minute focus group to help NCES learn about specific tools and/or strategies they might adopt to assist you in meeting your disclosure responsibilities. You will be helping other postsecondary institutions, especially smaller ones that have fewer resources to devote to this task. Participating in this group is very important and will provide you with an opportunity to make suggestions to NCES about how they can help institutions like yours overcome reporting challenges, share data reporting challenges facing your institution, and learn more about postsecondary institutional disclosure responsibilities.

Your participation in the study is voluntary and the information you provide will be combined with the responses of others in a summary report that does not identify anyone as an individual. Your answers may be used only for statistical purposes and may not be disclosed, or used, in identifiable form for any other purpose except as required by law [Education Sciences Reform Act of 2002 (ESRA 2002) 20 U.S.C., § 9573]. Additionally, your name and the name of your school will not be shared with NCES. If eligible, we will invite you to participate in our focus group to be held in Philadelphia on Thursday evening, Feb 23, 2012. We are offering a \$75 incentive and a light meal to participants as a thank you for your help. The session will be audio recorded; recordings will only be shared with Westat staff involved in the research.

Are you willing to participate in the group if you and your institution are eligible?

Yes.....(CONTINUE)

No..... [TRY TO CONVINCe THEM TO RECONSIDER SINCE THE PURPOSE OF THE GROUP IS TO HELP THEM MEET THE DISCLOSURE RESPONSIBILITIES, THEY WILL ALSO LEARN MORE ABOUT THEM.]

Comments:

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First, I would like to ask you a few questions to ensure that you are eligible for our focus group.

1. Does your school offer at least a bachelor's degree?

YES .....1 (CONTINUE)

NO.....2 (**TERMINATE**)

2. Approximately how many undergraduate students (full and part time) are enrolled in this school in fall 2011 or whenever most recent data are available? [NOTE: IF RESPONDENT INDICATES THEY ONLY HAVE DATA READILY AVAILABLE FOR ALL STUDENTS, THAT'S FINE, BUT PLEASE NOTE THIS]

\_\_\_\_\_# of undergraduate students [includes full- and part-time]

If 6,000 or less..... 1 (CONTINUE)

If over 6,000..... 2 (**TERMINATE**)

Not sure..... 3 (CONTINUE)

3. Is your institution a public, private not-for-profit, or private for-profit institution?

Public.....1 (CONTINUE)

Private, not-for-profit.....2 (CONTINUE)

Private, for-profit.....3 (CONTINUE)

4. What is your **highest** education level?

Less than a high school diploma.....1 (**TERMINATE**)

High school diploma.....2 (CONTINUE)

Associate's degree .....3 (CONTINUE)

Bachelor's.....4 (CONTINUE)

Master's degree..... 5 (CONTINUE)

Higher than a master's degree.....6 (CONTINUE)

Other (specify \_\_\_\_\_).....7 (**Only terminate if less than a high school diploma**)

5. How long have you worked at this institution?

\_\_\_\_\_# OF MONTHS OR YEARS (**If less than 1 year, ask contact if you may place them on a hold list to contact at a later date to qualify.**)

6. Are you employed at this institution:

FULL-TIME.....1 (CONTINUE)

PART-TIME.....2 (CONTINUE)

7. Would you please briefly describe your primary job responsibilities? **{Probe contact for key responsibilities of coordinating, collecting, and/or submitting data for the school.}**

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8. Does your institution currently have a consumer information portal page on your website (i.e., a web page that functions as a point of access for all/most consumer information)?

Yes.....1 (CONTINUE)

No.....2 (CONTINUE)

Don't know.....3 (CONTINUE)

**IF GENDER NOT APPARENT BY NAME OR VOICE OF RESPONDENT, ASK THE QUESTION:**

9. PLEASE CONFIRM YOUR GENDER AS:

Female.....1 (CONTINUE)

Male.....2 (CONTINUE)

Thank you for agreeing to participate in the focus group. In the next few days, we will send you a confirmatory e-mail detailing the date, time and location of the focus group. Please contact me directly should you be unable to attend the group.

## **Attachment II**

### **Screeners for Consumer Information Focus Groups**

**Attachment II**  
**Screeners for Consumer Information Focus Groups**

**DISCLOSURE INFORMATION PROJECT,  
NATIONAL CENTER FOR EDUCATION STATISTICS**

**SCREENER FOR FOCUS GROUP WITH PARENTS AND THEIR CHILD  
WHO IS A HIGH SCHOOL SENIOR PLANNING TO ATTEND A 4-YEAR  
COLLEGE UPON GRADUATION, WITH LOW TO MEDIUM ANNUAL  
HOUSEHOLD INCOME, AND HAVE ALREADY CONDUCTED A COLLEGE  
SEARCH**

**(BETHESDA, MD)**

**Wednesday, March 7, 2012 (5:30 p.m.)**

**Screener revised December 20, 2011**

**INTRODUCTION:** Westat, a social science research company in Rockville, MD, is working on a research project for the National Center for Education Statistics of the U.S. Department of Education. Westat is conducting a focus group related to the information colleges include on their websites for prospective college students and which types of information students and parents feel are most important in conducting college searches. If eligible, you will be invited to participate in a focus group to be held in Bethesda, Maryland, on March 7, 2012.

**Screening Criteria:**

- **Must be a parent of a senior public high school student who will attend college upon graduation**
- **Student plans on attending a 4-year college leading to a bachelor's degree. [If a student is planning to attend a 2-year college, do not terminate, but put on a hold list.]**
- **Student/parent have conducted an Internet search for at least two colleges**
- **Low to medium annual household income (mix of low and medium; do not want those in higher income brackets)**
- **If qualify, both parent (one) and child (one) will be invited to attend this group**
- **Goal: a mix of students from different high schools in DC, MD counties (Prince George's, Montgomery, and Howard), and VA counties(Arlington, Fairfax), if possible**
- **Goal: a mix of gender and racial/ethnic backgrounds**

1. Are you the parent of a high school student who is a senior?

Yes.....1 **[CONTINUE]**

No.....2 **[TERMINATE]**

2. Does your child attend a public, charter, or private school?

Public.....1 **[CONTINUE]**

Charter.....2 **[CONTINUE]**

Private.....3 **[TERMINATE]**

3. What is the name of the high school your child currently attends?

Name \_\_\_\_\_

City/State \_\_\_\_\_

4. Does your child plan to attend a 2-year or 4-year college?

2-year.....1 **[CONTINUE BUT PLACE ON HOLD LIST]**

4-year.....2 **[CONTINUE]**

5. Does your child plan on attending college in 2012 with the intentions of obtaining a bachelor's or associate's degree?

Yes.....1 **[CONTINUE]**

No.....2 **[TERMINATE SCREENER]**

6. Have you and/or your child conducted a college search?

Yes .....1 **[CONTINUE]**

No .....2 **[TERMINATE]**

7. Did you use the Internet for your search?

Yes .....1 **[CONTINUE]**

No .....2 **[TERMINATE]**

8. How many colleges have you searched for?

One college.....1 **[TERMINATE]**



Two or more.....2 [CONTINUE]

9. What colleges have you conducted a search for? [Name only two]

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10. Has your child applied to a college?

Yes.....1 [CONTINUE]

No.....2 [CONTINUE]

11. What is your highest education level? [the parent's education level]

High school graduate.....1 [CONTINUE]

Some college—2 years or less.....2 [CONTINUE]

Some college—more than 2 years.....3 [TERMINATE]

Graduated from college.....4 [TERMINATE]

12. Which of the following best describes your current annual household income?

**(CIRCLE one response)**

<b>Annual Household Income</b>	<b>Action</b>
<b>Less than \$40,000 annually</b>	<b>1 [CONTINUE]</b>
<b>\$40,000 to \$69,999 annually</b>	<b>2 [CONTINUE]</b>
<b>\$70,000 to \$89,999 annually</b>	<b>3 [CONTINUE]</b>
<b>\$90,000 or more annually</b>	<b>4 [TERMINATE]</b>

13. Which of the following best describes your ethnicity? Are you Hispanic or non-Hispanic? **(Circle one response)**

Hispanic or Latino.....1 [CONTINUE]

Non-Hispanic or Latino.....2 [CONTINUE]

14. How would you describe your race?  
**(Circle all categories mentioned. Respondents may choose multiple categories.)**

White.....1 [CONTINUE]  
Black or African-American.....2 [CONTINUE]  
Asian.....3 [CONTINUE]  
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander.....4 [CONTINUE]  
American Indian or Alaska Native.....5 [CONTINUE]

15. ***IF GENDER NOT APPARENT BY NAME OR VOICE OF RESPONDENT, ASK THIS QUESTION:***

Please confirm your gender as:

Female.....1  
Male.....2

**DISCLOSURE INFORMATION PROJECT,  
NATIONAL CENTER FOR EDUCATION STATISTICS**

**SCREENER FOR FOCUS GROUP WITH HIGH SCHOOL GUIDANCE  
COUNSELORS WITH AT LEAST 3 YEARS OF EXPERIENCE COUNSELING  
PROSPECTIVE COLLEGE STUDENTS AND WHO SPEND AT LEAST 1/4 OF  
THEIR TIME HELPING STUDENTS WITH THE COLLEGE SEARCH AND  
APPLICATION PROCESS IN THE  
MD/DC METROPOLITAN AREA  
(Bethesda, MD)  
Wednesday, March 7 (7:30 p.m.)**

**[DRAFT DATE 12/20/11]**

**INTRODUCTION:** Westat, a social science research company in Rockville, MD, is working on a research project for the National Center for Education Statistics of the U.S. Department of Education. Westat is conducting a focus group related to the awareness, understanding, and accessibility of information colleges must disclose on their websites to prospective college students and other consumers. If eligible, you will be invited to participate in a focus group to be held in Bethesda, MD on March 7, 2012.

**Screening Criteria:**

- **High school guidance counselor working in public or charter school in the DC metropolitan area with at least 3 years' experience counseling prospective college students**
- **Has an MA in counseling or related field. NOTE: We will not terminate anyone who has an MA in a field unrelated to counseling, but we'd like to put them on a HOLD list.**
- **At least one-fourth of counselor's time spent working with high school students on college choice, search, and application process**
- **Mix of counselors who work in schools where at least some (over 15 percent) of the students are low income**
- **Goal: a mix of counselors from different high schools in DC, MD counties (Prince George's, Montgomery, and Howard), and VA counties (Arlington, Fairfax) if possible**
- **Goal: a mix of males and females**

1. Are you a guidance counselor at the high school level?

Yes.....1 [CONTINUE]

No.....2 **[TERMINATE SCREENER]**

2. At what type of high school do you work as a counselor (public, charter, private)?
- Public.....1 [CONTINUE]  
 Charter.....2 [CONTINUE]  
 Private.....3 **[TERMINATE SCREENER]**
3. Do you counsel students at your school who are planning to attend college?
- Yes.....1 [CONTINUE]  
 No.....2 **[TERMINATE SCREENER]**
4. Including this school year, how long have you been counseling prospective college students?
- Less than 3 years.....1 **[TERMINATE SCREENER]**  
 3-6 years.....2 [CONTINUE]  
 7-9 years.....3 [CONTINUE]  
 10 years or more.....4 [CONTINUE]
5. About what percentage of your time is spent counseling prospective college students (working with high school students on conducting college searches, college choice, and the application process)?
- \_\_\_\_\_ percent [IF UNDER 25 PERCENT, **TERMINATE SCREENER]**
6. What is the highest degree you have received?
- Bachelor’s degree or lower.....1 **[TERMINATE SCREENER]**  
 Master’s degree or higher..... 2 [CONTINUE]

7. In what field did you earn a master's degree?

\_\_\_\_\_

[IF SCHOOL COUNSELING OR RELATED, CONTINUE TO Q8]

[IF OTHER THAN COUNSELING, CONTINUE TO Q8 BUT MAKE A SPECIAL NOTE OF THIS IN TRACKING SHEET AND PUT ON A HOLD LIST]

8. Where did you earn your highest degree?

\_\_\_\_\_

9. What, if any, type of certifications do you hold (e.g., National Board of Certified Counselors (NBCC) certificate or Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Program (CACREP) certificate)?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

10. About what percentage of students in your school are low income?

\_\_\_\_\_ percent [IF LESS THAN 15%, **TERMINATE SCREENER**]

11. What is the name of your high school and in what county is it located?

Name \_\_\_\_\_

County \_\_\_\_\_

**IF GENDER NOT APPARENT BY NAME OR VOICE OF RESPONDENT, ASK THIS QUESTION:**

12. Please confirm your gender as:

Female..... 1

Male..... 2

## **Attachment III**

### **Recruitment Procedures and Related Materials**

## **Recruitment Procedures**

## **Attachment III**

### **Disclosure Information Recruitment Procedures**

#### **Description of Focus Group Recruitment Process**

##### **Recruitment by Westat:**

Westat will recruit for the two focus groups with 2- and 4-year institutional representatives (see Attachment I for the scripts/screeners) that will be held in the Philadelphia area. The person Westat will target for participation in this focus group is the person responsible for collecting and coordinating their institution's disclosure requirements, which is often, but not always the IPEDS keyholder. Westat's initial contact person is the IPEDS keyholder since he or she would be most likely to know who is responsible for coordinating the disclosure requirements. Westat will compile and submit to the NCES Task Leader a list of 2- and 4-year postsecondary institutions that are located within a 50-mile radius of Philadelphia, PA that meet the criteria listed below. The NCES task leader will then provide us with the contact information for all these IPEDS keyholders. If neither the person with responsibility for the disclosure requirements nor someone who is familiar with the disclosure requirements is available, then we will invite the IPEDS keyholder to participate in the focus group. When we call the offices and identify and recruit eligible respondents, we will send them an e-mail explaining that the facility in Philadelphia will be in touch with more explicit instructions. The Philadelphia facility will then send them a confirmation letter, which will include a description of the informed consent process and the process for the focus group discussion.

Participants will be selected based on the following criteria:

##### **Focus group with representatives from 2-year postsecondary institutions:**

- Representatives from 2-year postsecondary institutions in the Philadelphia, PA, area
- Institution has no more than 2,000 students
- Offers associate degrees and/or less-than-4-year certificates
- Representative is responsible for or familiar with the disclosure requirements or responsible for submitting IPEDS data to ED

##### **Focus group with representatives from 4-year postsecondary institutions:**

- Representatives from 4-year postsecondary institutions in the Philadelphia, PA, area
- Institution has no more than 6,000 students
- Offers bachelor degrees
- Representative is responsible for or familiar with the disclosure requirements or for submitting IPEDS data to ED

For each of these groups, 11-12 participants will be recruited to ensure nine participants show up for each focus group.



### **Recruitment by Focus Group Facility:**

Westat has subcontracted with Shugoll Research, located in Bethesda, MD, to recruit participants for the two consumer focus groups—parent/child and high school guidance counselors. Shugoll, whom Westat has used successfully in the past, has extensive experience in recruiting both students of all ages and high school administrators, and has recruited parent/child pairs for Westat for a previous focus group. Shugoll sends e-mails to past focus group participants maintained in their database to identify interested potential participants. Once they hear from participants, they use the screeners provided by Westat (see Attachment II) to determine their eligibility. Shugoll then sends Westat weekly disposition sheets containing the key screener characteristics. If a potential participant does not meet the exact eligibility criteria described above or if there are too many eligible participants who attend (i.e., student) or work for (i.e., guidance counselors) the same high school, for example, we would ask Shugoll to place them on hold, and only invite them if we do not have enough eligible participants.

Focus group participants will be selected based on the following criteria:

#### **Parent/child group:**

- Four pairs consisting of a parent with his or her child from the DC metropolitan area
- Child, aged 17-19, is a public high school senior and is planning to attend a 4-year college leading to a bachelor's degree
- Parent/child have conducted a college search using the Internet
- Parent has no more than 2 years of college and has not graduated from college
- Low to moderate income
- Goal: Mixed race/ethnicity and gender

#### **High school guidance counselor group:**

- High school guidance counselors working in public or charter schools in the DC metropolitan area
- Has at least 3 years' experience counseling prospective college students
- At least ¼ of their time spent on counseling students related to the college search process
- Counselors work in schools where at least 15 percent of the students are low income
- Has earned master's degree
- Goal: mix of counselors from schools in various counties in DC, MD, and VA
- Goal: mixed gender

For the focus group with guidance counselors, 12 participants will be recruited to ensure nine participants show up. For the parent/child focus group, six pairs will be recruited to ensure four pairs show up.

### **Advertisement:**

Simultaneously, Shugoll advertises through their contacts at local schools in the DC metropolitan area by sending them Westat-developed flyers (see next page). The flyers briefly describe the purpose of the research and details of participation, including the time commitment, incentive for participation, and contact information. Individuals who are interested in participating in the focus groups will be asked to contact Shugoll to complete the brief screening interview to determine eligibility as described above.

**Sample Recruitment Flyer  
for Guidance Counselors**

# Are you a high school guidance counselor?

*You may be eligible to earn **\$75** by participating in a focus group to discuss consumer information on college websites.*

**A light meal will be provided.**

## About the focus group:

Westat, a social science research company, is conducting this 90-minute focus group for the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) of the U.S. Department of Education. During the focus group, a researcher will ask you to respond to questions about what information is most important to you in the college search process and how this information could be made more user-friendly on college websites.

## Eligibility to Participate:

- You must work in a public or charter high school in the DC metropolitan area
- Spend part of your time working with high school students on college choice, search, and the application process

**Date:** Wednesday, March 7, at 7:30 p.m.

**Location:** Shugoll Research (Bethesda, Maryland)

**\*\*If interested, call 301-215-7248 and reference Wendy\*\***

## **Sample Confirmation Emails**

## **Confirmation Email to Institutional Representatives**

**SAMPLE CONFIRMATION E-MAIL FROM FOCUS GROUP FACILITY TO  
CONFIRMED INSTITUTIONAL REPRESENTATIVES**

Thank you for your interest in participating in the focus group discussion on Thursday, February 23, 2012.

**Focus Pointe Philadelphia**

**Date:** Thursday, February 23, 2012

Two Logan Square  
Suite 500  
Philadelphia PA 19103  
215.701.1501

**Time:** 5:30 p.m. [or 7:30 p.m.]  
**Topic:** Education  
**Length:** 90 minutes  
**Incentive amount:** \$75

**This focus group has been approved by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB# 1800-0011).**

**Participants will be required to:**

- 1) Bring a photo ID with a birth date to the group.**
- 2) Read and sign a consent form agreeing to participate in the group and granting permission for it to be audio recorded.**
- 3) Please note: The information obtained during the focus group will be combined with the responses of others in a summary report that does not identify you as an individual. The answers you provide in the group may be used only for statistical purposes and may not be disclosed, or used, in identifiable form for any other purpose except as required by law [Education Sciences Reform Act of 2002 (ESRA 2002) 20 U.S.C., § 9573]. After the summary report is finalized and the project is over, the audiotapes will be destroyed.**

To be admitted to this discussion, we must contact you to (1) confirm your attendance and (2) verify the information you have just provided. We will call you within a week. **Please note that if you provide different answers during this call, we reserve the right to cancel your participation as well as any payment.** When you have completed the confirmation call successfully, we will send to your email box an **Admissions Ticket**.

**Please note:** If you do not receive a confirmation call by the day before Thursday, February 23, 2012, please contact our Confirmation Department at 866.641.4808.

**Directions and parking information will be attached.**

## **Confirmation Email to Parent/Child Group**

## **SAMPLE CONFIRMATION E-MAIL FROM FOCUS GROUP FACILITY TO CONFIRMED PARENT/CHILD GROUP**

### **Shugoll Research**

7475 Wisconsin Avenue, Suite 200  
Bethesda, MD 20814

Thank you for your commitment to participate in this focus group discussion. Please reply to confirm receipt of this e-mail and your attendance.

Participants must arrive **15 minutes** prior to your scheduled appointment time. If you are late we cannot guarantee that you will be used.

**It is important that you keep this commitment as each individual attending a group has been selected specifically for this focus group. If you have any hesitation about your availability please call (301) 215-7248.**

**This focus group has been approved by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB# 1800-0011).**

**Participants will be required to:**

- 1) Bring a photo ID with a birth date to the group.**
  - 2) Read and sign a consent form agreeing to participate in the group, and agreeing for your child to participate in the group if under the age of 18, and granting permission for it to be audio recorded.**
  - 3) Please note: The information obtained during the focus group will be combined with the responses of others in a summary report that does not identify you as an individual. The answers you provide in the group may be used only for statistical purposes and may not be disclosed, or used, in identifiable form for any other purpose except as required by law [Education Sciences Reform Act of 2002 (ESRA 2002) 20 U.S.C., § 9573]. After the summary report is finalized and the project is over, the audiotapes will be destroyed.**
- We look forward to seeing you **Wednesday, March 7, 2012**
  - The discussion will begin at **5:30 p.m.**
  - The discussion will last approximately **1½ hours**
  - The topic of the discussion is **Education**



- As a token of our appreciation, you will receive a gift of **\$100**

## **DIRECTIONS**

### ***From the Capital Beltway:***

- Take the Wisconsin Avenue/MD-355 exit heading **South** toward Bethesda
- Proceed 3.5 miles south on Wisconsin Avenue
- We are on the corner of Wisconsin Avenue & East-West Highway

### ***Via Metro:***

Take the **Red Line** to the Bethesda stop. At the top of the long escalator, bear to the right and follow the tunnel to the lower level of our building the “Bethesda Crescent.” Take the escalator up to the lobby level. Enter through the glass doors in the lobby and take the lobby elevator to the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor. (If the lobby doors are locked, pick up the telephone marked “Shugoll Research” located to the right of the doors and wait for our answer.)

### ***Parking:* PLEASE PAY CLOSE ATTENTION TO PARKING INSTRUCTIONS**

When turning onto Montgomery Avenue, parking is available at the first drive way on your left (**Parking Garage with gate** across from the police station). Also you can park at the Public Garage (Waverly Garage) one driveway up from the first gated garage on the left, located at the corner of Montgomery Avenue & Waverly Street. The Waverly Garage requires coins to park (nickels, dimes & quarters). There is short and long term parking for your convenience. **If you are coming for a 2 hour group please make sure you park in a parking space that is longer than two (2) hours, the 3 plus hour parking is located on the third level and above.** Parking is also available at the Air Rights Building on the corner of Waverly & Montgomery Avenue. Additional parking is available at the Hyatt on Wisconsin Avenue.

**\*\*\*\*\* PLEASE BE ADVISED, WE HAVE NO FACILITIES FOR CHILDCARE**  
\*\*\*\*\*

**\*\*\*\*\* YOU MUST HAVE VALID IDENTIFICATION TO PARTICIPATE IN  
THE FOCUS GROUP\*\*\*\*\***  
\*

## **Confirmation Email to Guidance Counselors**

## **SAMPLE CONFIRMATION E-MAIL FROM FOCUS GROUP FACILITY TO CONFIRMED GUIDANCE COUNSELORS**

### **Shugoll Research**

7475 Wisconsin Avenue, Suite 200  
Bethesda, MD 20814

Thank you for your commitment to participate in this focus group discussion. Please reply to confirm receipt of this e-mail and your attendance.

Participants must arrive **15 minutes** prior to your scheduled appointment time. If you are late we cannot guarantee that you will be used.

**It is important that you keep this commitment as each individual attending a group has been selected specifically for this focus group. If you have any hesitation about your availability please call (301) 215-7248.**

**This focus group has been approved by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB# 1800-0011).**

**Participants will be required to:**

- 1) Bring a photo ID with a birth date to the group.**
  - 2) Read and sign a consent form agreeing to participate in the group and granting permission for it to be audio recorded.**
  - 3) Please note: The information obtained during the focus group will be combined with the responses of others in a summary report that does not identify you as an individual. The answers you provide in the group may be used only for statistical purposes and may not be disclosed, or used, in identifiable form for any other purpose except as required by law [Education Sciences Reform Act of 2002 (ESRA 2002) 20 U.S.C., § 9573]. After the summary report is finalized and the project is over, the audiotapes will be destroyed.**
- We look forward to seeing you **Wednesday, March 7, 2012**
  - The discussion will begin at **7:30 p.m.**
  - The discussion will last approximately **1½ hours**
  - The topic of the discussion is **Education**
  - As a token of our appreciation, you will receive a gift of **\$75**



## DIRECTIONS

**From the Capital Beltway:** Take the Wisconsin Avenue/MD-355 exit heading **South** toward Bethesda

- Proceed 3.5 miles south on Wisconsin Avenue
- We are on the corner of Wisconsin Avenue & East-West Highway

### **Via Metro:**

Take the **Red Line** to the Bethesda stop. At the top of the long escalator, bear to the right and follow the tunnel to the lower level of our building the “Bethesda Crescent.” Take the escalator up to the lobby level. Enter through the glass doors in the lobby and take the lobby elevator to the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor. (If the lobby doors are locked, pick up the telephone marked “Shugoll Research” located to the right of the doors and wait for our answer.)

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**\*\*\*\*\* PLEASE BE ADVISED, WE HAVE NO FACILITIES FOR CHILDCARE  
\*\*\*\*\***

**\*\*\*\*\* YOU MUST HAVE VALID IDENTIFICATION TO PARTICIPATE IN  
THE FOCUS GROUP\*\*\*\*\*  
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## **Attachment IV**

### **Focus Group Protocols**

**Institutional Representative Focus Group Protocol  
(for both 2- and 4-year groups)**



**Attachment IV**  
**Focus Group Protocols**  
**NCES NPEC**  
**DISCLOSURE REPORTING FOCUS GROUPS**  
**DRAFT OUTLINE**

**Last Revised: 12/30/11**

**Welcome**

Good evening. My name is Keith and I am a researcher at Westat. I will moderate tonight's focus group. Thank you for taking time to participate. In tonight's discussion, we will talk about consumer information disclosure requirements and explore the challenges your institutions face in complying with these requirements and what possible solutions can be offered.

**Guidelines and Ground Rules**

1. There are no wrong answers. We invite and value a variety of opinions and experiences.
2. Information shared in this group will be combined with the responses of others in a summary report that does not identify anyone as an individual. Your answers may be used only for statistical purposes and may not be disclosed, or used, in identifiable form for any other purpose except as required by law [Education Sciences Reform Act of 2002 (ESRA 2002) 20 U.S.C., § 9573]. Help us protect your privacy by only stating your first name and NOT mentioning the name of your school.
3. Explain about one-way mirror and disclose that staff from Dept. of ED and Westat are observing and taking notes on the discussion behind one-way mirror and that the session will be audio recorded.
4. Turn off cell phones/Blackberries, etc. or turn them to vibrate.
5. Any questions before we begin?

**Roadmap of Activities Planned**

<b>Category of Information to be Covered</b>	<b>Approx. Time Set Aside</b>
Welcome/Ground-rules/Self-Introductions	10 minutes
<b>Issue A:</b> Knowledge About Disclosure Requirements	10 minutes
<b>Issue B:</b> Experiences Gathering, Preparing, and Presenting Disclosure Data	10 minutes

<b>Issue C:</b> Challenges Encountered	15 minutes
<b>Issue D:</b> What would help?	20 minutes
<b>Issue E:</b> Responses to Data Disclosure Template	20 minutes
Closure	5 minutes
<b>Total Time Allotted</b>	<b>90 minutes</b>

## **Self Introductions: (Baseline/Warm-Up Questions)**

I would like to meet each of you before I start with questions.

Tell me:

First name?

Job title?

How long you have been working at your current institution, in your current position?

## **ISSUE A: WHAT DO YOU KNOW ABOUT DATA DISCLOSURE REQUIREMENTS?**

Let's start by briefly talking about your data disclosure related tasks at your school. Data disclosure requirements differ from reporting requirements. Is someone willing to explain the difference? [Allow respondent to explain, then provide "official" definitions.]

1. Was everyone aware of these differences? [Obtain a show of hands].

***Then say: For this discussion, we are focusing only on disclosure requirements NOT reporting requirements.***

2. What are your disclosure data responsibilities at your institution?
  - PROBES: Do you work with disclosure issues? What are your primary responsibilities? (*Probe on coordinating data to submit to ED, collecting data from the school, reporting on the data, using the data*)
3. Do you coordinate school data with or submit school data to other campuses, organizations, or agencies other than ED?
  - If so, which organizations or agencies?
  - What about for other campuses?
4. How would you describe your level of understanding about the Disclosure requirements?

### **PROBES:**

- 4a. What have been your primary sources of information concerning Disclosure requirements? (*Ask if not mentioned: ED help desks, other institutions, associations such as NACUBO, AIR, ACE*)
- 4b. Are you *familiar* with the 2009 NPEC Report that provides suggestions for disseminating information that is required to be disclosed?
- 4c. Have you *used* the report to help you disseminate disclosure requirements? If so, how did you use it? What did you think of it?



***[Unveil flip chart containing the Disclosure Requirement categories. (see p. 8 of 2009 NPEC Report). Leave flip chart revealed throughout focus group]***

Here is a summary of the Disclosure Requirements. We will be returning to these throughout this evening's discussion.

**ISSUE B: WHAT ARE YOU DOING AND HOW ARE YOU DOING IT?**

(Experience collecting, preparing and presenting the Disclosure data)

5. What is your institution's status in making the appropriate disclosure requirements available to the public, including prospective students?

5a. Would you say: most systems are in place / started / still developing / not yet started

- If not yet started, is delay intentional due to some missing element?

- Are lists of disclosures fully available to consumer groups?

- How do you inform consumers where to find the disclosure information?

5b. What training, if any, have you received to manage data disclosure requirements?

5c. Where do the disclosure requirements actually appear on your institution's website?

- Is there a web portal with access to all disclosure data?
- How do you characterize or describe the disclosure data on your website?  
(If they want examples, say: Student Right to Know, Federal Compliance, Consumer Information, etc.)

5d. Are you using an outside vendor to help develop a web portal or section containing all or some of the disclosure requirements? If so, what prompted you to use one?

5e. Did you or do you plan to conduct any usability testing on the disclosure portion of your institution's website?

- If so, with whom did you conduct the testing? Students, employees, others?

- What did the testing reveal? *[If planning to test, what do you hope to learn?]*

5f. Which office(s) inside your institution manage or coordinate the information required to be disclosed? (e.g., admissions, institutional research, financial aid, Registrar)

- Is there an individual (or office) who is responsible for tracking updates to statutes and regulations concerning the disclosure requirements? (For example, who keeps track of HEA reauthorizations and new laws and amendments?)

## ISSUE C: WHAT CHALLENGES ARE YOU FACING?

Next, we'd like to explore some of the challenges your institutions face with respect to the data disclosure process.

6. What challenges have you experienced or anticipate experiencing in meeting the disclosure requirements? (e.g., communication challenges, understanding which items are to be disclosed, understanding how to provide the data, training?)
7. What **data collection** challenges, if any, have you encountered or anticipate encountering?
  - 7a. **Probes:**
    - For example, collecting and disclosing data on an annual basis?
    - Do any of the disclosure requirements require you to collect data on items for which you have not historically collected data? If so, what kind of data?
  - 7b. Are certain types of data more difficult to collect than others? Which ones? What makes you say this?

*If they cannot think of examples, you can ask about those listed below.*

(REFER TO LIST OF DISCLOSURE ITEMS TO HELP PROMPT RESPONSE)

For Example:

Job placement rates for graduates  
Preferred Lender Arrangements  
Credit transfer and articulation agreements  
Net Price Calculator  
Campus security policies

8. Do you know how your data collection procedures compare to what you do for IPEDS? If so, how?
  - 8a. If so, does your work for IPEDS make it easier or more difficult to collect the disclosure data, or does it have no affect? What makes you say that?
9. What challenges, if any, have you encountered in **coordinating** Disclosure information across offices or individuals?
  - 9a. Are certain types of data more difficult to coordinate than others? Which ones? What makes you say this?

9b. If your institution has multiple campuses, does that represent a data disclosure challenge?

10. With respect to preparing data to disclose on your institution's website, are certain Disclosure Requirements more problematic/complicated than others?

(REFER TO LIST OF DISCLOSURE ITEMS TO HELP PROMPT RESPONSE)

**PROBES:**

10a. To what extent has meeting the requirements placed a burden on your staff? Please explain. (Probe for problems in staff turnover, need for staff training, drain on staff time)

10b. To what extent, if at all, is the management of Disclosure data limited by your institution's technological capacity? In what way(s)?

11. For Disclosure data posted on your school's website, what **display or presentation challenges**, if any, have you experienced?

(REFER TO LIST OF DISCLOSURE ITEMS TO HELP PROMPT RESPONSE)

**PROBES:**

11a. In thinking about posting Disclosure information to your website, what issues, if any, have been discussed about the accessibility of the information?

11b. What about the clarity of the information/language?

11c. What about the ability of users to understand the information?

11d. Have you encountered any technical issues with respect to website development (e.g. creating a disclosure portal) that are unique to Disclosure requirements?

**ISSUE D: WHAT WOULD HELP YOUR INSTITUTION OVERCOME THESE CHALLENGES?**

12. If resources were not limited, that is, if you had unlimited time and money, what would improve the data disclosure process at your institution?

13. What basic strategies would help smaller institutions like yours comply with the Disclosure requirements? (*Probe for examples: standard format*)



*to use, checklist, Webinars offered by ED, resource tools including FAQs, template, PP slides for training)*

13a. What specifically would help with respect to:

- Data collection and coordination
- Data management and preparation
- Data presentation including location on website and titles used to describe the information, use of visuals, etc.

**NOTE:** Obtain “concrete recommendations” for each category. Use Easel Activity Format

**PROBES:**

What do you think of the following ideas? (If mentioned above, probe... if not, directly ask.)

13a. Receive more clarity and guidance from ED?

- How would you prefer to receive this assistance? By phone, email, resource guide on web?
- e.g. More defined suggestions on how data could be analyzed and presented?
- e.g. A checklist of the requirements, including individuals responsible at institution, location of documentation, etc.)

13b. Receive Technical Assistance?

- e.g. Guidance and lessons learned from other institutions? Best practices? (Peer support) What kind of forum would you prefer for sharing this guidance?

13c. Training offered via free Webinars or PowerPoint presentation that can be downloaded?

13d. Create and apply software solutions that would, for example, automatically populate IPEDS data into disclosure reports or reporting templates?

**ISSUE E: WHAT IS THE VALUE OF A DATA DISCLOSURE TEMPLATE OR CHECKLIST?**

One area where ED thinks they could specifically provide useful assistance is with the development of a data disclosure template or checklist for institutions to use to organize and post their data.

14. What do you think of this idea?

(Note: A template / checklist may have been identified as useful in Q12 above.)

14a. What general features should a disclosure template have? (*briefly engage the group in thinking through the overall design of such a potential resource **before** gauging their reactions to presented template elements*)

15. Now, I want to invite your reactions to a sample template. [**PRESENT TEMPLATE EXAMPLE PREPARED BY ED AS A POWERPOINT**]

**PROBES:**

15a. What about this example do you find most useful?

15b. What is not useful in terms of how it is presented or described?

15c. What changes would you make to this example? What is missing?

15d. How do you feel about how this example is organized?

15e. If this template were provided, would you use it? What makes you say this?

15f. Are there technical issues in using such a template; for example: multiple users; functionality; interface (Excel vs. web application)

16. What other comments or questions do you have about the disclosure requirements?

17. How might ED provide further assistance to smaller institutions like yours to meet the requirements?

**False Close**

Thank you so much for being here tonight. Before we conclude, I need to step out for a few minutes to make sure we have everything ready for you.

*Moderator checks with observers for up to two additional questions to pose, time permitting.*

**Final Close**

*Upon return, moderator will pose questions from observers, if any.*

Well, that concludes our discussion for tonight. Again, thank you so much for taking time out of your very busy lives to be here with us tonight. The

facility has your envelope ready for you. Please enjoy the rest of your evening and travel home safely.

## **Parent/Child Focus Group Protocol**

**MODERATOR’S GUIDE  
NCES CONSUMER INFORMATION DISCLOSURE FOCUS GROUP  
FOR PARENT/STUDENTS ENROLLED IN FOUR-YEAR COLLEGES**

**INTERNAL INFORMATION ONLY**

**Study Purpose:** To garner the perceptions, opinions, beliefs and attitudes of student consumers and their parents regarding HEA consumer information items and presentation on university websites.

**Intended Outcomes:** To compile an in-depth understanding of the consumers’ familiarity with and assigned level of importance to the HEA student consumer information. This information could potentially be used to provide colleges and universities with evidence to support the need to compile and present the required disclosures in a consumer-friendly manner.

**ROADMAP OF ACTIVITIES PLANNED**

<b>Categories of Information to be Covered</b>	<b>Approx. Time Set Aside</b>
Welcome/Ground-rules/Self-Introductions	10 minutes
<b>Issue 1.</b> Warm-up and Opening Questions	5 minutes
<b>Issue 2.</b> Familiarity with Disclosure Information	5 minutes
<b>Issue 3.</b> Interpretation of Disclosure Information Titles	30 minutes
<b>Issue 4.</b> Importance Assigned to Disclosure Information	25 minutes
<b>Issue 5.</b> Presentation of Disclosure Information	10 minutes
<b>Issue 6.</b> Wrap up/False Close	5 minutes
<b>Total Time Allotted</b>	<b>90 minutes</b>

**A. Acknowledgment:** I want to thank you for coming this evening and for fitting this session into your busy schedules.

**B. Intro:** My name is Holly and I work for Westat, a social science research firm in Rockville, MD. This evening, I will be the moderator for this 90 minute group discussion. Our purpose today is to discuss your role as a consumer of postsecondary education and the information, provided by university and colleges that is available to you.

**Agenda:** You will be doing several things: participating in a group discussion, then breaking off into smaller groups to discuss certain topics, and also helping me compile a list of relevant information. This is a free-flowing discussion and there are no wrong answers. I am looking for different points of view.

**C. Disclosures:**

- a. Facility Setting: Mention mikes, mirrors, observers, and taping.
- b. The session is being recorded to enable me to write an accurate report, not of who said what but “what got said.”

**D. Permissions:** At any time you can excuse yourself to go to the restroom or to get more food or beverages. I ask that only one person be up or out at a time.

**E. Guidelines:** In order to make this an efficient session, here are some guidelines:

- a. Please talk one at a time.
- b. Talk in a voice as loud as mine.
- c. Avoid side conversations with your neighbors.
- d. I need to hear from everyone; however, you do not have to answer every question.
- e. It is OK to piggyback on someone else’s comments.
- f. Work for equal “air time” so that no one talks too little or too much.
- g. Allow for different points of view. There are no wrong answers.

**F. Self Introductions:** Please introduce yourself to the group:

- a. Students, please tell us
  - i. First Name only
  - ii. What you plan to major in when you go to college? **Please do not share the name of the institution you are attending.**

- b.** Parents, please tell us
  - i.** First Name only
  - ii.** If you have other children or relatives you've helped when/if they were searching for colleges.
  - iii.** If so, what did you do to help them with their search?

### **ISSUE 1. WARM UP AND OPENING QUESTIONS [5 minutes]**

1. Did you (parent and child) conduct the search for a college together or did one of you take primary responsibility?

**PROBE:** If so, whom?  
Who initiated the search?

2. Where on the internet did you look for information to help you make your decision on what colleges to apply to?

**PROBE:** Did you go to the college websites directly?  
Where else?

3. Parents, then students: Briefly describe your experiences searching for the information you needed to compare possible universities or colleges to apply to.

**PROBE:** Was the information easy to locate on college websites?  
Could you find everything that you needed?  
Was the information presented in a way that it was easy to understand or not? What makes you say that?

### **ISSUE 2. FAMILIARITY WITH CONSUMER DISCLOSURE INFORMATION [5 minutes]**

The US Department of Education considers prospective and current students and their families “consumers” of postsecondary education. The Higher Education Act (HEA) of 1965, as amended in 2008, states that colleges and universities are required to disclose specific types of information to their consumers. That is, you (parent/child) should be able to go to a college website and find specific information that could be used to help you determine which colleges to apply to and eventually attend. As you can see from the screen shot, some of the information pertains to the following content areas:

- Notice of Availability of Institutional and Financial Aid Information
  - Contact Information for Assistance in Obtaining Institutional or Financial Aid Information
  - General Institutional Information
  - Teacher Preparation Program Report
  - Student Financial Assistance
  - Health and Safety
  - Student Outcomes
  - Intercollegiate Athletic Program Participation Rates and Financial Support Data
  - Voter Registration
4. Were you aware that postsecondary institutions participating in federal student financial aid programs were required to provide this type of information to consumers?
5. Which of these categories of information seems to be the most relevant in your college search?

### **ISSUE 3. INTERPRETATION OF DISCLOSURE INFORMATION TITLES [30 minutes]**

Although colleges are required to disclose this information, researchers have found that postsecondary institutions vary greatly in the way they collect, present and disseminate this information. To make it easier to compare the same information about several different institutions, the National Postsecondary Education Cooperative (NPEC) has issued a list of suggestions to institutions about how to organize this information. One of those suggestions includes adopting a simple, yet common, set of content titles for the purpose of providing links to information on their HEA disclosure page on their websites. Here are four of the possible headings they suggest:

MODERATOR NOTE: Pass out handout of the list of content areas.

- General Institutional Information
- Student Financial Assistance
- Health and Safety
- Student Outcomes

NPEC has suggested that college and universities place a variety of information underneath these four headings. However, these titles can be interpreted differently by different people. Therefore, please take a moment and discuss these titles in small groups. One group will be of students and the other of parents. In these groups, you will do the following three things:

- Select a person to be your scribe.



- Select a person to be your spokesperson (it can be the same as the scribe).
- Take 10 minutes to collectively list the type of information you think each title heading would include—if possible, list at least five things under each category.

MODERATOR NOTE: Set timer and call participants back to the table after 10 minutes.

6. Let's start with the parents, what type of information do you think you would find under the title "**General Institutional Information**"? Students, how does that compare to your interpretation of this title?

**PROBE:** During your search for colleges to apply to, did you look for this information?  
 If so, could you find it?  
 What type of general information did you look for but could not find?

7. Now let's start with the students, what type of information do you think you would find under the title "**Student Financial Assistance**"? Parents, how does that compare to your interpretation of this title?

**PROBE:** During your search for colleges to apply to, did you look for this information?  
 If so, could you find it?  
 What type of financial assistance information did you look for but could not find?

8. Now let's go back to the parents, what type of information do you think you would find under the title "**Health and Safety**"? Students, how does that compare to your interpretation of this title?

**PROBE:** During your search for colleges to apply to, did you look for this information?  
 If so, could you find it?  
 What type of student outcomes information did you look for but could not find?

9. Now let's go back to the parents, what type of information do you think you would find under the title "**Student Outcomes**"? Students, how does that compare to your interpretation of this title?

**PROBE:** If you did not know what the term “Student Outcomes” means, would you be likely to click on it to learn more about it, ignore it, or do something else?  
During your search for colleges to apply to, did you look for this information?  
If so, could you find it?  
What type of student outcomes information did you look for but could not find?

#### **ISSUE 4. IMPORTANCE ASSIGNED TO CONSUMER DISCLOSURE INFORMATION [30 minutes]**

Okay, now let’s see how your lists compare to what NPEC had in mind. I will display a list of four general disclosure information titles with examples of the type of information you should be able to find underneath them. Please take a minute to review them. [DISPLAY FULL LIST ON SLIDE]

10. Are there any items on these lists that you do not think belong under the assigned title?
  - a. If so, which ones? What makes you say that?
11. Now, let’s look at each of the categories individually. [SHOW SECOND SLIDE—GENERAL INSTITUTIONAL INFORMATION]. For **General Institutional Information** items—Students, what items in this category would be the most important or useful to you?
  - a. Parents, do you agree?
  - b. What would be the most important or useful to you as a parent of a prospective student?
12. [SHOW THIRD SLIDE—FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE ] For **Financial Assistance** items—Parents, what would be the most important or useful to you? [
  - a. Students, do you agree?
  - b. What makes you say that?
  - c. What would be the most important or useful to you as a prospective student?
13. [SHOW FOURTH SLIDE—HEALTH AND SAFETY ] For **Health and Safety** items—Students, what would be the most important or useful to you? [

- a. Parents, do you agree?
  - b. What makes you say that?
  - c. What would be the most important or useful to you as a parent of a prospective student?
14. [SHOW FIFTH SLIDE—STUDENT OUTCOMES ] For **Student Outcomes** items—Parents, what would be the most important or useful to you?
- a. Students, do you agree?
  - b. What makes you say that?
  - c. What would be the most important or useful to you as a prospective student?
15. Now that you have seen the full list, do you recall looking for this type of information on a college website? If so, which information?  
*[This question will only be asked at the end, as time allows.]*
16. Now I would like for each of you to take a moment and rank the level of importance of the information listed underneath these four categories. Please notice that you are sometimes asked to rank different numbers of items for each category, so please pay close attention to the instructions.
- a. MODERATOR NOTE: Pass out ranking sheet. Read instructions to group. Set timer. Allow for five minutes to complete the ranking exercise. Then ask for the worksheets to be passed back.

**ISSUE 5. PRESENTATION/ORGANIZATION OF DISCLOSURE  
INFORMATION  
[10 minutes]**

NCES has provided a mockup of what a “real” institution’s consumer information web page looks like, and we would like to hear your reactions to it.

MODERATOR NOTE: Display or pass out mockup.

17. What are your first impressions of how the information on this page is presented?
18. What aspects of this layout/presentation work well? What makes you say that?
19. What aspects of this layout/presentation need improvement?

**PROBE:** How would you change it?  
What makes you want to change it?

20. Do you think all the items “fit” in the categories under which they are organized?

**PROBE:** Are the categories too narrow? Too broad?  
If so, how would you reorganize them?

21. What do you think about how the information is presented?  
[SHOW GRADUATION RATES CHART AS AN EXAMPLE]

**PROBE:** How would you describe what these data mean?  
What, if anything, would make this easier to understand? (e.g., more text, better or different visuals?)

22. How would you prefer to access this information on a website?

**PROBE:** Where do you think this information should it be located on the institution’s website so consumers like you could find it?

23. What other comments or suggestions do you have to improve the website?

### **ISSUE 6. WRAP UP AND FALSE CLOSE [5 minutes]**

24. If you were to do your college search again, would you be inclined to access an institution’s consumer information web page? What makes you say that?

25. Would this type of consumer information affect the decision you have made on the schools you have applied to? In what ways?

### **False Close**

Thank you so much for being here tonight. Before we conclude, I need to step out for a few minutes to make sure we have everything ready for you.

Moderator checks with observers for up to two additional questions to pose, time permitting.

## **Final close**

Upon return, moderator will pose questions from observers, if any.

Well, that concludes our discussion for tonight. Again, thank you so much for taking time out of your very busy lives to be here with us tonight. The facility has your envelop ready for you. Please enjoy the rest of your evening and travel home safely.

## **Guidance Counselor Focus Group Protocol**

**MODERATOR’S GUIDE  
NCES CONSUMER INFORMATION DISCLOSURE FOCUS GROUP  
FOR GUIDANCE COUNSELORS**

**INTERNAL INFORMATION ONLY**

**Study Purpose:** To garner the perceptions, opinions, beliefs and attitudes of student consumers and their parents regarding HEA consumer information items and presentation on university websites.

**Intended Outcomes:** To compile an in-depth understanding of the consumers’ familiarity with and assigned level of importance to the HEA student consumer information. This information could potentially be used to provide colleges and universities with evidence to support the need to compile and present the required disclosures in a consumer-friendly manner.

**ROADMAP OF ACTIVITIES PLANNED**

<b>Categories of Information to be Covered</b>	<b>Approx. Time Set Aside</b>
Welcome/Ground-rules/Self-Introductions	10 minutes
<b>Issue 1.</b> Warm-up and Opening Questions	5 minutes
<b>Issue 2.</b> Familiarity with Disclosure Information	5 minutes
<b>Issue 3.</b> Interpretation of Disclosure Information Titles	20 minutes
<b>Issue 4.</b> Importance Assigned to Disclosure Information	25 minutes
<b>Issue 5.</b> Presentation of Portal Title	10 minutes
<b>Issue 6.</b> Presentation of Disclosure Information	10 minutes
<b>Issue 7.</b> Wrap up/False Close	5 minutes
<b>Total Time Allotted</b>	<b>90 minutes</b>

**A. Acknowledgment:** I want to thank you for coming this evening and for fitting this session into your busy schedules.

**B. Intro:** My name is Holly and I work for Westat, a social science research firm in Rockville, MD. This evening, I will be the moderator for this 90 minute group discussion. Our purpose today is to discuss your role as a consumer of postsecondary education and the information, provided by university and colleges that is available to you.

**Agenda:** You will be doing several things: participating in a group discussion and also helping me compile a list of relevant information. This is a free-flowing discussion and there are no wrong answers. I am looking for different points of view.

**C. Disclosures:**

- a. Facility Setting: Mention mikes, mirrors, observers, and taping.
- b. The session is being recorded to enable me to write an accurate report, not of who said what but “what got said.”

**D. Permissions:** At any time you can excuse yourself to go to the restroom or to get more food or beverages. I ask that only one person be up or out at a time.

**E. Guidelines:** In order to make this an efficient session, here are some guidelines:

- a. Please talk one at a time.
- b. Talk in a voice as loud as mine.
- c. Avoid side conversations with your neighbors.
- d. I need to hear from everyone; however, you do not have to answer every question.
- e. It is OK to piggyback on someone else’s comments.
- f. Work for equal “air time” so that no one talks too little or too much.
- g. Allow for different points of view. There are no wrong answers.

**F. Self Introductions:** Please introduce yourself to the group by telling us:

- a. Your first name (only)
- b. How long you’ve been a guidance counselor
- c. How many students are enrolled in your school?
- d. How many guidance counselors work in your school? [Please don’t mention the name of your school.]





## **ISSUE 1. WARM UP AND OPENING QUESTIONS** **[5 minutes]**

1. To what extent, do your students conduct college searches [e.g., gather information about various colleges to apply to] with their parents?

**PROBE:** What makes you say that?

2. Given all of your responsibilities as a guidance counselor, do you have an opportunity to help students conduct the search for a college?

**PROBE:** If so, to what extent are you involved in this process?

3. Where on the internet did students look for information to help make their decision on what colleges to apply to?

**PROBE:** Where, on the internet, do students collect most of their information?  
Do they go to the college websites directly?  
Where else?

4. Briefly describe your experiences conducting an internet search for information students need to compare possible universities or colleges to apply to.

**PROBE:** Was the information easy to locate on college websites?  
Could you find everything needed?  
Was the information presented in a way that it was easy to understand or not? What makes you say that?

## **ISSUE 2. FAMILIARITY WITH CONSUMER DISCLOSURE INFORMATION** **[5 minutes]**

The US Department of Education considers prospective and current students and their families “consumers” of postsecondary education. The Higher Education Act (HEA) of 1965, as amended in 2008, states that colleges and universities are required to disclose specific types of information to their consumers. That is, anyone should be able to go to a college website and find specific information that could be used to help determine which colleges to apply to and eventually attend. As you can see from the screen shot, some of the information pertains to the following content areas:

- Notice of Availability of Institutional and Financial Aid Information
  - Contact Information for Assistance in Obtaining Institutional or Financial Aid Information
  - General Institutional Information
  - Teacher Preparation Program Report
  - Student Financial Assistance
  - Health and Safety
  - Student Outcomes
  - Intercollegiate Athletic Program Participation Rates and Financial Support Data
  - Voter Registration
5. Were you aware that postsecondary institutions participating in federal student financial aid programs were required to provide this type of information to consumers?
6. Which of these categories of information seems to be the most relevant to students in their college search?

### **ISSUE 3. INTERPRETATION OF DISCLOSURE INFORMATION TITLES [20 minutes]**

Although colleges are required to disclose this information, researchers have found that postsecondary institutions vary greatly in the way they collect, present and disseminate this information. To make it easier to compare the same information about several different institutions, the National Postsecondary Education Cooperative (NPEC) has issued a list of suggestions to institutions about how to organize this information. One of those suggestions includes adopting a simple, yet common, set of content titles for the purpose of providing links to information on their HEA disclosure page on their websites. Here are four of the possible headings they suggest:

MODERATOR NOTE: [SHOW SLIDE OF THE LIST OF CONTENT AREAS]

- General Institutional Information
- Student Financial Assistance
- Health and Safety
- Student Outcomes

NPEC has suggested that college and universities place a variety of information underneath these four headings. However, these titles can be interpreted differently by different people. Therefore, let's take a moment and discuss these titles and what you might find underneath them.

7. Starting with "**General Institutional Information**," what type of information do you think you would find under this title.

**PROBE:** In searching for colleges to apply to, do students generally look for this information?  
Where do they go to find it?  
What type of **general information** did you or students look for but cannot find?

8. What type of information do you think you would find under the title “**Student Financial Assistance**”?

**PROBE:** In searching for colleges to apply to, do students generally look for this information?  
Where do they go to find it?  
What type of **financial assistance** information did you or students look for but cannot find?

9. What type of information do you think you would find under the title “**Health and Safety**”?

**PROBE:** In searching for colleges to apply to, do students generally look for this information?  
Where do they go to find it?  
What type of **health and safety** information did you or students look for but cannot find?

10. What type of information do you think you would find under the title “**Student Outcomes**”?

**PROBE:** If you (or your students) did not know what the term “Student Outcomes” means, would you be likely to click on it to learn more about it, ignore it, or do something else?  
In searching for colleges to apply to, do students generally look for this information?  
Where do they go to find it?  
What type of **student outcome** information did you or students look for but cannot find?

#### **ISSUE 4. IMPORTANCE ASSIGNED TO CONSUMER DISCLOSURE INFORMATION [25 minutes]**

Okay, now let’s see how your lists compare to what NPEC had in mind. I will display a list of four general disclosure information titles with examples of the type of information you should be able to find underneath them. Please take a minute to review. [DISPLAY FULL LIST ON SLIDE]

11. Are there any items on these lists that you do not think belongs under the assigned title?
  - a. If so, which ones? What makes you say that?
12. Now, let's look at each of the categories individually. [SHOW SECOND SLIDE—GENERAL INSTITUTIONAL INFORMATION]. For **General Institutional Information** items—what items in this category would be the most important or useful to prospective students?
  - a. What makes you say that?
13. [SHOW THIRD SLIDE—FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE ] For **Financial Assistance** items—what would be the most important or useful to prospective students?
  - a. What makes you say that?
14. [SHOW FOURTH SLIDE—HEALTH AND SAFETY ] For **Health and Safety** items—what would be the most important or useful to prospective students?
  - a. What makes you say that?
15. [SHOW FIFTH SLIDE—STUDENT OUTCOMES ] **Student Outcomes** items—what would be the most important or useful to prospective students?
  - a. What makes you say that?
16. Now that you have seen the full list, do you recall helping students search for this type of information on a college website? If so, which information?
17. Now I would like for each of you to take a moment and rank the level of importance of the information listed underneath these four categories. Please notice that you are sometimes asked to rank different numbers of items for each category, so please pay close attention to the instructions.
  - a. MODERATOR NOTE: Pass out ranking sheet. Read instructions to group. Set timer. Allow for five minutes to complete the ranking exercise. Then ask for the worksheets to be passed back.

## **ISSUE 5. PRESENTATION OF PORTAL TITLE [10 minutes]**

On each postsecondary institution website, a consumer should be able to find a “portal” or a link from the home page to this disclosure information. Based on an NCES study of 40 postsecondary institutions, the icon indicating the link was observed to be labeled using a variety of titles. Take a look at a list of the various titles and tell me: [DISPLAY LIST OF TITLES]

- Student Right to Know
  - Federal Disclosure Notices
  - Student Consumer Information
  - Consumer Information
  - Federal Compliance and Student Consumer Information
  - HEA Disclosure
18. Which title would most likely draw a consumer’s attention to click on it?  
a. What is it about that title that makes you say that?
19. Which title would most likely give the consumer a better understanding of what they would find if they click on it?
20. Is there a better, more clear and attractive title to use that is not currently on this list?
21. Which title would you suggest that all postsecondary institution use so that it is easiest for consumers to locate disclosure information?

## **ISSUE 6. PRESENTATION/ORGANIZATION OF DISCLOSURE INFORMATION [10 minutes]**

NCES has provided a mockup of what a “real” institution’s consumer information web page looks like, and we would like to hear your reactions to it.

MODERATOR NOTE: Display or pass out mockup.

22. What are your first impressions of how the information on this page is presented?
23. What aspects of this layout/presentation work well? What makes you say that?

24. What aspects of this layout/presentation need improvement?

**PROBE:** How would you change it?  
What makes you want to change it?

25. Do you think all the items “fit” in the categories under which they are organized?

**PROBE:** Are the categories too narrow? Too broad?  
If so, how would you reorganize them?

26. What do you think about *how* the information is presented?  
[SHOW GRADUATION RATES CHART AS AN EXAMPLE]

**PROBE:** Is it clear to you? To your students?  
What, if anything, would make this information easier to understand? (e.g., more text, better or different visuals?)

27. How would you prefer to access this information on a website?

**PROBE:** Where do you think this information should be located on the institution’s website so consumers like you could find it?

28. What other comments or suggestions do you have to improve the website?

### **ISSUE 7. WRAP UP AND FALSE CLOSE [5 minutes]**

29. Would students be inclined to access an institution’s consumer information web page? What makes you say that?

30. Do you think this type of consumer information could affect the decisions students have made on the schools they applied to? In what ways?

31. In your interactions with students, are you likely to promote the existence or utility of an institution’s consumer information web page?

- a. What makes you say that?
- b. Under what circumstances?

## **False Close**

Thank you so much for being here tonight. Before we conclude, I need to step out for a few minutes to make sure we have everything ready for you.

Moderator checks with observers for up to two additional questions to pose, time permitting.

## **Final close**

Upon return, moderator will pose questions from observers, if any.

Well, that concludes our discussion for tonight. Again, thank you so much for taking time out of your very busy lives to be here with us tonight. The facility has your envelop ready for you. Please enjoy the rest of your evening and travel home safely.



## **Attachment V**

### **Focus Group Materials: Screenshots and Ranking Form**

**Screenshots of Draft Sample  
NCES Disclosure Data Template**

**SAMPLE FOR DISCUSSION PURPOSES ONLY. DO NOT DISTRIBUTE.**

**Welcome to the U.S. Department of Education’s Voluntary Consumer Information Disclosure Template**

This template is designed to help institutions comply with disclosure requirements in the Higher Education Act of 1965, as amended by the Higher Education Opportunity Act of 2008. Please enter the requested information below.

	Please enter text or the URL for your web page containing this information. This will be published on the output screen.	Enter contact information for the office or individual responsible for this information. This will <u>not</u> be published on the output screen.	Enter relevant notes that may help you update the information in this template, such as where the information is located or when a policy was last updated. This will <u>not</u> be published on the output screen.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Notice of Availability of Institutional and Financial Aid Information</b> <i>[Description of disclosure requirement]</i></li> </ul>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Contact Information for Assistance in Obtaining Institutional or Financial Aid Information</b> <i>[Description of disclosure requirement]</i></li> </ul>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Teacher Preparation Program Report</b> <i>[Description of disclosure requirement]</i></li> </ul>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Intercollegiate Athletic Program Participation Rates and Financial Support Data (Equity in Athletics Disclosure Act)</b> <i>[Description of requirement]</i></li> </ul>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Voter Registration</b> <i>[Description of requirement]</i></li> </ul>			

**SAMPLE FOR DISCUSSION PURPOSES ONLY. DO NOT DISTRIBUTE.**

**General Institutional Information**

	Please enter text or the URL for your web page containing this information. This will be published on the output screen.	Enter contact information for the office or individual responsible for this information. This will <u>not</u> be published on the output screen.	Enter relevant notes that may help you update the information in this template, such as where the information is located or when a policy was last updated. This will <u>not</u> be published on the output screen.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Privacy of Student Records–Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) <i>[Description of disclosure requirement]</i></li> </ul>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Facilities and Services for Students with Disabilities <i>[Description of disclosure requirement]</i></li> </ul>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Student Diversity <i>[Description of disclosure requirement]</i></li> </ul>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Price of Attendance <i>[Description of disclosure requirement]</i></li> </ul>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Net Price Calculator <i>[Description of disclosure requirement]</i></li> </ul>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Refund Policy and Requirements for Withdrawal and Return of Federal Financial Aid <i>[Description of disclosure requirement]</i></li> </ul>			

**SAMPLE FOR DISCUSSION PURPOSES ONLY. DO NOT DISTRIBUTE.**

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Textbook Information <i>[Description of disclosure requirement]</i></li> </ul>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Educational Programs <i>[Description of disclosure requirement]</i></li> </ul>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Instructional Facilities <i>[Description of disclosure requirement]</i></li> </ul>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Faculty <i>[Description of disclosure requirement]</i></li> </ul>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Transfer of Credit Policies and Articulation Agreements <i>[Description of disclosure requirement]</i></li> </ul>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Accreditation, Approval, and Licensure of Institution and Programs <i>[Description of disclosure requirement]</i></li> </ul>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Copyright Infringement - Policies and Sanctions <i>[Description of disclosure requirement]</i></li> </ul>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Computer Use and File Sharing <i>[Description of disclosure requirement]</i></li> </ul>			

**SAMPLE FOR DISCUSSION PURPOSES ONLY. DO NOT DISTRIBUTE.**

<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Student Activities <i>[Description of disclosure requirement]</i></li></ul>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Career and Job Placement Services <i>[Description of disclosure requirement]</i></li></ul>			

**SAMPLE FOR DISCUSSION PURPOSES ONLY. DO NOT DISTRIBUTE.**

**Student Financial Assistance**

	Please enter text or the URL for your web page containing this information. This will be published on the output screen.	Enter contact information for the office or individual responsible for this information. This will <u>not</u> be published on the output screen.	Enter relevant notes that may help you update the information in this template, such as where the information is located or when a policy was last updated. This will <u>not</u> be published on the output screen.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assistance Available From Federal, State, Local, and Institutional Programs <i>[Description of disclosure requirement]</i></li> </ul>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Federal Student Financial Aid Penalties for Drug Law Violations <i>[Description of disclosure requirement]</i></li> </ul>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Student Loan Information <i>[Description of disclosure requirement]</i></li> </ul>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o Initial Loan Counseling for Student Borrowers <i>[Description of disclosure requirement]</i></li> </ul>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o Exit Counseling for Student Borrowers <i>[Description of disclosure requirement]</i></li> </ul>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o Institutional Code of Conduct for Education Loans <i>[Description of disclosure requirement]</i></li> </ul>			

**SAMPLE FOR DISCUSSION PURPOSES ONLY. DO NOT DISTRIBUTE.**

o Preferred Lender Lists <i>[Description of disclosure requirement]</i>			
o Preferred Lender Arrangements <i>[Description of disclosure requirement]</i>			



**SAMPLE FOR DISCUSSION PURPOSES ONLY. DO NOT DISTRIBUTE.**

<b>Health and Safety</b>			
	Please enter text or the URL for your web page containing this information. This will be published on the output screen.	Enter contact information for the office or individual responsible for this information. This will <u>not</u> be published on the output screen.	Enter relevant notes that may help you update the information in this template, such as where the information is located or when a policy was last updated. This will <u>not</u> be published on the output screen.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Drug and Alcohol Abuse Prevention Program <i>[Description of requirement]</i></li> </ul>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Vaccination Policies <i>[Description of requirement]</i></li> </ul>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Campus Security Policies, Crime Statistics and Crime Log <i>[Description of requirement]</i></li> </ul>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fire Safety Policies, Fire Statistics and Fire Log (On-Campus Housing Facilities) <i>[Description of requirement]</i></li> </ul>			

**SAMPLE FOR DISCUSSION PURPOSES ONLY. DO NOT DISTRIBUTE.**

<b>Student Outcomes</b>			
	Please enter text or the URL for your web page containing this information. This will be published on the output screen.	Enter contact information for the office or individual responsible for this information. This will <u>not</u> be published on the output screen.	Enter relevant notes that may help you update the information in this template, such as where the information is located or when a policy was last updated. This will <u>not</u> be published on the output screen.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Retention Rate <i>[Description of requirement]</i></li> </ul>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Graduation Rates (Student Right-to-Know Act) <i>[Description of requirement]</i></li> </ul>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Transfer-out Rates (Student Right-to-Know Act) <i>[Description of requirement]</i></li> </ul>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Graduation Rates for Students Receiving Athletically Related Student Aid (Student Right-to-Know Act) <i>[Description of requirement]</i></li> </ul>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Transfer-out Rates for Students Receiving Athletically Related Student Aid (Student Right-to-Know Act) <i>[Description of requirement]</i></li> </ul>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Job Placement for Graduates <i>[Description of requirement]</i></li> </ul>			

**SAMPLE FOR DISCUSSION PURPOSES ONLY. DO NOT DISTRIBUTE.**

<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Job Placement Rates for Graduates <i>[Description of requirement]</i></li></ul>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Graduate and Professional Education Placement for Graduates <i>[Description of requirement]</i></li></ul>			

**Screenshots of Sample Institutional Website Pages  
for Consumer Groups**

# INSTITUTION A

[About Us](#) | [Admissions](#) | [Academics](#) | [Research](#) | [Libraries](#) | [Athletics](#) | [Students](#) | [Alumni](#) | [Faculty & Staff](#) | [Community](#) | [Search](#)

## UPCOMING EVENTS

### “Students in the Arts” Exhibition

Through April 22  
Morris Library

### Lifelong Learning Institute Open House

Wednesday, March 21  
10 a.m. to 1 p.m.

### Commencement

Sunday, May 13  
2 p.m.

[Consumer Information](#) | [Net Price Calculator](#) | [Legal Notices](#)

Institution A • Anytown, USA • 1-555-555-5555



**INSTITUTION A**

# Consumer Information

**Click on the links below for more information:**

- Notice of Availability of Institutional and Financial Aid Information
- Contact Information for Assistance in Obtaining Institutional or Financial Aid Information
- General Institutional Information
- Teacher Preparation Program Report
- Student Financial Assistance
- Health and Safety
- Student Outcomes
- Intercollegiate Athletic Program Participation Rates and Financial Support Data (Equity in Athletics Disclosure Act)
- Voter Registration

Welcome to Institution A's Consumer Information website.

The Higher Education Opportunity Act of 2008 requires higher education institutions

To the left are general consumer information topic areas, which provide links to refer

INSTITUTION A

# Consumer Information



Click on the links below for more information.

- [Notice of Availability of Institutional](#)

Click on the links below for more information:

- [Notice of Availability of Institutional and Financial Aid Information](#)
- [Contact Information for Assistance in Obtaining Institutional or Financial Aid Information](#)
- [General Institutional Information](#)
- [Teacher Preparation Program Report](#)
- [Student Financial Assistance](#)
- [Health and Safety](#)
- [Student Outcomes](#)
- [Intercollegiate Athletic Program Participation Rates and Financial Support Data \(Equity in Athletics Disclosure Act\)](#)
- [Voter Registration](#)

Click on the links below for more information.

- [Assistance Available From Federal,](#)

Click on the links below for more information:

- [Drug and Alcohol Abuse Prevention Program](#)
- [Vaccination Policies](#)
- [Campus Security Policies, Crime Statistics and Crime Log](#)
- [Fire Safety Policies, Fire Statistics and Fire Log \(On-Campus Housing Facilities\)](#)

id



INSTITUTION A

# Consumer Information

Click on the links below for more information:

Click on the links below for more information:

- [Notice of Availability of Institutional and Financial Aid Information](#)
- [Contact Information for Assistance in Obtaining Institutional or Financial Aid Information](#)
- [General Institutional Information](#)
- [Teacher Preparation Program Report](#)
- [Student Financial Assistance](#)
- [Health and Safety](#)
- [Student Outcomes](#)
- [Intercollegiate Athletic Program Participation Rates and Financial Support Data \(Equity in Athletics Disclosure Act\)](#)
- [Voter Registration](#)

Click on the link below for more information:

- [Go Back](#)
- **GRADUATION RATES (STUDENT RIGHT-TO-KNOW ACT)**  
Graduation rates for entering full-time, first-time students

	2002	2003	2004	2005
<b>Number in Cohort</b>	<b>3,401</b>	<b>3,433</b>	<b>3,442</b>	<b>3,506</b>
<b>% Graduating within 4 Years</b>	<b>67.1</b>	<b>61.3</b>	<b>61.8</b>	<b>65.2</b>
Males	58.2	53.9	54.1	56.3
Females	72.8	66.9	67.3	71.3
African-Americans	41.1	44.4	38.7	45.2
Asians	62.0	59.9	51.6	61.3
Hispanics	66.1	54.5	54.8	57.5
Whites	69.0	63.3	64.5	67.2
Residents	55.7	49.4	51.0	53.5
Nonresidents	73.7	69.1	68.0	71.0
<b>% Graduating within 5 years</b>	<b>77.9</b>	<b>73.7</b>	<b>74.9</b>	<b>76.0</b>
Males	72.7	69.4	71.8	69.9
Females	81.2	76.9	77.1	80.3



## **Ranking Form for Consumer Focus Groups**

## Disclosure Information Focus Group

### Ranking of information within each category

For each category, please rank in order of importance the types of information that are most important to you in the college search process. Follow the instructions at the top of each listing of information for how many pieces of information within that category should be ranked.

Category	Information
<b>General Institutional Information</b>	<p>Rank your <b>top six</b> pieces of information. Rank in order of importance to you, with 1 being the most important and 6 being the least.</p> <p>___ Privacy of Student Records—Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)</p> <p>___ Facilities and Services for Students with Disabilities</p> <p>___ Student Diversity</p> <p>___ Price of Attendance</p> <p>___ Net Price Calculator</p> <p>___ Refund Policy and Requirements for Withdrawal and Return of Federal Financial Aid</p> <p>___ Textbook Information</p> <p>___ Educational Program</p> <p>___ Instructional Facilities</p> <p>___ Faculty</p> <p>___ Transfer of Credit Policies and Articulation Agreements</p> <p>___ Accreditation, Approval, and Licensure of Institution and Programs</p> <p>___ Copyright Infringement—Policies and Sanctions</p> <p>___ Computer Use and File Sharing</p> <p>___ Student Activities</p> <p>___ Career and Job Placement Services</p>

<p><b>Student Financial Assistance</b></p>	<p>Rank <b>all three</b> pieces of information. Rank in order of importance to you, with 1 being the most important and 3 being the least.</p> <p>___ Assistance Available From Federal, State, Local, and Institutional Programs</p> <p>___ Federal Student Financial Aid Penalties for Drug Law Violations</p> <p>___ Student Loan Information</p> <p><b>Please rank the following in order of importance on a scale of 1-5 (1 = most important; 5 = least important)</b></p> <p>___ Initial Loan Counseling for Student Borrowers</p> <p>___ Exit Counseling for Student Borrowers</p> <p>___ Institutional Code of Conduct for Education Loans</p> <p>___ Preferred Lender Lists</p> <p>___ Preferred Lender Arrangements</p>
<p><b>Health and Safety</b></p>	<p>Rank <b>all four</b> pieces of information. Rank in order of importance to you, with 1 being the most important and 4 being the least.</p> <p>___ Drug and Alcohol Abuse Prevention Program</p> <p>___ Vaccination Policies</p> <p>___ Campus Security Policies, Crime Statistics and Crime Log</p> <p>___ Fire Safety Policies, Fire Statistics and Fire Log (On-Campus Housing Facilities)</p>
<p><b>Student Outcomes</b></p>	<p>Rank your <b>top six</b> pieces of information. Rank in order of importance to you, with 1 being the most important and 6 being the least.</p> <p>___ Retention Rate</p> <p>___ Graduation Rates (Student Right-to-Know Act)</p> <p>___ Transfer-out Rates (Student Right-to-Know Act)</p> <p>___ Graduation Rates for Students Receiving Athletically Related Student Aid (Student Right-to-Know Act)</p> <p>___ Transfer-out Rates for Students Receiving Athletically Related Student Aid (Student Right-to-Know Act)</p> <p>___ Job Placement for Graduates</p> <p>___ Job Placement Rates for Graduates</p> <p>___ Graduate and Professional Education Placement for Graduates</p>

## **Attachment VI**

### **Consent Forms**

## Attachment VI—Consent Forms

### Disclosure Information Focus Group Participant Informed Consent – Institutional Representatives

Westat, a social science research company in Rockville, MD, is working with the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) of the U.S. Department of Education on a project related to the information colleges must disclose on their websites for prospective college students and the general public. Westat is conducting focus groups for this project. Project staff want to learn about any challenges institutions may have in meeting their disclosure responsibilities. Focus group participants will be asked questions about their familiarity with the disclosure items. Participants will discuss any challenges collecting and preparing this information and what tools might be useful to them. Participants will also be asked to review a sample template that could be used to organize and present disclosure information on their websites.

Your participation in the focus group is important but voluntary. If you choose to participate, you can leave the focus group at any time. There are no risks for participating in this focus group. The information shared in this group will be used to help NCES develop tools to assist institutions in meeting their disclosure responsibilities.

This focus group has been approved by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB# 1800-0011). The focus group will last about 90 minutes and will be conducted by a trained moderator from Westat; the discussion will be audio recorded. After the focus group is over, you will receive \$75 in appreciation for your time.

The information obtained during the focus group, including audio recordings, will be provided to Westat staff working on this project. The information obtained during the focus group will be combined with the responses of others in a summary report that does not identify you as an individual. Your answers may be used only for statistical purposes and may not be disclosed, or used, in identifiable form for any other purpose except as required by law [Education Sciences Reform Act of 2002 (ESRA 2002) 20 U.S.C., § 9573]. After the report is finalized and the project is over, the audio recordings will be destroyed.

If you have any questions about this project, contact Denise Glover at Westat at 301-251-2269 or [deniseglover@westat.com](mailto:deniseglover@westat.com), or Archie Cubarrubia at NCES at [archie.cubarrubia@ed.gov](mailto:archie.cubarrubia@ed.gov).

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**I have read the above document describing the voluntary nature, response confidentiality, and procedures for this research study.**

I, \_\_\_\_\_ [print name], agree to participate in the NCES Disclosure Information focus group and consent to the audio recording of the discussion. I also understand that my participation is voluntary and that the resulting report will not identify my school or me.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Participant's Signature

\_\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

## **Disclosure Information Focus Group Participant Informed Consent – Parents**

Westat, a social science research company in Rockville, Maryland, is working with the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) of the U.S. Department of Education on a study about the information colleges must disclose on their websites for prospective college students and their families. Westat is conducting focus groups for this project. Project staff want to learn if consumers are aware of the disclosure requirements and what disclosure information is most important to them in the college search process. Focus group participants will also discuss how the information could be better presented on college websites.

Participation in the focus group is important but voluntary. There are no risks for you or your child to participate in this focus group. The information shared in this group will be used to help NCES potentially develop a template for how the disclosure information might be presented on institutions' websites.

This focus group has been approved by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB# 1800-0011). The focus group will last about 90 minutes and will be conducted by a trained moderator from Westat. During this time, the moderator will lead a discussion about the types of disclosure information you think are most helpful in conducting a college search. The group will also discuss how such information could be made more user-friendly on institutions' websites. The discussion will be audio recorded. After the focus group is over, you and your child will receive **\$100** in appreciation for your time.

The information obtained during the focus group, including audio recordings, will be provided to Westat staff working on this project. Additionally, NCES staff will observe the focus group. The information obtained during the focus group will be combined with the responses of others in a summary report that does not identify you or your child as individuals. Your answers may be used only for statistical purposes and may not be disclosed, or used, in identifiable form for any other purpose except as required by law [Education Sciences Reform Act of 2002 (ESRA 2002) 20 U.S.C., § 9573]. After the report is finalized and the project is over, the audio recordings will be destroyed.

If you have any questions about this project, you can contact Denise Glover at Westat at 301-251-2269 or [deniseglover@westat.com](mailto:deniseglover@westat.com), or Archie Cubarrubia at NCES at [archie.cubarrubia@ed.gov](mailto:archie.cubarrubia@ed.gov).

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**I have read the above document describing the voluntary nature, response confidentiality, and procedures for this research study.**

[If your child is under 18 years old] My son/daughter, \_\_\_\_\_, has my permission to participate in the NCES Disclosure Information focus group and my consent to the audio recording of the discussion.

[For all parents] I, \_\_\_\_\_ [print name], agree to participate with my child in the NCES Disclosure Information focus group and consent to the audio recording of the discussion. I also understand that our participation is voluntary and that the resulting report will not identify my child or me.

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Signature of Parent/Guardian

\_\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

## **Disclosure Information Focus Group Participant Informed Consent – High School Students**

Westat, a social science research company in Rockville, Maryland, is working with the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) of the U.S. Department of Education on a study about the information colleges must disclose on their websites for prospective college students and their families. Westat is conducting focus groups for this project. Project staff want to learn if consumers are aware of the disclosure requirements and what disclosure information is most important to them in the college search process. Focus group participants will also discuss how the information could be better presented on college websites.

Participation in the focus group is important but voluntary. There are no risks for you to participate in this focus group. The information shared in this group will be used to help NCES potentially develop a template for how the disclosure information might be presented on institutions' websites.

This focus group has been approved by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB# 1800-0011). The focus group will last about 90 minutes and will be conducted by a trained moderator from Westat. During this time, the moderator will lead a discussion about the types of disclosure information you think are most helpful in conducting a college search. The group will also discuss how such information could be made more user-friendly on institutions' websites. The discussion will be audio recorded. After the focus group is over, you and your parent will receive **\$100** in appreciation for your time.

The information obtained during the focus group, including audio recordings, will be provided to Westat staff working on this project. Additionally, NCES staff will observe the focus group. The information obtained during the focus group will be combined with the responses of others in a summary report that does not identify you as an individual. Your answers may be used only for statistical purposes and may not be disclosed, or used, in identifiable form for any other purpose except as required by law [Education Sciences Reform Act of 2002 (ESRA 2002) 20 U.S.C., § 9573]. After the report is finalized and the project is over, the audio recordings will be destroyed.

If you have any questions about this project, you can contact Denise Glover at Westat at 301-251-2269 or [deniseglover@westat.com](mailto:deniseglover@westat.com), or Archie Cubarrubia at NCES at [archie.cubarrubia@ed.gov](mailto:archie.cubarrubia@ed.gov).

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**I have read the above document describing the voluntary nature, response confidentiality, and procedures for this research study.**

I, \_\_\_\_\_ [print name], agree to participate in the NCES Disclosure Information focus group and consent to the audio recording of the discussion.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Student

\_\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

## **Disclosure Information Focus Group Participant Informed Consent – Guidance Counselors**

Westat, a social science research company in Rockville, Maryland, is working with the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) of the U.S. Department of Education on a study about the information colleges must disclose on their websites for prospective college students and their families. Westat is conducting focus groups for this project. Project staff want to learn if consumers are aware of the disclosure requirements and what disclosure information is most important to them in the college search process. Focus group participants will also discuss how the information could be better presented on college websites.

Your participation in the focus group is important but voluntary. If you choose to participate, you can leave the focus group at any time. There are no risks for participating in this focus group. The information shared in this group will be used to help NCES potentially develop a template for how the disclosure information might be presented on college websites.

This focus group has been approved by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB# 1800-0011). The focus group will last about 90 minutes and will be conducted by a trained moderator from Westat. During this time, the moderator will lead a discussion about the types of disclosure information you think are most helpful in conducting a college search. The group will also discuss how such information could be made more user-friendly on institutions' websites. The discussion will be audio recorded. After the focus group is over, you will receive \$75 in appreciation for your time.

The information obtained during the focus group, including audio recordings, will be provided to Westat staff working on this project. Additionally, NCES staff will observe the focus group. The information obtained during the focus group will be combined with the responses of others in a summary report that does not identify you as an individual. Your answers may be used only for statistical purposes and may not be disclosed, or used, in identifiable form for any other purpose except as required by law [Education Sciences Reform Act of 2002 (ESRA 2002) 20 U.S.C., § 9573]. After the report is finalized and the project is over, the audio recordings will be destroyed.

If you have any questions about this project, contact Denise Glover at Westat at 301-251-2269 or [deniseglover@westat.com](mailto:deniseglover@westat.com), or Archie Cubarrubia at NCES at [archie.cubarrubia@ed.gov](mailto:archie.cubarrubia@ed.gov).

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**I have read the above document describing the voluntary nature, response confidentiality, and procedures for this research study.**

I, \_\_\_\_\_ [print name], agree to participate in the NCES Disclosure Information focus group and consent to the audio recording of the discussion.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Participant's Signature

\_\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_\_  
Date