

Volume I:

Postsecondary Education Quick Information System (PEQIS) 19: Services and Support Programs for Military Service Members and Veterans, 2012–13

OMB# 1850-0733 v. 28

April 2, 2013
National Center for Education Statistics
U.S. Department of Education

Justification

The National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), U.S. Department of Education (ED), requests OMB approval under the NCES system clearance for the Quick Response Information System (QRIS) (OMB #1850-0733) to conduct data collection for the Postsecondary Education Quick Information System (PEQIS) survey #19 on services and support programs available to veteran and military students at postsecondary institutions. The survey will provide the first nationally representative data about the prevalence of various types of services and support programs for military service members and veterans, with a First Look report on the results to be released in 2014.

According to the Veterans Administration, over 500,000 veterans have used the Post 9/11 G.I. Bill for postsecondary education. This represents the largest increase in student veterans since the post World War II era and this number is expected to rise. The unique needs of student veterans often require additional or alternative academic and personal support programs and services than traditional students utilize. Executive Order 13607, issued in 2012, specified Principles of Excellence for educational institutions to follow in working with students who are military service members and veterans. Currently, there are no national data available on the prevalence and characteristics of support programs and services for veterans and active-duty service members at postsecondary institutions. The proposed survey will assess the prevalence of support programs and services designed and offered specifically to these types of students such as customized information about financial education benefits, customized or additional academic advising, career planning/services, mental health counseling, and tutorial assistance using VA educational benefits. Other topics the survey addresses are what institutions' policies are for charging veterans in-state tuition, what types of students are tracked by institutions, and the availability of training for postsecondary staff members on issues specific to veterans and service members.

The PEQIS survey is authorized under the Education Science Reform Act of 2002 (ERSA 2002, 20 U.S.C. 9543), which authorizes NCES to collect and report statistical data related to education in the United States. NCES has contracted Westat for this survey.

Design

Overview of Survey Development

The survey reflects topics and issues identified through literature review, with modifications based on three rounds of feasibility calls and two rounds of pretest calls (OMB# 1850-0803) with college personnel most knowledgeable about services and programs for military service members and veterans. Three rounds of feasibility calls, two with nine respondents, and one with seven respondents, were conducted from August through November 2012 (OMB# 1850-0803 v.68). The feasibility calls were used to explore potential new survey items, and identify and correct issues with the content and format of the survey before conducting the pretest. Respondents were asked to review but not complete the questionnaire and then participate in a short telephone interview with Westat to provide feedback on the questionnaire. The resulting draft of the questionnaire was then reviewed by the NCES Quality Review Board (QRB) and revised accordingly to prepare it for the pretest.

Two rounds of pretest calls, one with eight respondents and one with nine respondents, were conducted from January through March 2013 (OMB# 1850-0803 v.76). In both rounds of pretest calls, respondents were asked to complete the questionnaire and participate in a telephone debriefing with Westat to provide feedback on the questionnaire. Completed questionnaires were collected by fax prior to the debriefing with each respondent. The purpose of the pretests was to verify that all questions and corresponding instructions were clear and unambiguous, to determine if the information would be readily accessible to respondents, and to determine whether the burden on respondents could be reduced further. Changes to the questionnaires were made based on the feedback received from the pretests, and documented in a memorandum summarizing the pretest results. Changes from the draft reviewed by OMB for the pretest and the current draft are summarized in the crosswalk of changes between 1-8-13 and 3-18-13. The revised questionnaire (Attachment 1) is being submitted with this request for OMB clearance.

NCES Review and Consultations Outside of Agency

The NCES QRB, consisting of staff from the NCES Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS) and other postsecondary surveys (Jessica Shedd, Tara Lawley, and Matthew Soldner), the Office of Innovation and Improvement (OII) in the U.S. Department of Education (Karen Gross and Charles Boyer), and the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) (Thomas Erickson) reviewed a draft questionnaire prior to the feasibility calls, and again prior to the submission for the pretest calls.

Assurance of Confidentiality

Data to be collected will not be released to the public with institutional or personal identifiers attached. Data will be presented in aggregate statistical form only. In addition, each data file undergoes extensive disclosure risk analysis and is reviewed by the NCES/IES Disclosure Review Board before use in generating report analyses and before release as a public use data file. Respondents will be assured that their participation in the survey is voluntary and that their answers may be used only for statistical purposes and may not be disclosed, or used, in identifiable form for any other purpose unless otherwise compelled by law (Education Sciences Reform Act of 2002, 20 U.S.C. § 9573).

Description of Sample and Burden

The proposed PEQIS survey will collect data from the PEQIS panel, a nationally representative sample of approximately 1,600 4-year and 2-year Title IV degree-granting postsecondary institutions in the 50 states and the District of Columbia. The PEQIS data collection will be accomplished by means of a self-administered survey. Each respondent will have the option of completing the survey using a paper questionnaire or a Web version of the questionnaire. The questionnaire is limited to three pages of items readily available to respondents and can be completed by most respondents in 30 minutes or less. These procedures are typical for PEQIS surveys and results in minimum burden on respondents.

Questionnaire packages, including information needed to access the Web survey, will be mailed to the PEQIS coordinator of institutions in the PEQIS panel in June 2013. The cover letter and questionnaire will include a description of the most appropriate respondent. Follow-up for nonresponse will be conducted both by mail and telephone and will begin about 3 weeks after the questionnaires have been mailed to the institutions. Experienced telephone interviewers will be trained to conduct the nonresponse follow-up and will be monitored by Westat supervisory personnel. Telephone nonresponse follow-up is used to prompt respondents to complete and submit the survey by web, mail, or fax and is expected to take about 5 minutes.

Table 1. Estimated burden for data collection and nonresponse follow-up: PEQIS 19

Type of collection	Sample size	Estimated response rate (percent)	Estimated number of respondents	Estimated number of responses	Total burden hours per respondent	Respondent burden hours
Initial institution contact	1,600	100%	1,600	1,600	.083	133
Questionnaire	1,600	90%	1,440	1,440	.500	720
Nonresponse follow-up call	1,600	75%	1,200	1,200	.083	100
Total burden.....	-	-	1,600	4,240	-	953

The estimated burden time for sampled institutions to review the introductory letter requesting their participation (initial contact) is 5 minutes per institution for a total of 133 respondent burden hours (table 1). The initial sample of 1,600 schools will yield about 1,440 completed questionnaires, assuming a response rate of 90 percent. Based on a response burden of approximately 30 minutes per completed questionnaire, the estimated response burden to complete the survey is estimated to be about 720 hours.¹ It is anticipated that about 25 percent of the sample will have returned the completed survey before nonrespondent follow-up begins and about 75 percent of the sample (i.e., 1,200 institutions) will receive a nonresponse follow-up call that will take about 5 minutes. The

¹ This estimate is the average amount of time postsecondary respondents reported the questionnaire took to complete during the two pretest rounds.

total estimated burden time for nonresponse follow-up is about 100 hours. The total number of burden hours for data collection and nonresponse follow-up is about 953 hours.

Procedures and Data Collection Instrument

A questionnaire, cover letter (Attachment 2), and Web information sheet (Attachment 3) will be mailed to each institution in the PEQIS panel. The cover letter requests the participation of the institution and introduces the purpose and content of the survey. It also notes that the survey should be completed by the person at the institution most knowledgeable about services and support programs for military service members and veterans. The cover letter also includes instructions on how to complete and return the survey, as well as contact information in case of questions. The Web information sheet is included in the mailing to provide information about the option to complete a Web version of the survey. Confidentiality and voluntary language is cited on the cover letter and the front page of the survey. All sampled institutions that do not complete a survey within 3 weeks after the initial mailing of the survey will receive a nonresponse follow-up letter (Attachment 4), another copy of the Web information sheet, and a brief, scripted telephone call (Attachment 5) prompting the respondent to return a completed survey via the Web, fax or mail.

Questionnaire

The questionnaire is designed to collect information on the services and support programs available to students who are military service members and veterans at the postsecondary institution. The time frame for the survey is the 12-month 2012–13 academic year, except for questions 24–28, which ask about enrollment during the fall of 2012. A definition is provided prior to question 1 to clarify the types of students included in the survey. This definition is based on Executive Order 13607 which refers to support for, “active-duty service members, reservists, members of the National Guard, veterans, and military families.” The instrument is discussed below.

Question 1 asks whether the institution enrolled any military service members, veterans, or dependents of military service members and veterans during the 12-month 2012–13 academic year. Respondents that answer “no” are asked to return the survey without answering any additional questions.

Question 2 asks if the institution uses specific methods to identify students who are military service members or veterans. This question gathers information about how postsecondary institutions are identifying these students. Based on the pretest calls and feasibility calls, this is different than who is included in the enrollment counts.

Question 3 asks if the institution has a dedicated social space for gathering (e.g., a student lounge) reserved specifically for military service members and veterans. This question is included because some institutions are designating separate space(s) for military service members and veterans to gather to help with the transition to civilian life and to provide a place where they feel comfortable.

Question 4 asks if the institution has a student military or veteran organization for students. This question is included to find out about specific support groups available to assist in the integration of military service members and veterans into the postsecondary institution.

Question 5 asks if the institution reserves university owned or operated housing (on or off-campus) specifically for military service members and veterans. This question is included because one of the services an institution can provide to help with the transition to civilian life is to reserve sections of housing for military service members and veterans. These students are typically older and have different life experiences than other students in university owned or operated housing, and they may not feel comfortable sharing housing with many students in the general student population.

Question 6 asks if the institution provides customized information to individual military service members and veterans about both the military and non-military financial education benefits available to them. This question is included to find out whether institutions are providing information specifically geared towards students who are active duty military or veterans and their dependents, with the information customized for individuals in those groups.

Question 7 asks if the institution has a staff member or office designated as the point of contact for military service members and veterans seeking information on the programs and services available to them.

Question 8 asks if the institution offers any courses or sections of courses specifically for military service members or veterans. Respondents are asked not to include military science or ROTC courses. This question provides information about the integration of military service members and veterans into courses for the general student population, and about special courses provided for them (e.g., to help them hone the skills critical for success at the postsecondary level, or to address issues specific to this population such as combat experiences).

Question 9 asks if the institution awards academic credit to students for military training received during active-duty service. This question provides information about the extent to which institutions provide at least some academic credit for military training.

Question 10 asks if the institution provides admissions events or special admissions information sessions customized for prospective students who are military service members or veterans. Question 11 asks if the institution customizes the student orientation program for military service members or veterans. These questions are included because some postsecondary institutions customize their orientation programs and/or admissions events for military service members and veterans since their needs may be different than other populations of students entering the institution.

Question 12 asks if the institution has a formal mentoring or advising program in which faculty or staff members who are current or former members of the military mentor students who are military service members or veterans. Question 13 asks if the institution has a veteran-to-veteran peer mentoring program for military service members or veterans. Question 14 asks if the institution offers group counseling for students who are military service members or veterans. These items are included to find out about mentoring and counseling groups available to assist in the integration of military service members and veterans into the postsecondary institution.

Question 15 asks if the institution offers customized or additional support services specifically for military service members and veterans in certain areas, such as academic support/tutoring, financial aid counseling, and study skills workshops. This question provides information about additional support services beyond those provided to all students taking courses through the institution.

Question 16 asks if the institution provides information about or referrals for off-campus health-related services (medical/health services, counseling or mental health services) for military service members or veterans.

Question 17 asks if the institution offers training for faculty or staff in areas such as mental and physical health issues associated with and resulting from military service, and student transition from military life to civilian life. For those areas in which the institution offers training, the question asks whether the training is mandatory for faculty or staff.

Question 18 asks if the institution provides information to current or prospective students about the programs and services available to military service members and veterans via various communication methods (mail, email, website, social media, brochures, and bulletin boards). Question 19 asks if the institution provides information to prospective students at specific events (college admissions fairs and information fairs/events held on military bases) about the programs and services available to military service members and veterans. These questions gather information about the methods used to provide information and the places/events at which institutions are communicating information about programs and services available to military service members and veterans.

Question 20 asks if the institution has assisted students in applying for tutorial assistance using VA educational benefits in the last 12 months. Question 21 asks if the institution offers VA work-study opportunities. These items are included because military service members and veterans and their dependents receiving education benefits may qualify for VA tutorial benefits and VA work-study.

Question 22 asks whether veterans are exempt from paying tuition at the institution. Based on feedback from the pretest calls, some institutions do not charge veterans tuition. The question is also meant to set up the skip for question 23 which asks about the institution's policy for charging veterans in-state tuition. If respondents answer "yes" to question 22, they are instructed to skip to question 24. If they answer "no," they continue with question 23.

Question 23 asks about the institution's policy for charging veterans in-state tuition rates. Respondents are asked to exclude active-duty personnel stationed in the state. This question will gather information about whether postsecondary institutions are waiving in-state tuition residency requirements for military service members and veterans. If in-state tuition does not apply to the institution, respondents skip to question 24.

Question 24 asks if the institution enrolled any military service members, veterans, or dependents of military service members and veterans in the fall of 2012. If an institution indicates that they did enroll these types of students in fall 2012, then questions 25 through 27 will be completed. Question 25 asks how many military service members and veterans, and dependents of military service members and veterans were enrolled during the fall of 2012. The question asks for separate undergraduate-level and graduate-level student counts. The fall of 2012 is used because it aligns with the unduplicated fall enrollment counts that institutions report to IPEDS.

Question 26 asks which types of students are included in the enrollment counts reported in question 25. This question provides information about the types of students included in question 25 and provides a way to collect information about how institutions keep their records.

Question 27 asks how many of the students reported in the enrollment counts at question 25 are dependents of military service members or veterans who received military or veteran's financial education benefits. This question also asks for undergraduate-level and graduate-level student counts. The respondent has the option of skipping the question if the institution cannot report these enrollments separately.

Question 28 asks about the types of dependents included (Chapter 33, Chapter 35, other) in the enrollment counts report in question 27. This question is included in order to find out what types of dependents institutions are tracking. This will help identify which institutions are providing only partial counts of dependents.

Survey Cost and Time Schedule

The survey is estimated to cost the federal government about \$500,000, including about \$460,000 for contractual costs and \$40,000 for salaries and expenses. Contractual costs include the costs for survey preparation, data collection, data analysis, and report preparation.

The survey will be mailed in June 2013. About 3 weeks after mail out of the survey, Westat will begin telephone follow-up for nonresponse. Data collection is scheduled to end about 18 weeks after initial mail out.

Plan for Tabulation and Publication

The *First Look* report will be released on the NCES website in 2014 and include explanatory text and tables. Institutions in the PEQIS panel will be notified when NCES releases the report. A public use data file will also be released on the NCES website. Survey responses will be weighted to produce national estimates. Tabulations will be produced for each data item. For PEQIS 19, crosstabulations of data items will be made with selected classification variables, such as the following:

- Type of institution (2-year public, 2-year private, 4-year public, 4-year private)
- Size of institution (less than 3,000; 3,000–9,999; 10,000 or more)

Statistical Methodology

Reviewing Statisticians

John Ralph, of NCES, is the Program Officer for this survey. Adam Chu, Senior Statistician, Westat, was consulted about the statistical aspects of the design. Westat is the contractor currently conducting the QRIS surveys for NCES.

Respondent Universe and Statistical Methodology

This survey will be sent to approximately 1,600 postsecondary institutions in the PEQIS panel. The sampling frame for the PEQIS panel was constructed from the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (PEQIS) “Institutional Characteristics” file. Institutions eligible for the PEQIS frame included 2-year and 4-year (including graduate-level) Title IV-eligible degree granting institutions located in the 50 states and the District of Columbia: a total of approximately 4,300 institutions.

The PEQIS sampling frame was stratified by instructional level (4-year, 2-year), control (public, private not-for-profit), highest level of offering (doctor’s/first professional, master’s, bachelor’s, less than bachelor’s), and total enrollment. Within each strata, institutions were sorted by region (Northeast, Southeast, Central, West), and by whether the institution had a relatively high minority enrollment. The sample of institutions was allocated to the strata in proportion to the aggregate square root of total enrollment. Institutions within a stratum were sampled with equal probabilities of selection.

Crosswalk of Survey Item Changes Between Pretest and Full Scale (1-8-13 and 3-18-13)

1-8-13 Questionnaire Draft		3-18-13 Questionnaire Draft
-		Q1/NEW
Q1	is now	Q2/same
Q2	is now	Q3/same
Q3	is now	Q5/same
Q4	is now	Q6/instructions in parentheses modified only
Q5	is now	Q7/same
Q6	is now	Q8/modified
Q7	is now	Deleted/combined with new Q8
Q8	is now	Q9/same
Q9	is now	Q11/same
Q10	is now	Q10/slightly modified
Q11	is now	Separated into new Q4, Q13, and Q14
Q12	is now	Q12/same
Q13	is now	Q15/same
Q14	is now	Q16/modified; same response options
Q15	is now	Q17/same; deleted response option d
Q16	is now	Q18/same; added example to response option d; moved response options g and h into new Q19; deleted response option i
Q17	is now	Q20/modified
Q18	is now	Q21/same
Q19	is now	Deleted
Q20	is now	Q23/modified; instructions in parentheses added; response options modified
Q21	is now	Q24/same
Q22	is now	Q25/same; response options modified
Q23	is now	Q26/same
Q24	is now	Q27/same; instructions in italics modified; response options modified
-		Q4 NEW
-		Q13 NEW
-		Q14 NEW
-		Q19 NEW
-		Q22 NEW
-		Q28 NEW