

**Attachment 2: SED Questionnaire Item Issues**

Questionnaire Item Number	Issues for Cognitive Testing
A2 and A8d Primary and interdisciplinary fields of dissertation research, primary field of study	<p>We will explore respondents' ability to name their fields of study in their own words and to match field of study to one of the categories on the list.</p> <p>Respondent interpretation of "interdisciplinary" will be explored to gain a better understanding of how they understand this term. We will focus on issues of whether respondents in interdisciplinary programs have difficulty identifying a field of study.</p> <p>A2 (primary field of dissertation research), A3 (department that supervised doctoral studies), and A8d (primary field of doctoral study) are often seen as redundant by respondents. We will examine ways to clarify question intent and eliminate the perceived redundancy of these questions.</p>
A3 Department that supervised doctoral studies	<p>We will examine whether respondents have issues determining how to identify the department, interdisciplinary committee, center, or institute that supervised their doctoral studies. This question may be more difficult for respondents in interdisciplinary programs.</p>
A8 - A9 Month/year degree started and granted	<p>Research on the timeline variables has revealed that discrepancies in the timeline data are common. Some potential causes of discrepancies include memory erosion and nontraditional educational pathways. We are developing new questions that address nontraditional degrees and considering options for reordering of the educational history items, which are currently non-chronological, to accord more closely with the recall order that respondents may prefer (forward chronological order).</p>
A9 Postsecondary degree	<p>The term "postsecondary" may be unclear to some respondents. We will explore wording that clarifies the meaning of this term.</p>
A10 Master's degree prerequisite	<p>Respondent understanding of this item will be investigated. This item was intended to address timeline issues that arise when students are in joint programs.</p>
A11 First entry into grad school	<p>Respondents vary in the interpretation of this question. We will clarify what the question is intended to measure and revise the question to increase clarity.</p>
A12 – A13 Years taking coursework, working on dissertation, time off	<p>These questions are intended to capture the total time to degree. We will focus in the cognitive testing on how respondents understand the questions and arrive at their answers. Since these items are not needed for timeline calculation but are often discrepant with the timeline data, we will explore whether these items could be removed from the questionnaire.</p>
B1	<p>The question will be explored to improve clarity. The phrases "intend to live" and "within the next year" are confusing for some respondents.</p>
B2	<p>We will explore understanding of the term "postdoc" and what it means to "intend" to take a postdoc position.</p>

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B3	We will investigate understanding of the response options in this question. Several terms, such as “predoctoral employment,” “definite commitment” may not be well understood. In addition, we will explore whether the response options are mutually exclusive or whether more than one can apply to a doctoral student’s situation.
B4a	The distinctions among the types of further training and study that are represented in the response options are unclear to respondents. The cognitive testing will focus on exploring ways to clarify these terms.
B5 – B6 Main source of postdoc support, type of principal employer	Respondents may have difficulty selecting one of the offered response options. The cognitive testing will explore understanding of the options and ways to clarify them.
B10	We will investigate respondent understanding of the response options. The term “professional services to individuals” is particularly problematic for respondents. Further, respondents can have difficulty deciding on primary vs. secondary work activities.
C2	We will explore how to make the marital status question more suitable for non-traditional families.
C4	We will explore changes to this question to encompass non-traditional families in which “mother” and “father” are not the correct terms for the parents.
C7	We will test new items to capture dual citizenship.
C11	We will include a prompt for respondents who choose not to answer the race question to find out if this is because they prefer not to answer or because they do not identify with any of the races listed in the question.