



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Institute of Education Sciences

MEMORANDUM

DATE: August 18, 2014

TO: Sharon Mar, OMB/OIRA Desk Officer

FROM: Marsha Silverberg, Contract Officer's Representative
National Center for Education Evaluation and Regional Assistance

Subject: Study of Enhanced College Advising in Upward Bound: Response to OMB Questions on Baseline Forms Clearance Package

The U.S. Department of Education (ED) will fulfill a congressional mandate to assess the effectiveness of a promising practice in its long-standing Upward Bound (UB) program by conducting a research demonstration to enhance college advising in UB. The study is being sponsored by ED's Institute of Education Sciences, in collaboration with the Office of Postsecondary Education, and implemented by a team headed by Abt Associates Inc.

An initial Information Collection Request (ICR) for the study, describing the evaluation design and planned baseline data collection, was sent to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) on June 26, 2014 for a 30-day comment period. On August 6, 2014 ED received several comments from OMB regarding the collection. These questions are addressed below.

1. Is there any concern that spillover might occur when control students are seniors as the intervention is eventually rolled out in control schools? How will the study account for this possibility? Did the study consider phasing it into control schools after seniors had graduated?

Yes, due to concern about spillover, the intervention will not roll out in control projects (i.e. projects assigned to Wave 2) until the summer of 2016, after the study treatment and control students have graduated high school. Study control students and treatment students are all in the Class of 2016. Wave 2 (control) projects will implement the intervention with the Class of 2017 and only in their senior year (2016-2017). We made modest changes to the narrative and exhibits in Parts A and B of the package to clarify.

2. How confident is the study team in being able to recruit 200 UB projects to participate in the study?

Over 240 UB projects have signed up for the study, based on announcements at various recent conferences. As of August 12, 2014 198 UB projects have confirmed their participation but we also have a wait list that we will be contacting.

3. Why does the study team need to collect College Entrance Exam data for each student in the study—what outcome of interest does that help to inform?

The College Entrance Exam data are necessary to estimate the extent of undermatching,” which is a key outcome in the study and of great interest to the current administration. Undermatch occurs when a student has a high likelihood of acceptance at colleges with greater selectivity than the college where she enrolls. The SAT/ACT data is used to determine the likelihood of acceptance at colleges in various classifications of selectivity, following methods used in other studies. As an aside, the amount of burden on the College Board or ACT is about the same whether the request for exam data is for all or some subset of the study sample.