

DISCUSSION GUIDE

VIDEO TESTING FOCUS GROUP

1/26~27/2016

FINAL 11/19/15

I. INTRODUCTION AND GROUND RULES

- My name is Dave Glantz and I work for Market Connections, a market research firm in the Washington, DC area. We are conducting this focus group on behalf of the U.S. Department of Education's office of Federal Student Aid, also known as FSA.
- I will be your moderator for tonight's focus group discussion. We'll be here for about two hours to talk about your impressions of student financial aid information provided by the U.S. Department of Education.
- As I mentioned, what we are doing today is called a "focus group."
- As a **participant**, I'd like you to...
 - Participate — I need to hear from everyone.
 - Speak up (but only one talks at a time).
 - Please avoid side conversations.
 - Address your comments to the group.
 - Remember that you're here for who you are, so say what you believe and not what you think others might say.
 - If you don't agree with what somebody says, tell us what you think — there are no wrong answers.
 - What you don't know is just as important as what you do know.
- As the **moderator**, I can be impartial because I have no vested interest in whether you agree or disagree with the things we'll be talking about. I try to ensure...
 - We get through this discussion guide: there are lots of questions and ideas I'd like to talk to you about, so I have to keep things on track.
 - We are audio and videotaping, which is standard practice to help with the accuracy of my report. I also have some colleagues behind the glass, who are involved in this project, and who are interested in hearing your views firsthand.
 - Most importantly, everything we discuss is considered private and for internal research purposes only. Our report will not identify individuals by name.

II. WARM-UP, IMPORTANT VIDEO ELEMENTS

Start by: 0:05

elapsed time: 0:15

Finish by: 0:20

I would first like to have everyone introduce themselves. Please tell me...

- Your first name (or what you like to be called)
 - o HS STUDENTS: The course of study that interests you
 - o PARENTS OF HS STUDENTS: The course(s) of study your child is interested in
 - o POTENTIAL ADULT COLLEGE STUDENTS: Course of study/profession that interests you
 - o BORROWERS IN REPAYMENT: Current or new profession(s) that interest you

- **[SHOW OF HANDS]** How many of you have ever watched an informational video, on any topic?
- Let’s put the video’s specific topic aside for a moment. Generally speaking, what separates a good informational video from a flop? (**PROBE:** length, quality of narration, live action vs. animation, engaging (in what way?), depends on the producer/sponsor of the video, educational value, entertaining, other (SPECIFY))
- Let’s think specifically about what qualities you would expect or prefer from an informational video put out by a federal agency such as the U.S. Department of Education’s Office of Federal Student Aid, or FSA?
- **[FLIPCHART]** What topics would you want to see on video from FSA?

III. EVALUATING FSA VIDEOS

Start by: 0:25

elapsed time: 1:35

Finish by: 2:00

Just to give you some background, you may be aware that the Office of Federal Student Aid provides information and advice on preparing for college, the types of federal financial aid available, how to qualify and apply for aid, and how to manage repayment of your loans.

With that in mind, for the rest of our time together I’ll have you review a number of brief videos being considered by FSA. I’ll show these videos to you, one at a time, so that you can tell me what you think. I’m also going to ask you questions about each of these.

Sound good? Okay, let's get started!

0:27

[HAND OUT GRADING SHEET FOR FIRST ITEM] I will now hand out a grading sheet that covers each of the videos you'll be looking at. And then I want you to do three things before we restart the discussion: silently write down your grade from A-F in terms of how appealing the video is to you personally, and also grade the video for how relevant it is to you in your current situation, how credible its message is, how informative it is, and how likely you are to take some sort of action based on what you saw. So for example, if under "appeal" you do not like the video at all, give it a failing grade of "F". If you like it very much, then give it an "A". And of course, you can also choose any grade in between.

I would also like you to jot down the first thing you said to yourself when viewing the video. When you've finished filling out that information, we'll restart the discussion to get at the reasons behind your grades.

SHOW VIDEO A [TBD] THEY FILL OUT GRADING SHEET

To begin, I want you to look at **[VIDEO A TITLE TBD]**

[THEY WATCH AND GRADE VIDEO]

Let's go around the room and please read your grade for appeal.

- **IF GRADE A or B:** What do you see as the strengths of the video?
- **IF GRADE C, D, F:** What needs to change or improve to increase the appeal of the video? (**PROBE:** visual appeal, length, content, tone, flow, ability to comprehend)
- To what degree has the video impacted your perception of the topic it discussed?
- Thinking of the information presented in the video, did you have enough time to absorb it all, or did you feel rushed?
- To what extent is the video memorable to you?
- Does the video include clear next steps for seeking additional information or taking action?
- How likely are you to take action after having viewed this?
 - o Is there anything about the video that would discourage you from viewing it or taking action? What exactly? (**PROBE:** over-simplified, too complex, other format or mode of communication (**SPECIFY**) would be better for subject matter covered)

0:45

SHOW VIDEO B [TBD] THEY FILL OUT GRADING SHEET

Now I want you to look at [VIDEO B TITLE TBD]

[THEY WATCH AND GRADE VIDEO]

Let's go around the room and please read your grade for appeal.

- **IF GRADE A or B:** What do you see as the strengths of the video?
- **IF GRADE C, D, F:** What needs to change or improve to increase the appeal of the video? (**PROBE:** visual appeal, length, content, tone, flow, ability to comprehend)
- To what degree has the video impacted your perception of the topic it discussed?
- Thinking of the information presented in the video, did you have enough time to absorb it all, or did you feel rushed?
- To what extent is the video memorable to you?
- Does the video include clear next steps for seeking additional information or taking action?
- How likely are you to take action after having viewed this?
 - Is there anything about the video that would discourage you from viewing it or taking action? What exactly? (**PROBE:** over-simplified, too complex, other format or mode of communication (**SPECIFY**) would be better for subject matter covered)

1:00

SHOW VIDEO C [TBD] THEY FILL OUT GRADING SHEET

Now I want you to look at [VIDEO C TITLE TBD]

[THEY WATCH AND GRADE VIDEO]

Let's go around the room and please read your grade for appeal.

- **IF GRADE A or B:** What do you see as the strengths of the video?
- **IF GRADE C, D, F:** What needs to change or improve to increase the appeal of the video? (**PROBE:** visual appeal, length, content, tone, flow, ability to comprehend)
- To what degree has the video impacted your perception of the topic it discussed?

- Thinking of the information presented in the video, did you have enough time to absorb it all, or did you feel rushed?
- To what extent is the video memorable to you?
- Does the video include clear next steps for seeking additional information or taking action?
- How likely are you to take action after having viewed this?
 - Is there anything about the video that would discourage you from viewing it or taking action? What exactly? (**PROBE:** over-simplified, too complex, other format or mode of communication (**SPECIFY**) would be better for subject matter covered)

1:15

SHOW VIDEO D [TBD] THEY FILL OUT GRADING SHEET

Now I want you to look at [VIDEO D TITLE TBD]

[THEY WATCH AND GRADE VIDEO]

Let's go around the room and please read your grade for appeal.

- **IF GRADE A or B:** What do you see as the strengths of the video?
- **IF GRADE C, D, F:** What needs to change or improve to increase the appeal of the video? (**PROBE:** visual appeal, length, content, tone, flow, ability to comprehend)
- To what degree has the video impacted your perception of the topic it discussed?
- Thinking of the information presented in the video, did you have enough time to absorb it all, or did you feel rushed?
- To what extent is the video memorable to you?
- Does the video include clear next steps for seeking additional information or taking action?
- How likely are you to take action after having viewed this?
 - Is there anything about the video that would discourage you from viewing it or taking action? What exactly? (**PROBE:** over-simplified, too complex, other format or mode of communication (**SPECIFY**) would be better for subject matter covered)

1:30

SHOW VIDEO Q1 [TBD] THEY FILL OUT GRADING SHEET

Now I want you to evaluate a different style of video [VIDEO Q1 TITLE TBD]

[THEY WATCH AND GRADE Q1 VIDEO]

[MODERATOR, PICK UP THE PACE] Let's go around the room and please read your grade for appeal.

- **IF GRADE A or B:** What do you see as the strengths of the video?
- **IF GRADE C, D, F:** What needs to change or improve to increase the appeal of the video? (**PROBE:** visual appeal, length, content, tone, flow, ability to comprehend)
- How effective is the spokesperson/spokespeople in presenting the information?
- Do you prefer multiple presenters or one familiar face?
- Do you prefer a wide variety of ages to represent the information, or should presenters be "age appropriate" for the content?
- **[TIME PERMITTING]** How likely are you to take action after viewing this?

1:40

SHOW VIDEO Q2 [TBD] THEY FILL OUT GRADING SHEET

Here is another video in this style. [VIDEO Q2 TITLE TBD]

[THEY WATCH AND GRADE Q2 VIDEO]

Let's go around the room and please read your grade for appeal.

- **IF GRADE A or B:** What do you see as the strengths of the video?
- **IF GRADE C, D, F:** What needs to change or improve to increase the appeal of the video? (**PROBE:** visual appeal, length, content, tone, flow, ability to comprehend)
- How effective is the spokesperson/spokespeople in presenting the information?
- Do you prefer multiple presenters or one familiar face?
- Do you prefer a wide variety of ages to represent the information, or should presenters be "age appropriate" for the content?
- **[TIME PERMITTING]** How likely are you to take action after viewing this?

1:50

WRAP UP

- **[SHOW OF HANDS]** We have seen a video style that is lengthier and which covers broad, overarching topics and themes, versus the briefer, more specific “Q” videos that give answers to particular questions or subject matter. Who prefers the lengthier video style, the shorter style, or does it depend? (**PROBE:** On what?)

Generally speaking, do you prefer step by step procedural videos over more information-focused videos, or vice versa? (**IF DEPENDS:** on what?)

Finally, where would you want to see videos produced by FSA? (**PROBE:** FSA website/studentaid.gov; YouTube, other (SPECIFY))

Those are all the questions I have for you. Thanks for participating!

2:00