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|  | Clearance Documentation |

Documentation for the Generic Clearance of Customer Service Satisfaction Collections

**TITLE OF INFORMATION COLLECTION: Data Collection for PEP Phase III Reports**

**[] SURVEY [X ] FOCUS GROUP [ ] SOFTWARE USABILITY TESTING**

**DESCRIPTION OF THIS SPECIFIC COLLECTION**

**BACKGROUND**

Under Title IV of the Higher Education Act of 1965, as amended, which covers the administration of U.S. federal student financial aid programs, Federal Student Aid (FSA) administers the following programs: Pell grants, Stafford loans, PLUS loans, and the “campus-based” programs including Federal Work Study, Perkins Loans, and Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grants. Federal regulation requires schools to have written policies and procedures for the administration of the Title IV student assistance programs. To ensure institutional regulatory compliance, FSA provides training and technical assistance for financial aid administrators, institutional leaders, and other institutional support staff nationwide via its Information for Financial Aid Professionals (IFAP) website and the School Experience Group (SEG). The SEG’s mission is to identify the unique service needs of all post-secondary education institutions and provide them with tailored resources to meet those needs. Within SEG, the Minority Serving and Under Resourced Schools Division (MSURSD) is responsible for providing support, assessment, and training specifically targeted for Minority Serving Institutions (MSIs).

MSURSD is currently trying to promote financial literacy and encourage MSI’s to create financial literacy programs or expand their current programs. Over the past year, Windwalker was contracted to create a Financial Literacy Toolkit and Workshop that MSURSD could provide to institutions that wanted to introduce or reform financial literacy on their campus. The toolkit includes a comprehensive strategy for assessing current financial literacy programs, creating or reforming a program, gaining support for a program, and finally implementing a program. The current research is focused on the best methods for promoting this financial literacy toolkit and workshop to institutions, specifically by gaining insights about:

1. key product benefits and messages;
2. needs, drivers, and communication channels for the target audience population;
3. strategies, mechanisms, tasks, resources and timelines for implementing expansion activities; and
4. processes for assessing strategy effectiveness and refining communications.

**INTENDED PURPOSE AND NEED FOR THE COLLECTION**

MSURSD has contracted Windwalker to develop a financial literacy communication and awareness plan to assist with product promotion and audience expansion of the Financial Literacy Toolkit and Workshop. Windwalker created this Toolkit and Workshop as part of a previous task and it is ready for dissemination. The toolkit is meant to be distributed to financial aid offices and contains all the tools necessary to institute or improve a financial literacy program at their institution. The present research attempts to identify the most efficient and effective way of communication with MSI’s regarding the Toolkit and Workshop.

The current phase of the research includes conducting three focus groups: 1) third party vendors, 2) MSI staff, and 3) higher education professionals and policymakers. The three focus groups will include 3-6 participants from each of the groups previously mentioned. The focus groups will provide insight into the current methods used by others in the higher education community to promote financial literacy and raise awareness.

There are three protocols, one for each group, that contain between 13 and 19 items in order to obtain the desired information. The goal in obtaining data from three different groups is to gain a comprehensive view of financial literacy promotion from others that promote financial literacy and from the people who receive these promotions.

The insights gained from the qualitative data collection will be used to inform a communication and awareness plan for the Financial Literacy Toolkit and Workshop. All interview protocols are provided as appendices in this document.

**COLLECTION PROCEDURES**

Each onsite data collection visit will entail one or two Windwalker researchers experienced in qualitative data collection. All focus groups will be conducted in person. The MSI staff focus group will be conducted on a college campus and will include participants from multiple institutions. The other focus groups will be conducted in one of the FSA offices in Washington, DC. The focus groups will take approximately 90 minutes. The researcher will ask if the participants agree to have the conversations recorded using a tape-recorder provided by the researcher. It will be explained to participants that the recording is for data analysis purposes only and will only be accessible to the research team. However, the researcher will not record the session should any of the participants decline to have their comments recorded.

The focus groups will comprise of open-ended questions that will help inform the financial literacy promotion plan. As previously stated, the focus groups will last 90minutes and will contain between 13 and 19 questions depending on the group. The focus group protocols include questions and a series of prompts to act as guidelines for the researchers to gather data from respondents and to allow further questioning when specific topics are touched on.

MSURSD will identify the potential focus group participants. MSURSD will also contact the potential participants to begin the recruitment process. Windwalker will work with MSURSD to finalize the focus group meeting details and logistics.

Upon completing all of the focus groups, the Windwalker researcher will review his or her notes and listen to the available recorded sessions. At this time, the researcher will synthesize all of the findings that emerged from the focus groups and use them to create a promotion plan for financial literacy. A formalized plan will be developed with greater details provided about each step of the process.

**DATES, LOCATIONS, AND PARTICIPANTS**

The proposed timeframe for the data collection is March 1-11, 2016 to accommodate the delivery of the draft reports to MSURSD leadership by April 15, 2016. One or two Windwalker researcher(s) will conduct each focus group and no payments, stipends, or incentives are proposed for participants. There are three focus groups proposed: 1) third-party vendors, 2) higher education professionals and policymakers, and 3) MSI staff participants. Each focus group will have between 3 and 6 participants for a total sample of 9-18 participants. This timeline meets the contractual requirement that the focus groups be conducted and will occur after OMB clearance is obtained. The focus group protocols have also been shared with MSURSD leadership for approval, and final approval from them has already been granted.

**BURDEN HOUR COMPUTATION** *(Number of responses (X) estimated response or participation time in minutes (/60) = annual burden hours):*

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| **Category of Respondent**  | **No. of Respondents** | **Participation Time** | **Burden** |
| Individual | 18 (maximum 6 in each focus group) | 1.5 hours | 27 |
|  |  |  |  |
| **Totals** | **18** |  | **27** |

**PLANNED USE OF DATA**

As was mentioned in the “Collection Procedures” section, the data collected from these efforts will be used to inform and create a financial literacy promotion plan. The findings will be presented in summary form that may be specific to focus groups. This means that it will not be possible to identify individual responses from specific participants. The first draft is due to MSURSD leadership on April 15, 2016.

**AMOUNT OF ANY PROPOSED STIPEND OR INCENTIVE**

Not applicable.

**STATISTICAL INFORMATION**

We expect a 100% response rate in terms of respondents participating in the focus group once they have agreed to participate. However, we do not expect every invitee to agree to participate. Given the qualitative nature of the data obtained from focus group, only minimal statistical analyses will be conducted. Descriptive statistics such as frequency of findings may be present, but the vast majority of the findings from this collection will reported as broad themes and actionable recommendations rather than quantifiable results.

**REQUESTED APPROVAL DATE:** February 25, 2016

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