

# Federal Student Aid 2016 In-School Financial Aid Satisfaction Survey

## [Programming instructions in bold brackets or parenthesis]

You have received this survey as part of an initiative the United States Department of Education Office of Federal Student Aid has undertaken to improve customer satisfaction for borrowers who are presently in school.

The survey will take approximately five minutes to complete. CFI Group, an independent research and consulting firm, is conducting this survey, which is authorized by the U.S. Office of Management and Budget, Control No. 1845-0045. It is hosted via a secure server. Your responses are strictly confidential. **Individual responses will not be reported and you will not be contacted as a result of taking this survey.** If you have any questions, please contact [survey@cfigroup.com](mailto:survey@cfigroup.com).

Thank you in advance for your valuable feedback.

## PRA Burden Statement

According to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, no persons are required to respond to a collection of information unless such collection displays a valid OMB control number. The valid OMB control number for this information collection is 1845-0045. Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 5 minutes per response, including time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. The obligation to respond to this collection is voluntary. If you have comments or concerns regarding the status of your individual submission of this survey, please contact Federal Student Aid/Customer Experience Office/Customer Analytics Group at 830 First Street, NE Washington, DC 20202 or [customersurveys@ed.gov](mailto:customersurveys@ed.gov) directly. [Note: Please do not return the completed survey to this address.]

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## Introduction

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During the 2015-2016 academic year were you enrolled in a post-high school study program at a college, university, trade school, or community college?

Yes **[Continue with Next Question, INFOHOW]**

No **[End Survey]**

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## Information

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INFOHOW Please think about how you get information about financial aid for your education since you started your program. For each, please indicate if you have received information from that source.

- 1 A counselor you had in high school
- 2 Printed materials from your school's office of financial aid or from a government entity, such as the Department of Education
- 3 Printed materials from a lending institution such as a bank or credit union
- 4 Social media resources (such as Twitter, YouTube and Facebook) from your school's office of financial aid or from a government entity, such as the Department of Education
- 5 Other online resources from your school's office of financial aid or from a government entity, such as the Department of Education
- 6 Online resources from a lending institution such as a bank or credit union

- 7 Talking with financial aid counselors at your college or university
- 8 Talking with other staff or faculty at your school (e.g., resident advisors, academic counselors)
- 9 Talking with friends or family about financial aid
- 10 Information in the media (i.e., TV, radio, print ads)
- 11 Other **[capture open end]**

INFOPREF What would you say is your most preferred way to get information about financial aid for your studies?

- 1 Counselor (HS or college) or staff at College or University
- 2 Printed materials
- 3 Social media resources
- 4 Other online resources (such as websites)
- 5 Media
- 6 Other people (family, teachers)
- 7 Other **[capture open end]**

Please think about all the different types of information you may get about financial aid, regardless of the source. On a scale from 1 to 10, where “1” means “poor” and “10” means “excellent”, in general how would you rate the information you get about financial aid on:

INFO1 Being easy to understand

INFO2 It’s usefulness

INFO3 Being available in a format you prefer (e.g., printed materials, web pages, etc.)

INFO4 Being easy to find

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### Communications

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Please think about any communications you may receive from your school about financial aid, such as newsletters, notifications of application deadlines, and so on.

COMMHOW How does your school typically contact you about your financial aid package?

- 1 Mail
- 2 Email
- 3 Social media notification (Twitter tweet, Facebook)
- 4 Other **[capture open end]**

COMMPREF What is your preferred way to get communications from your school about your financial aid package?

- 1 Mail
- 2 Email
- 3 Social media notification (Twitter tweet, Facebook)
- 4 Other **(capture open end)**

On a scale from 1 to 10, where “1” means “poor” and “10” means “excellent”, please rate them on:

COMM1 Clarity of communications you receive

COMM2 Timeliness (i.e., arriving in time for you to take appropriate action)

COMM3 Effectiveness of the means used for communicating with you (e.g., mail, email, etc.)

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## Award Administration

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Think about the process to receive the financial aid you have been awarded. For example, the paperwork you may need to submit, visits to your school's financial aid office, getting your promissory notes signed, etc. Please also think generally about your experiences with the award administration process at your school. On the 1 to 10 scale with 1 as "Poor" and 10 "Excellent", please rate the award administration process at your school.

AWRD1 The timeliness of your award notification

AWRD2 The information they provide about your personal financial aid package

AWRD3 Making clear the steps you need to take to get your awarded funds (e.g., course registration requirements, etc.)

AWRD4 Making clear when your awarded funds will be available

AWRD5 Helpfulness of the financial aid staff you interact with

AWRD6 Knowledge of the financial aid staff you interact with

PROBLEM Have you ever had any problems with the award administration process?

- 1 Yes
- 2 No (**skip to Account Management**)

PROBTYPE What was the nature of the problem you experienced? [**capture open end**]

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## Account Management

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ACCTSYS Does your school give you access to an online account management tool where you can check your account status, look up loan or scholarship payments, or make payments?

- 1 Yes
- 2 No (**skip to ACCTHOW**)
- 3 Don't know (**skip to ACCTHOW**)

ACCTOFT How often would you say you use this system to get information on your account? [**capture open end**]

ACCTHOW How do you get information about your account? [**capture open end**]

Please think about the way your school manages your account, and rate the following items using the 1 to 10 scale, where "1" means "poor" and "10" means "excellent".

ACCT1 Availability of your account information

ACCT2 Ease of accessing your account information

ACCT3 Accuracy of the account balances

ACCT4 Ease of understanding your account statements

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## Entrance/Exit Counseling

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GETCOUN Have you received entrance and/or exit counseling regarding your student loans?

- 1 Entrance
- 2 Exit
- 3 Both
- 4 Neither (**skip to FACT**)
- 5 Don't know (**skip to FACT**)

COUNFORM What was the format of the counseling session(s) you attended?

- 1 Videotaped presentation
- 2 Online at Studentloans.gov
- 3 Private meeting with a financial aid counselor
- 4 Group meeting or discussion with financial aid counselor
- 5 Other (**specify**)

**(IF COUNFORM=1)** Was the videotaped presentation for PLUS counseling?

- 1 Yes
- 2 No

On the 1 to 10 scale, with “1” being “poor” and “10” being “excellent”, please rate the counseling you received on:

COUN1 Helpfulness of the information provided

COUN2 Convenience of the counseling session (i.e.. time and place)

COUN3 Format of the counseling session (i.e., way the information was presented)

COUN4 Degree to which the counseling session made your rights and responsibilities clear to you

COUN5 Prepared you to make the best future decisions in managing your federal loans

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Financial Awareness Counseling Tool (FACT)

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FACT Have you used the Financial Awareness Counseling tool on studentloans.gov?

- 1 Yes
- 2 No (**skip to ACSI**)
- 3 Don't know (**skip to ACSI**)

**Using the 1 to 10 scale, please rate the Financial Awareness Counseling Tool.**

**FACT1** Helpfulness of the information provided

**FACT2** The time it took to complete the counseling

**FACT3** Format of the counseling session (i.e., way the information was presented)

**FACT4** Degree to which the counseling session made your rights and responsibilities clear to you

**FACT5** The ease of completing the counseling

**FACT6** Prepared you to make the best future decisions in managing your federal loans

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## ACSI Benchmark Questions

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Please think about your experiences this past academic year dealing with financial aid issues as your work on your post-high school education, including what was covered so far in this survey, and with anything else you can think of.

- ACSI1. Using a 10-point scale on which “1” means “very dissatisfied” and 10 means “very satisfied”, how satisfied are you with the financial aid process?
- ACSI2. Using a 10-point scale on which "1" now means "falls short of your expectations" and "10" means "exceeds your expectations," to what extent has the financial aid process met your expectations?
- ACSI3. Imagine what an ideal process for financial aid for post-high school education would be like. How well do you think the financial aid process you deal with now compares with the ideal you just imagined? Please use a 10-point scale on which "1" means "not at all close to the ideal," and "10" means "very close to the ideal."

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## Outcome Measures

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- CONFFIN Using a scale of 1 to 10 where “1” means “not at all confident” and “10” means “completely confident,” how confident are you that you will receive sufficient financial aid to meet your educational goals?
- CONFM On that same scale, how confident are you in your ability to manage your student loans both now and in the future?
- COMP1 Using a scale of 1 to 10 where “1” means “not at all important” and “10” means “very important,” how important has the aid you have received been to your ability to complete your program of study?
- CLOSE1 In your own words, how do you think the financial aid process could be improved to better serve students such as yourself? **(capture open end)**

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## Background

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DEGCOMP What post-high-school degrees or certifications have you already completed, if any?

- 1 Certificate/Licensure – 1 year
- 2 Associate’s Degree or 2-year Certificate
- 3 Bachelor’s Degree
- 4 Master’s Degree
- 5 Professional Degree (e.g., Law, Medicine)
- 6 Ph. D
- 7 None – first time student
- 8 None – but had some post-high school schooling previously
- 9 Other **(capture open end)**

WHYBACK **(if DEGCOMP not equal to (≠) either 7 or 8. Allow multiple responses.)** Why have you decided to pursue additional higher education?

- 1 Continuing studies in same field
- 2 Pursuing new field or academic interest/career change
- 3 Returning to school due to unemployment or economic hardship
- 4 Other **(capture open end)**

YEARPROG How many years does it take a full-time student to complete your program? **(capture open end)**

YEAR How many full years of your current degree program would you say you have completed?  
**(capture open end)**

STATUS Are you a full-time or a part-time student as of today?

- 1 Full time
- 2 Part time

WORK Are you presently employed either full-time or part time, looking for work, or not looking?

- 1 Not employed and not looking for work
- 2 Not employed and looking for work
- 3 Employed part time – one position
- 4 Employed part time – multiple positions
- 5 Employed full time
- 6 Self-employed

WRKSTD **(if WORK = 3 or 4)** Is any of your work through a work-study program that is a part of your financial aid package?

- 1 Yes
- 2 No
- 3 Don't know/Not sure

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### Closing

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Thinking back to the time before you took out any loans to fund your education, how would you characterize your degree of knowledge and understanding about student loan/Federal Student Aid issues?

- a. None
- b. Very little
- c. Average
- d. Above-average
- e. Expert