**Memorandum United States Department of Education**

 **Institute of Education Sciences**

 National Center for Education Statistics

DATE: September 9, 2016

TO: Robert Sivinski, OMB

THROUGH: Kashka Kubzdela, OMB Liaison, NCES

FROM: Tracy Hunt-White, NPSAS:16 Project Officer, NCES

SUBJECT: 2015-16 National Postsecondary Student Aid Study (NPSAS:16) Full Scale Data Collection Nonresponse Conversion Update (OMB# 1850-0666 v. 19)

The 2015-16 National Postsecondary Student Aid Study (NPSAS:16) Full Scale Student Data Collection was approved by OMB in December 2015 (OMB# 1850-0666 v.17), with a change request approved in February 2016 (OMB# 1850-0666 v.18). This request is to revise the approved student contacting materials and expand the target sample for the abbreviated survey. These revisions do not impact the approved survey content, respondent burden, or the cost to the federal government.

**Contacting Materials**

Among the set of contacting materials originally approved by OMB were letters and emails signed by Tracy Hunt-White as the NPSAS:16 project officer, but sent from the project email address: NPSAS@rti.org. We would like to add a new email message to be sent to sample members directly from Dr. Hunt-White’s NCES email account. The text of the new email is included at the end of the revised appendix D included with this memorandum. The email will be sent to all sample members selected to complete an abbreviated interview as part of the prong treatments. The two-pronged approach was described in the approved supporting statement (OMB# 1850-0666 v.17, Part B, page 14) as follows:

NPSAS staff will implement a two-pronged approach for using responsive design for NPSAS:16. First, we will focus on increasing the number of study members, especially in sectors with lower rates of study membership. For a respondent to be considered a study member, data for three key variables and for at least 8 of 15 additional variables must be collected either from the student interview and/or student records, in addition to any administrative data. We will identify students with almost all of the data necessary to be a study member, except for a small number of variables, and direct data collection resources to obtain the missing data. Second, we will focus on improving data for study members, for whom we have student records data but not an interview, by identifying and targeting students for whom imputation may not work well. In the later stages of data collection, we will use multiple imputation to impute key variables available mainly from the interview. Students with the greatest amount of variation evident in the imputed values will be targeted in the time remaining in data collection.

In addition, the email would be sent to the remaining sample members who are nonrespondents at the time of the email. Currently, 42,688 sample members have not yet completed the interview and were not identified for inclusion in either of the prong treatments. We will attempt to gain their cooperation with an email directly from NCES and the offer of an abbreviated interview.

**Abbreviated Survey**

The NPSAS:12 data collection continued through October 23, 2012, achieving a yield of over 85,000 student-level responses. As of September 6, 2012, the NPSAS:12 student survey response rate was at 61%, including about 7% of sample members who had already completed an abbreviated survey. The approved design for NPSAS:16 intended for only sample members selected for treatment in prongs 1 or 2 to receive an abbreviated survey. Prong 1 cases are being offered an abbreviated interview that collects sufficient information to qualify respondents as study members, and also receive the prong 2 survey items. The prong 2 abbreviated survey collects data only available from the student interview which, lacking sample members’ responses, would have high variability in imputed values.

The final waves of prong 1 and 2 cases will be contacted on September 14 and 15, 2016. Beginning on September 26, 2016, through the end of data collection, we would like to begin offering the prong 1 and 2 abbreviated surveys to all remaining sample members who are interview nonrespondents and do not meet the study member definition through other data sources (prong 1) and to study members needing additional information to improve imputations (prong 2). Additionally, NCES would like to extend the end of NPSAS:16 data collection through October 17, 2016 to ensure that sufficient response yield is achieved. Together with the expanded offer of the abbreviated survey and NCES-based email, we expect NPSAS:16 will end with student yield and response rates comparable to NPSAS:12.

With data collection extended until October 17th, we further expect institutions to achieve student records participation rates at levels closer to those obtained in NPSAS:12. As shown in table 1, institution records participation across the for-profit institution sectors, in particular, is currently lower in NPSAS:16 compared to the same data collection day in NPSAS:12. Institutions have simply become less inclined to participate in non-mandated collections. Currently, 10 institutions have received the option of completing a reduced (“abbreviated”) institution records instrument to help ensure their participation. We expect to increase the institution participation rates, but they will not likely match NPSAS:12 given the changes in the for-profit institution sectors.

Table 1 provides the student survey response rates for NPSAS:12 and NPSAS:16. Table 2 provides the institution student records participation rate. Table 3 provides the approved (OMB# 1850-0666 v.17, Appendix F) abbreviated student interview items.

**Table 1. Student survey response rates observed in NPSAS:12 and NPSAS:16, by sector**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Student survey response rates | NPSAS:12 Final | NPSAS:16 as of Sept 6, 2016 |
| Total | 68.8 | 55.0 |
| Private, for-profit, Less than 2-year | 54.9 | 34.1 |
| Private, for-profit, 2-year  | 56.6 | 36.2 |
| Private, for-profit, 4-year | 62.3 | 49.4 |
| Private, nonprofit, less than 4 year | 64.4 | 41.3 |
| Private, nonprofit, 4-year non-doctorate granting | 79.5 | 63.7 |
| Private, nonprofit, 4-year doctorate granting | 81.6 | 64.8 |
| Public, Less than 2-year | 62.4 | 44.4 |
| Public, 2-year | 64.9 | 51.3 |
| Public, 4-year non-doctorate granting, primarily sub-baccalaureate | N/A\* | 53.1 |
| Public, 4-year non-doctorate granting, primarily baccalaureate | 74.6 | 58.6 |
| Public, 4-year doctorate granting | 80.4 | 61.4 |

\*Sector was not included in NPSAS:12.

**Table 2. Institution record participation rates in NPSAS:12 and NPSAS:16, by sector**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Institution record participation rates | NPSAS:12 Final | NPSAS:16 as of Sept 6, 2016 |
| Total | 88.3 | 70.5 |
| Private, for-profit, Less than 2-year | 92.5 | 67.9 |
| Private, for-profit, 2-year  | 76.5 | 35.4 |
| Private, for-profit, 4-year | 77.8 | 23.3 |
| Private, nonprofit, less than 4 year | 94.2 | 58.8 |
| Private, nonprofit, 4-year non-doctorate granting | 87.8 | 89.4 |
| Private, nonprofit, 4-year doctorate granting | 90.1 | 86.2 |
| Public, Less than 2-year | 88.3 | 94.1 |
| Public, 2-year | 90.6 | 81.3 |
| Public, 4-year non-doctorate granting, primarily sub-baccalaureate | N/A\* | 69.2 |
| Public, 4-year non-doctorate granting, primarily baccalaureate | 96.1 | 67.8 |
| Public, 4-year doctorate granting | 98.1 | 77.4 |

 \*Sector was not included in NPSAS:12.

**Table 3. NPSAS:16 Full-Scale Abbreviated Student Interview Items**

| **Variable name** | **Variable label** | **Prong 1** | **Prong 2** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| N16RESPCONF | Correct respondent verification | X | X |
| INFCON | Consent information | X | X |
| END1 | End form for respondents who indicated wanting to complete survey later | X | X |
| END1TEXT | Cell phone number and provider | X | X |
| END2 | End form for respondents who declined to complete survey | X | X |
| RETRNFRM | Continue with web survey | X | X |
| N16AELIG | Attended NPSAS institution during NPSAS academic year | X | X |
| N16ACURENR | Current attendance at NPSAS institution | X | X |
| N16ANOATT | Reason not currently attending NPSAS institution | X | X |
| N16ADRP | Date last attended NPSAS institution (month and year) | X | X |
| N16ADRPTM | Left NPSAS before term ended or at end of term | X | X |
| N16ADRPRF | Received full tuition refund from NPSAS institution | X | X |
| N16ADRPCMP | Completed course at NPSAS institution during NPSAS academic year | X | X |
| N16ADRPOK | Introduction form for respondents who left NPSAS | X | X |
| N16AEVREN | Ever attended NPSAS institution | X | X |
| N16ALAST | Date of last NPSAS institution attendance | X | X |
| N16AWHYSM | Reason for being on NPSAS enrollment list | X | X |
| N16AASENR | Enrolled in an associate’s degree program at NPSAS institution | X | X |
| N16ABACHENR | Enrolled in a bachelor’s degree program at NPSAS institution | X | X |
| N16AGRDDEG | Enrolled in an graduate degree program at NPSAS institution | X | X |
| N16ADEGREE | Degree program at NPSAS institution | X | X |
| N16AUGSTVER | Primarily undergraduate working toward bachelor’s degree | X | X |
| N16ACKHOUR | Clock hour requirement | X | X |
| N16ARMCRD | Taken only remedial courses during NPSAS academic year | X | X |
| N16AELCRD | Enrolled for credit that could be used for degree program | X | X |
| N16ABYE | Ineligible contact information | X | X |
| N16ADIPL | Type of high school completion | X | X |
| N16AHSGRAD | Date completed high school | X | X |
| N16AHSCMP | Completing high school while attending NPSAS institution | X | X |
| N16APRDG | Earned prior degree or certificate | X | X |
| N16AOTDG | Type of prior degree or certificate earned | X | X |
| N16APRBDAT | Date prior bachelor’s degree completed | X | X |
| N16ANENRL | Months attended NPSAS institution between July 2015 and June 2016 | X |  |
| N16ASTST | Enrollment intensity at NPSAS institution in NPSAS academic year | X |  |
| N16ACMPDGN | Completed NPSAS degree requirements | X | X |
| N16ADGN | Date awarded degree from NPSAS institution | X | X |
| N16AFRSTGRD | First graduate-level degree at NPSAS institution | X | X |
| N16AUGYR | Undergraduate year or level at NPSAS institution | X | X |
| N16AGRYR | Year of graduate degree program at NPSAS institution | X | X |
| N16AEXPN | Date expected to complete NPSAS degree requirements | X | X |
| INTBCK | Intro to Background section | X | X |
| N16ABBELIG | B&B-eligibility calculation | X | X |
| N16ADOB | Date of birth | X | X |
| N16ALT30 | Age ranges | X | X |
| N16AMARR | Current marital status | X | X |
| N16ASX | Gender | X |  |
| N16FMILIT | Military status | X | X |
| N16FHISP | Hispanic or Latino origin | X |  |
| N16FRAC1 | Race | X |  |
| N16EINCOM | Income for prior calendar year from all sources | X |  |
| N16EINCSP | Spouse’s income for prior calendar year from all sources | X | X |
| N16EDEPS | Any children who received more than half their financial support from respondent in NPSAS year | X | X |
| N16EOTDEPS | Any others (except spouse or children) who live with and received more than half their financial support from respondent in NPSAS year | X |  |
| N16EPARST | Parents’/guardians’ marital status | X | X |
| N16EPARNC | Parents’/guardians’ income in prior calendar year | X |  |
| N16EPRHSD | Number of people financially supported by parents/guardians in NPSAS year | X | X |
| N16FPARED1 | Parent 1 identification: Parent 1's highest level of education completed | X |  |
| N16FPARED2 | Parent 2 identification: Parent 2's highest level of education completed | X |  |
| N16BREMEVER | Taken any remedial courses since high school | X | X |
| N16BREMSY | Took remedial courses in NPSAS year | X | X |
| N16CAPPAID | Applied for financial aid in NPSAS year | X | X |
| N16CNOAPP | Reasons for not applying for financial aid in NPSAS year | X | X |
| N16CPRVLN | Took out any private student loans in NPSAS year | X | X |
| N16CPRVEST | Estimated amount borrowed in private loans in NPSAS year | X | X |
| N16CUGPRVT | Total amount borrowed in private loans for undergraduate education | X | X |
| N16CUGPRVEST | Estimated total amount borrowed in private loans for undergraduate education | X | X |
| N16CPAYSTRAT | Ever heard of income-driven repayment plan or loan forgiveness programs | X | X |
| N16CUSEIBR | Likelihood of using income based repayment plan | X | X |
| N16CUSELFP | Likelihood of using loan forgiveness programs | X | X |
| N16DWKPLN | Plans for work in year following NPSAS year | X | X |
| N16DFUTWAGES | Point estimate of future expected wages | X | X |
| N16GEXTERNAL | Contact about future studies | X | X |
| N16GNAME | Update name | X | X |
| N16G1ADR | First address entry | X | X |
| N16GEMAIL | Email addresses | X | X |
| N16GPHONE | All phone numbers | X | X |
| N16GTEXT | Text message number | X | X |
| INCTYP | PayPal or paycheck incentive option | X | X |
| PAYPAL | Collect PayPal email address | X | X |
| INCENTADDR | Address to send paycheck incentive | X | X |
| INCENT1 | Incent confirmation screen | X | X |
| INCENTEND | Incent end form | X | X |
| END | Survey end form | X | X |