

**Memorandum****United States Department of Education  
Institute of Education Sciences  
National Center for Education Statistics**

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DATE: September 9, 2016  
TO: Robert Sivinski, OMB  
THROUGH: Kashka Kubz dela, 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 17<sup>th</sup>, 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
<b>Total</b>	68.8	55.0
<b>Private, for-profit, Less than 2-year</b>	54.9	34.1
<b>Private, for-profit, 2-year</b>	56.6	36.2
<b>Private, for-profit, 4-year</b>	62.3	49.4
<b>Private, nonprofit, less than 4 year</b>	64.4	41.3
<b>Private, nonprofit, 4-year non-doctorate granting</b>	79.5	63.7
<b>Private, nonprofit, 4-year doctorate granting</b>	81.6	64.8
<b>Public, Less than 2-year</b>	62.4	44.4
<b>Public, 2-year</b>	64.9	51.3
<b>Public, 4-year non-doctorate granting, primarily sub-baccalaureate</b>	N/A*	53.1
<b>Public, 4-year non-doctorate granting, primarily baccalaureate</b>	74.6	58.6
<b>Public, 4-year doctorate granting</b>	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
<b>Total</b>	88.3	70.5
<b>Private, for-profit, Less than 2-year</b>	92.5	67.9
<b>Private, for-profit, 2-year</b>	76.5	35.4
<b>Private, for-profit, 4-year</b>	77.8	23.3
<b>Private, nonprofit, less than 4 year</b>	94.2	58.8
<b>Private, nonprofit, 4-year non-doctorate granting</b>	87.8	89.4
<b>Private, nonprofit, 4-year doctorate granting</b>	90.1	86.2
<b>Public, Less than 2-year</b>	88.3	94.1
<b>Public, 2-year</b>	90.6	81.3
<b>Public, 4-year non-doctorate granting, primarily sub-baccalaureate</b>	N/A*	69.2
<b>Public, 4-year non-doctorate granting, primarily baccalaureate</b>	96.1	67.8
<b>Public, 4-year doctorate granting</b>	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
N16AGRDEG	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	

Variable name	Variable label	Prong 1	Prong 2
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