

NATIONAL CENTER FOR EDUCATION STATISTICS (NCES)

***Attachment VI
Sample Contacting Materials***

***2016/20 Baccalaureate and Beyond Longitudinal Study
(B&B:16/20) Tryouts and Focus Groups***

OMB# 1850-0803 v.242

November 2018

This attachment includes the rationale for testing different envelope and brochure designs and the designs to be discussed during focus groups, including 4 sample envelope designs and 4 sample brochures. Two handouts, one for each set of materials, to be completed by focus groups participants are also provided.

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Background

While there is some research comparing different types of mailing, for example USPS First-Class to Priority Mail, and their effects on survey response rates and sample representativeness,¹ there is little research regarding which features of the mailing are particularly effective to increasing response rates and representativeness. For example, are there particular visual design features of the envelope that survey designers can use to encourage sample members to open the envelope? If so, what are these features? An early study preparing the 2000 Census tested different messages on the outside of the envelopes.² The results suggest that respondents do pay attention to such messages as a message appealing to the mandatory nature of the study increased response rates by approximately 10 percentage points compared to another message highlighting the benefits of participation. While other more recent studies do not find an increase in response rates when including envelope messages,³ DeBell and colleagues (2017) conducted an experiment in which they clipped a cash incentive to the mailing so that it was visible from the outside of the envelope. The study found that this envelope communicating to the sample member that a cash incentive was included in the mailing raised the response rate of their mail survey by almost four percentage points and led to slightly higher return to sender as undeliverable rates compared to a standard letter.

While we cannot state that participation in the B&B survey is mandatory, the latter result suggests that indicating that a cash incentive is included with the survey request and making the value of the incentive visible may significantly increase sample members' interest in opening the mailing and, in turn, to consider the survey request. Based on this hypothesis, B&B:16/20 will conduct focus group discussions to better understand which mailing features motivate sample members to open or discard a mailing – and why. The goal is to design an envelope based on these findings and compare this ideal envelope in a potential B&B:16/20 calibration sample with the control envelope used in past B&B studies.

In the focus groups, we will test four different envelope designs, including:

- A standard envelope used in past studies (serving as a control)
- Three envelope designs with a printed message that hints at cash being enclosed, including,
 - “\$2 Gift Enclosed. See details inside”,
 - “Your next cup of coffee is on us. See details inside”, and
 - An envelope with a \$2 bill printed in the corner.

In addition to the study envelopes, it is important to periodically review the study materials included in the mailings. We will test different versions of alternative study brochures and flyers that may be more appealing to sample members compared to the standard brochures in use. We will investigate the content of the study brochures as well as alternative formats (e.g., brochure vs. flyer).

The following are the handouts for focus group participants to complete and the envelope and brochure designs that participants will discuss. For the focus group protocol in which the materials are referenced, see Attachment IV.

¹ DeBell, M., Maisel, N., Edwards, B., Amsbary, M., and V. Meldener. 2017. Improving General Population Survey Response Rates with Visible Money. Paper presented at the 72nd Annual Conference of the American Association for Public Opinion Research, New Orleans, LA.

² Dillman, D.A., Jenkins, C., Martin, B., and T. DeMailo. 1996. Cognitive and Motivational Properties of Three Proposed Decennial Census Forms. Study Series (Survey Methodology #2006-4). Accessed 7/5/18: <https://www.census.gov/srd/papers/pdf/ssm2006-04.pdf>. Dillman, Don A., Jon R. Clark, and James Treat, 1994. The Influence of 13 Design Factors on Response Rates to Census Surveys. Annual Research Conference Proceedings, U.S. Bureau of the Census, Washington, D.C. Pp. 137-159. Accessed 7/5/18: <https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=mdp.39015052943357>

³ Dykema, J., Jaques, K., Cyffka, K., Assad, N., Hammers, R.G., Elver, K., Malecki, K.C., & Stevenson, J. 2015. Effects of Sequential Prepaid Incentives and Envelope Messaging in Mail Surveys. *Public Opinion Quarterly*, 79(4), 906-931.

Envelope Design Handout

- 1) Please rank each of the following four envelopes with 1 = most likely to open and 4 = least likely to open.
 [Note: The order of the envelopes will be randomized, and the questionnaire will be designed professionally.]









- 2) Consider the envelope that you ranked the highest, that is, the one that you are most likely to open. On a scale from 1 to 10, where 1 is least likely and 10 is most likely, how likely are you to actually open this envelope?

1 Least Likely	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10 Most Likely
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Sample Envelope Design 1: Control



National Center for Education Statistics
U.S. Department of Education
5265 Capital Boulevard (0214099.120.002.424)
Raleigh, NC 27616-2925

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

Sample Envelope Design 2: Note - "\$2 Gift Enclosed"



National Center for Education Statistics
U.S. Department of Education
5265 Capital Boulevard (0214099.120.002.424)
Raleigh, NC 27616-2925

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

\$2 Gift Enclosed
See details inside.

Sample Envelope Design 3: Note - "Your next cup of coffee is on us"



National Center for Education Statistics
U.S. Department of Education
5265 Capital Boulevard (0214099.120.002.424)
Raleigh, NC 27616-2925

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED



Your next cup of
coffee is on us
See details inside.

Sample Envelope Design 4: Printed \$2 Bill



National Center for Education Statistics
U.S. Department of Education
5265 Capital Boulevard (0214099.120.002.424)
Raleigh, NC 27616-2925

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED



Brochure Design Handout

3) Please select a maximum of three topics that you think should be included in a study brochure or pamphlet.

[Note: The order of these topics will be randomized, and the questionnaire will be designed professionally.]

- Study content
- Study sponsor
- Introducing the study team
- Sample member selection
- Data use
- Privacy and Confidentiality
- Sample member's rights (voluntary participation, etc.)
- Study contact/help desk information
- Past results
- Other, please specify: _____

4) Please rank the three topics you just identified above in order of importance with 1 being the topic that you find most important to include and 3 being the topic that you find least important to include.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

5) On a scale from 1 to 10, where 1 is least likely and 10 is most likely, how likely are you to actually read a brochure or pamphlet that you receive in the mail?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Least Likely									Most Likely
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Baccalaureate and Beyond Longitudinal Study



YOUR PARTICIPATION MATTERS

Where can I find more information about B&B

E-mail address: bbemail@rii.org

Website: <https://surveys.nces.ed.gov/bb/>

Telephone number: 877-262-4440



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Baccalaureate and Beyond Longitudinal Study

WHAT IS B&B?

The Baccalaureate and Beyond Longitudinal Study (B&B:08/18) is a national study of approximately 17,000 graduates from U.S. colleges and universities who will be asked about their experiences in the 10 years since completing a bachelor's degree.



Why am I being asked to participate?

You have been asked to participate in B&B because you completed the requirements for your bachelor's degree 10 years ago, during the 2007-08 academic year. Most study participants were first surveyed in 2008 as part of the National Postsecondary Student Aid Study (NPSAS).

Why is my participation important?

The National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) has conducted only one previous 10-year follow-up with baccalaureate graduates—the Class of 1992-93 was surveyed in 2003 as part of B&B:93/03.

Your survey responses will help educators, researchers, and policymakers at the local, state, and national levels understand the experiences of recent college graduates. Your experiences are unique, and if you choose not to participate in B&B, no one else can be substituted for you.

How will my information be protected?

NCES is required to follow strict procedures to protect personal information in the collection, reporting, and publication of data. All of the information you provide may be used only for statistical purposes and may not be disclosed, or used, in identifiable form for any other purpose except as required by law (20 U.S.C. §9573 and 6 U.S.C. §151).

HOW DO I PARTICIPATE?

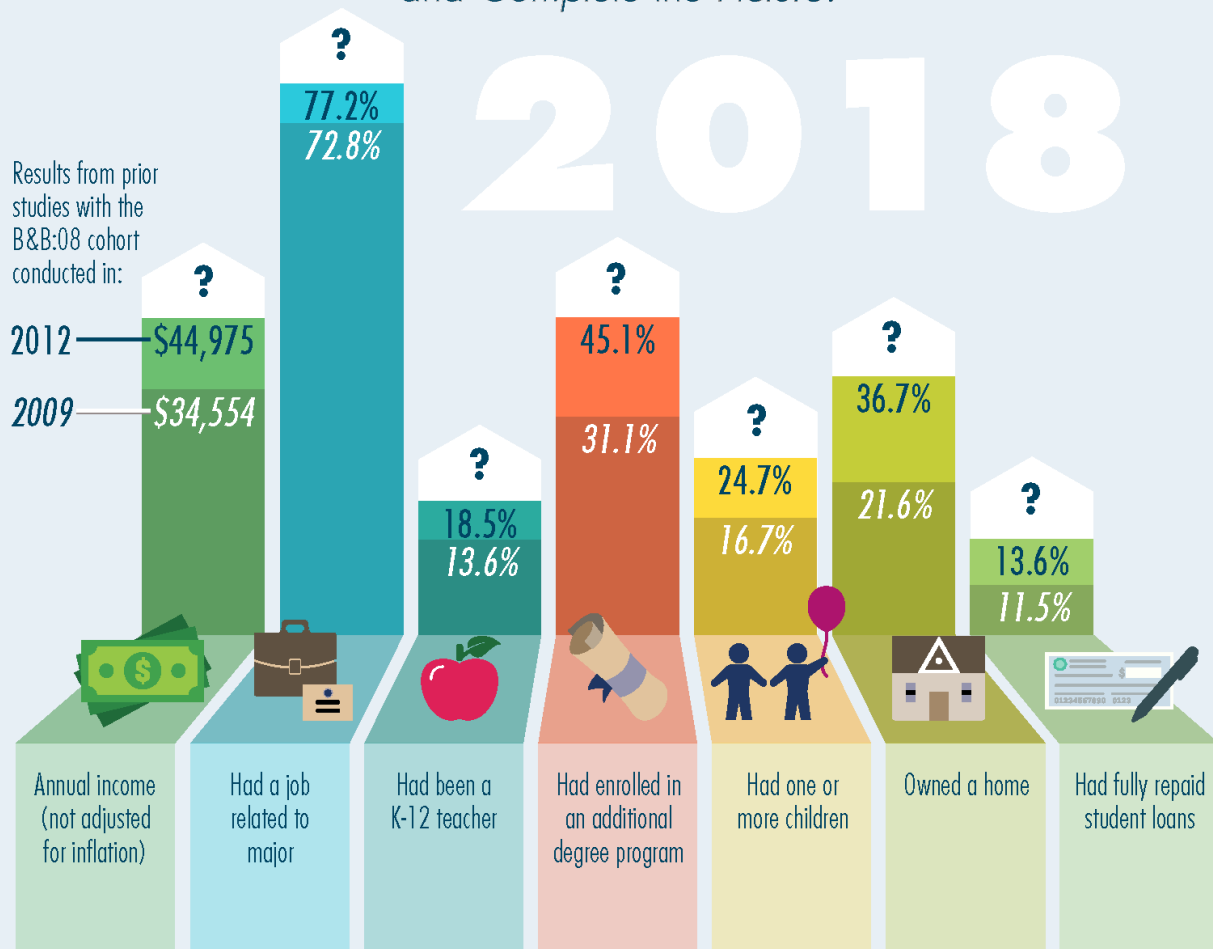
You can complete the B&B survey online or by telephone.

Online: Log onto the study website at <https://surveys.nces.ed.gov/bb/> using the Study ID and password provided in your welcome letter. The survey is mobile-optimized, so it can be easily completed on a mobile device.



B&B Provides Data Researchers and Policymakers Can't Get Anywhere Else

Your Experiences are Unique, **So Share Your Story** and Complete the Picture!



SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, 2008/12 Baccalaureate and Beyond Longitudinal Studies (B&B:08/12) and 2008/09 Baccalaureate and Beyond Longitudinal Studies (B&B:08/09).

The 2008/18 Baccalaureate and Beyond Longitudinal Study (B&B:08/18) is a survey of individuals who completed their postsecondary education during the 2007-08 academic year. The National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) in the U.S. Department of Education's Institute of Education Sciences has contracted with RTI International to collect data for B&B on its behalf.

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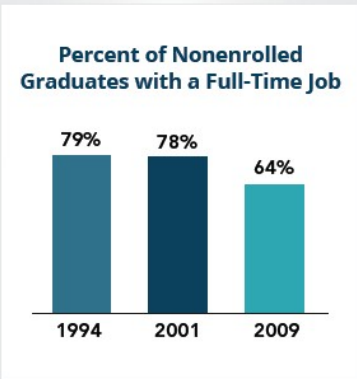
To learn more about the data from previous B&B studies, visit NCES's B&B website at <https://nces.ed.gov/surveys/b&b/>

Learn more about our confidentiality procedures for sample members at <https://surveys.nces.ed.gov/bb/confidentiality.aspx>

Sample Brochure Design 3: 3 Panel Brochure

What have we learned from previous rounds of B&B?

In 1994, seventy-nine percent of bachelor's degree recipients had a full-time job in the year following their graduation, compared to 78 percent in 2001, and 64 percent in 2009.



SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), 1993/94, 2000/01, and 2008/09 Baccalaureate and Beyond Longitudinal Studies (B&B:93/94, B&B:2000/01, and B&B:08/09).

HOW DO I PARTICIPATE?

You can complete the B&B survey online or over the phone.

ONLINE

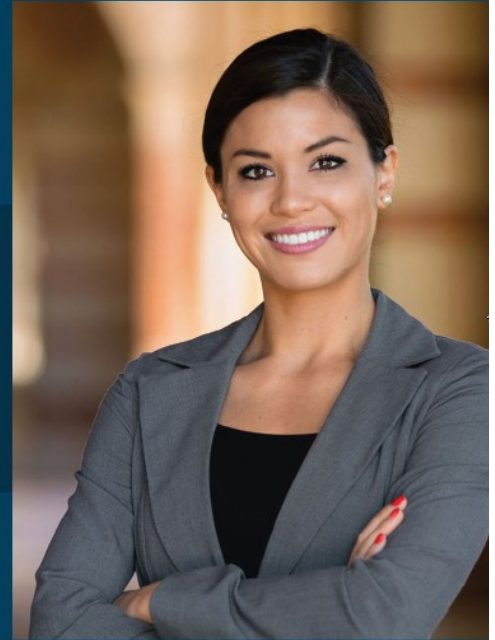
Log onto the study website at <https://surveys.nces.ed.gov/bandb/> using the Study ID and password provided in your welcome letter. The survey is mobile-optimized, so it can be easily completed on a mobile device.

PHONE

Call our Help Desk at 877-287-3782 to speak to one of our professional interviewers.



2016/17
BACCALAUREATE AND BEYOND
LONGITUDINAL STUDY



B&B HELP DESK

 877-287-3782

 bandb@rti.org

<https://surveys.nces.ed.gov/bandb/>

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WHAT IS B&B?

The 2016/17 Baccalaureate and Beyond Longitudinal Study (B&B:16/17) is a national study of approximately 29,000 graduates from U.S. colleges and universities who will be asked about their experiences since completing a bachelor's degree.

The study will collect information on graduate and other education, experiences on the job market and in the labor force, earnings and expenses, family status, and personal and professional goals. In addition to survey responses, we collect related information from sources such as student loan and enrollment databases. There is a particular focus on careers in teaching and other employment outcomes.

WHO IS CONDUCTING B&B?

B&B:16/17 is conducted by the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), in the U.S. Department of Education's Institute for Education Sciences, with data collection being carried out under contract by RTI International, a U.S.-based nonprofit research organization.

NCES is authorized to conduct B&B by the Education Sciences Reform Act of 2002 (ESRA 2002, 20 U.S.C. §9543) and to collect students' education records from educational agencies or institutions for the purposes of evaluating federally supported education programs under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA, 34 CFR §§ 99.31(a)(3) (iii) and 99.35).

WHY AM I BEING ASKED TO PARTICIPATE?

You have been asked to participate in B&B:16/17 because you completed the requirements for your bachelor's degree during the 2015-16 academic year.

WHAT HAPPENS TO THE RESULTS?

Results from the current study are scheduled to be released in 2019 and will be posted on the NCES website (<https://nces.ed.gov/>) along with results from previous B&B studies. Your responses will be combined with those of other students and will be presented in summary form only. No individually-identifying information will be published.

HOW WILL MY INFORMATION BE PROTECTED?

NCES is required to follow strict procedures to protect personal information in the collection, reporting, and publication of data. All of the information you provide may be used only for statistical purposes and may not be disclosed, or used, in identifiable form for any other purpose except as required by law (20 U.S.C. §9573 and 6 U.S.C. §151).

Data security procedures for B&B are reviewed and approved by NCES data security staff. Your answers are secured behind firewalls and are encrypted during internet transmission using Secure Sockets Layer (SSL) protocol. All data entry modules are password protected and require the user to log in before accessing the data. NCES employees and contractors are subject to large fines or imprisonment if individual responses are disclosed.

WHY IS MY PARTICIPATION IMPORTANT?

Your survey responses help educators, researchers, and policymakers at the local, state, and national levels understand the experiences of recent college graduates. Your experiences are unique, and if you choose not to participate in B&B:16/17, no one else can be substituted for you.



Sample Brochure Design 4: 2 Panel Brochure

HOW DO I PARTICIPATE?

You can complete the B&B survey online or over the phone.

ONLINE

Log onto the study website at <https://surveys.nces.ed.gov/bandb/> using the Study ID and password provided in your welcome letter. The survey is mobile-optimized, so it can be easily completed on a mobile device.

PHONE

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