

NATIONAL CENTER FOR EDUCATION STATISTICS (NCES)

Attachment XIX

Focus Groups with Institution Staff and Usability Testing:
Postsecondary Data Portal Website Content

2019-20 National Postsecondary Student Aid Study
(NPSAS:20) Pretesting

OMB# 1850-0803 v. 243

December 2018

Attachment XIX. Postsecondary Data Portal (PDP) Website Content

This attachment includes the current Postsecondary Data Portal (PDP) content approved in January 2018 (OMB# 1850-0666 v.21) for the 2017–18 National Postsecondary Student Aid Study, Administrative Collection (NPSAS:18-AC). As part of the focus group and usability testing conducted to prepare for NPSAS:20, participants will be asked about their experiences using this website and their opinions about the resources available to participants. The website content is provided in this attachment as reference material for topics that may be discussed in the testing sessions.

This website content is identical to that approved for NPSAS:18-AC, with the following exceptions:

- To facilitate focus group and usability testing for the NSPAS:20 student records collection, items that refer to NPSAS:18-AC or a specific academic year have been updated to apply to NPSAS:20 and the 2019-2020 academic year, which is the focus of NPSAS:20.
- References to HSLs:09 and BPS:12 collections have been removed, since those collections will not be in collection at the time of these testing sessions.

No other changes have been made from the version approved for NPSAS:18-AC.

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Postsecondary Data Portal (PDP) Website Content (Pre-Login)

The Postsecondary Data Portal (PDP) is the web-based data collection system for all NCES sample studies that collect data from postsecondary institutions. The sections of the website that are accessible prior to login include generic information about NCES postsecondary studies and the PDP itself, including answers to frequently asked questions. The content of these pages is included below. Study-specific information that is available after login is included in the next section.

Home Page

The study-specific information below, including the list of studies and their OMB numbers and time estimates, the links to the NCES websites for each study, and the list of contact persons will be added or removed as studies that use the Postsecondary Data Portal website begin and end. Before a study is added, planned revisions and additions to the portal's content will be submitted to OMB for review as part of the study's clearance request, then the website will be changed after that request is approved.

IES logo

Login <UserName> <Password>

Welcome to the Postsecondary Data Portal

The central hub for institutions providing data for sample studies conducted by the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), part of the U.S. Department of Education.

Log in above to get started.

NCES is authorized to conduct these studies by the Education Sciences Reform Act of 2002 (ESRA 2002, 20 U.S.C. §9543) and the Higher Education Opportunity Act of 2008 (HEOA 2008, 20 U.S.C. §1015). The data are being collected for NCES by RTI International, a U.S.-based nonprofit research organization. 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).

According to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, no persons are required to respond to a collection of information unless it displays a valid OMB control number. The valid OMB control numbers for the voluntary information collections using this website are listed below. The time required to complete the information collections is estimated to average the number of minutes or hours listed below per response, including the time to review instructions, search existing data sources, gather the data needed, and complete and review the information collection.

If you have any comments concerning the accuracy of the time estimate, suggestions for improving the collections, or any comments or concerns regarding the status of your individual submission of these data, please write directly to: Postsecondary Data Portal studies, National Center for Education Statistics, PCP, 550 12th St., SW, 4th floor, Washington, DC 20202.

NSPAS:20 OMB Clearance No: #####-##### Expiration Date: xx/xx/xxxx

NSPAS:20 List Collection: 2.8 hours, NSPAS:20 Student Records Collection: 22 hours

Click below to visit the NCES website and learn more about the studies that use this portal.

<link to NCES website for NPSAS>

<link to NCES website for BPS>

<link to NCES website for B&B>

<link to NCES website for HSLS:09>

<link to <http://nces.ed.gov/datalab/>>

(Text below is on footer of every page)

Other NCES Links

NCES DataLab
National Center for Education Statistics

Contact Info

Help Desk: [\[EMAIL ADDRESS\]](#) or 1-855-500-1441

RTI Institution Records Coordinator [Tiffany Mattox](#) or 1-855-500-1441

NPSAS:20

RTI Study Director [Jennifer Wine](#) or 1-855-500-1441

NCES Project Officer Tracy Hunt-White or (202) 245-6507

Latest Tweets

<[link to NCES Tweeter feed](#)>

OMB Clearance No: #####-##### Expires xx/xx/xxxx

About the PDP

About this website

We developed the Postsecondary Data Portal (PDP) website (<https://surveys.nces.ed.gov/portal>) to improve your user experience. The PDP reduces the time it takes to respond to NCES data requests and makes the data submission process as simple and straightforward as possible.

Benefits of the new PDP include the following:

- **Centralization.** It is a central hub for uploading postsecondary institution data for all NCES sample studies.
- **Personalization and Functionality.** You can choose from three user-friendly modes for providing data, all of which offer intuitive functionality.
- **Continuity.** Future data requests will remain as static as possible, and reports or programs you create to provide the data can be updated minimally to complete future requests.
- **Security.** Data are secured through password-protected access and Secure Sockets Layer (SSL) encryption.
- **Tools at Your Fingertips.** You can access DataLab, our powerful, easy-to-use suite of online data analysis tools that includes more than 30 federal education datasets.

Each of the studies collect data that are used by NCES for reporting and analysis. Any data released to the public will be in aggregate form (e.g., statistical tables, graphs). Review the FAQs or log in to learn more. Background information on each study can be accessed from the Home page.

The Education Sciences Reform Act of 2002 (ESRA 2002, 20 U.S.C. §9543) and the Higher Education Opportunity Act of 2008 (HEOA 2008, 20 U.S.C. §1015) authorize NCES to collect and disseminate information about education in the United States. NCES is the primary federal statistical entity for collecting and analyzing data related to education in the U.S. and other nations. NCES is located within the Institute of Education Sciences of the U.S. Department of Education. NCES fulfills a Congressional mandate to collect, collate, analyze, and report complete statistics on the condition of American education; conduct and publish reports; and review and report on education activities internationally.

NCES has contracted with RTI International to administer the studies included on this website. RTI is an independent, nonprofit contract research organization located in Research Triangle Park, NC, that was established by a joint action of three major universities in North Carolina: University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, North Carolina State University, and Duke University. RTI began operations in 1958 and has provided contract support to NCES on postsecondary research dating back to 1971.

Annually, NCES also conducts a system of interrelated surveys entitled the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS) through a different website. IPEDS gathers information from every college, university, and technical and vocational institution that participates in the federal student financial aid programs. These data are made available to students and parents through the College Navigator college search website and to researchers and others through the IPEDS Data Center.

Confidentiality and Security

Confidentiality and Security

All of the information provided as part of NCES sample studies 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). Any student data released to the general public (for example, in statistical tables) are designed so that it is not possible to identify specific individuals.

Specific measures have been taken to protect all responses:

- Data are collected over a secure server and connection, protected by Secure Sockets Layer technology (SSL; 128-bit encryption). All hard-copy records are maintained in locked storage cabinets. A unique study identification variable (not the Social Security number or student ID) are created and maintained for each sampled student to protect against inadvertent disclosure of confidential data.
- All electronic data are secured in protected data files, and personally identifiable information (PII) is stored in files separate from the descriptive information. The data are stored securely on an Enhanced Security Network, which is certified and accredited as a NIST moderate security level network. NCES and RTI employ strict procedures for the transfer of PII; maintenance, storage, and use of direct identifiers; replacement of direct identifiers with internal codes; security of master survey files; and reporting of data security breaches in accord with the U.S. Department of Education Incident Handling Procedures. For more information on NIST security level, please see FIPS Publication 199 at <http://nvlpubs.nist.gov/nistpubs/FIPS/NIST.FIPS.199.pdf>.
- All NCES staff and contractors are subject to severe fines and imprisonment for disclosing individual responses.
- All RTI project staff members have signed Confidentiality Agreements and Affidavits of Nondisclosure and are prohibited by law from using the obtained information for any purposes other than this research study.
- Data security procedures are reviewed and approved by NCES data security staff.

Confidentiality and data security protection procedures have been put in place for the studies accessible through this website to ensure that the contractor and its subcontractors comply with all privacy requirements, including:

1. The statement of work of each contract;
2. *Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) of 1974* (20 U.S.C. §1232(g));
3. *Privacy Act of 1974* (5 U.S.C. §552a);
4. *Privacy Act Regulations* (34 CFR Part 5b);
5. *Computer Security Act of 1987*;
6. *U.S.A. Patriot Act of 2001* (P.L. 107-56);
7. *Education Sciences Reform Act of 2002* (ESRA 2002, 20 U.S.C. §9573);
8. *Confidential Information Protection and Statistical Efficiency Act of 2002*;
9. *E-Government Act of 2002*, Title V, Subtitle A;
10. *Cybersecurity Enhancement Act of 2015* (6 U.S.C. §151);
11. The U.S. Department of Education General Handbook for Information Technology Security General Support Systems and Major Applications Inventory Procedures (March 2005);
12. The U.S. Department of Education Incident Handling Procedures (February 2009);

13. The U.S. Department of Education, ACS Directive OM: 5-101, Contractor Employee Personnel Security Screenings;
14. NCES Statistical Standards; and
15. All new legislation that impacts the data collected through the contract for this study.

The data collection contractor complies with the U.S. Department of Education’s IT security policy requirements as set forth in the Handbook for Information Assurance Security Policy and related procedures and guidance, as well as IT security requirements in the Federal Information Security Management Act (FISMA), Federal Information Processing Standards (FIPS) publications, Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Circulars, and the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) standards and guidance. All data products and publications will also adhere to the NCES Statistical Standards, as described at the website: <http://nces.ed.gov/statprog/2012/>.

Contact Us

CONTACT US

Name


Email

Organization (optional)

Phone (optional)

Comments

The contact information you provide in this form will only be used to follow up on your message.

 Telephone contact information can be found at the bottom of each page of this website.

FAQs - General

These apply across projects and are available before the user logs in.

Who is collecting these data?

The National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), in the United States Department of Education's Institute of Education Sciences, is conducting the studies that use this website, and has contracted with RTI International to collect data for these studies. The studies are listed on the Home page. NCES is the primary federal statistical entity for collecting and analyzing data related to education in the U.S. and other nations. RTI International is an independent, nonprofit research organization, established as a joint action of the three major universities in North Carolina: University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, North Carolina State University, and Duke University.

By what authority does NCES collect this information?

The National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), within the U.S. Department of Education's Institute of Education Sciences, has been authorized by Congress to conduct these studies in the Education Sciences Reform Act of 2002 (ESRA 2002, 20 U.S.C. §9543) and the Higher Education Opportunity Act of 2008 (HEOA 2008, 20 U.S.C. §1015). Each study has been approved by the U.S. Office of Management and Budget (OMB).

How was my institution selected?

The National Postsecondary Student Aid Study (NPSAS) scientifically samples institutions from all Title IV institutions included in the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS). For longitudinal studies such as the Beginning Postsecondary Students Longitudinal Study (BPS), sample members have identified which institutions they attended when completing the student survey; this information may also come from other administrative data sources. Transcripts and student records are collected from the postsecondary institutions attended by sample members.

Why is participation important?

The quality and affordability of postsecondary education are vital concerns for students and their families. The National Postsecondary Student Aid Study (NPSAS) is designed to describe how students meet the cost of education beyond high school and provides comprehensive data on the enrollment status, education goals, employment, and demographic characteristics of postsecondary students across the nation.

The NCES longitudinal sample studies collect data from transcripts, student records, and/or student surveys to provide much-needed information on the course of study of today's college students as they begin, leave, and re-enter postsecondary study, transfer between institutions, and complete programs at all levels of institutions. The combination of transcripts and other data collected through surveys, file matching, and record abstraction, allows for analyses of the undergraduate and graduate paths taken by sample members and for analyses of the important link between academic performance and outcomes over time.

The data collected through the studies on this website appear in a wide array of publications and reports, and are cited in journal and newspaper articles and in foundation policy briefs. They are also widely used for decision making. For example, NPSAS is the primary source of data used by federal government agencies and higher education associations to analyze the effectiveness of current federal student financial aid programs. In addition, many agencies and organizations, including the U.S. Department of Education, the Congressional Budget Office (CBO), the Government Accountability Office (GAO), the Office of Management and Budget (OMB), the American Council on Education (ACE), the National Association of Independent Colleges and Universities (NAICU), and the National Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators (NASFAA) use NPSAS data to prepare reports that influence the direction of federal student aid policies.

The data collected through the studies on this website are used by researchers, policymakers, and administrators to analyze and nationally benchmark information about current postsecondary students; to analyze local and national trends over time; and to inform decisions at the institutional, state, and national levels. Participation of each sampled institution assures that the data thus used accurately represent students attending all different types of postsecondary institutions in the United States. After the data are collected, participating institutions will receive a data feedback report that allows staff to see how their institution compares to financial aid estimates at the sector, state, and/or national levels (depending on responses rates).

Do we need to have the student's permission before providing this information?

No. Student or parental consent is not required for release of student record information for the purposes of these studies. The data request conforms fully to the requirements of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA) (34 CFR Part 99). Under FERPA's general consent rule, NCES is authorized to obtain student level data from institutions for any study-eligible student, without prior consent, if the disclosure is to authorized representatives of the Secretary of Education [34 CFR §§ 99.31(a)(3) and 99.35]. Student data are subject to strict protections that are adhered to by NCES and its contractor organizations. You can review this regulation on the U.S. Department of Education's website at <http://www2.ed.gov/policy/gen/reg/ferpa>.

FERPA regulations also stipulate that all disclosures be reported in the student record, with an indication of who received the information and their legitimate interests in the information. For schools without electronic student record systems, a Disclosure Notice may be printed after log in from the Reference Materials page. These notices fulfill the requirements of 34 CFR 99.32(a) pursuant to the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (20 U.S.C. §1232g). Electronic student record systems will require the insertion of a similar statement.

Are the collected data kept secure and confidential?

Both NCES and RTI International follow strict procedures to protect study participants' information. For more information on confidentiality and data security see <https://surveys.nces.ed.gov/Portal/Home/Confidentiality>.

How do we provide the data?

The data are submitted by upload or keying as well as other methods. After logging in, you will see a list of what is needed on the Postsecondary Data Portal Task Menu. You can click on any active menu option.

What assistance is available from RTI staff?

The Help Desk at RTI International is available to answer your questions about the studies and using this website. Please call 1-855-500-1441 or e-mail [EMAIL ADDRESS] with your concerns. Help Desk staff are available from 9:00 a.m. to 6:30 p.m. Eastern time, Monday - Friday.

Postsecondary Data Portal (PDP) Website Content (After Login)

This section includes content of the Postsecondary Data Portal (PDP) that is available to users after logging in to the website. The post-login webpages are customized based on the study or studies for which the institution has been sampled.

- The Task Menu and Designate a Coordinator pages are used for all studies that collect data through the PDP.

- The remaining pages in this section are specific to the NPSAS:20 enrollment list and student records collection.

The content of these pages is included below, and was based on the materials developed and approved for NPSAS:18-AC (OMB #1850-0666).

Task Menu

The Task Menu displays a checklist of items that the institution completes to provide data. The previous OMB submission included a PDP Task Menu for an institution that has been selected for both NPSAS:18-AC and the BPS:12 postsecondary transcripts collection. Because there will not be an overlapping transcript study during NPSAS:20, the Task Menu below is for an institution selected for NPSAS:20 only.

Postsecondary Data Portal Task Menu

Welcome, it's time to complete the tasks below.

Your participation in studies developed by the National Center for Education Statistics is very important.

The data collected from your institution will provide much-needed information on the academic experiences of today's postsecondary students as they begin, leave, and reenter postsecondary education, transfer between institutions, and complete programs at all types of institutions.

Please complete the tasks indicated by a green arrow.

- Designate a Coordinator
- Complete the Institution Registration Page
- Review Sampled Student List

Student Records

- Provide Institution Information for Student Records
- Provide Student Record Information

Designate a Coordinator page

Please fill in or verify the information below. The coordinator is your institution's primary contact for NCES sample studies institution data collections. He or she will receive all further communication about study procedures and deadlines.

Please note that we need a 'FedEx-friendly' address - no PO Box addresses, please!

Coordinator

Salutation
Name
Title
Institution
Address
Telephone
Fax
Email

Institution Registration Page (IRP)

1. Our records indicate that the name of your institution is <name>. Is that correct? Yes/No. If no, Please enter the correct name of your institution:
2. Will your Student Enrollment List include students enrolled at more than one campus or location for your institution? Yes/No
3. Does your institution offer continuous enrollment for your students, rather than terms with explicit start and end dates? Yes/No.

If no, please specify the start and end dates for the term, enrollment, or payment period that includes the date of April 30, 2020. If your institution has multiple terms (including short sessions of over a month) that include the date of April 30, 2020, please enter the period with the latest starting date.

Start Date:

End Date:

4. When will you be able to provide a list of all students enrolled at any time between July 1, 2019, and April 30, 2020?

Response option 1. (If 3 = missing or yes:) Within 2 weeks of the start of the term that includes the date April 30, 2020. (If 3 = no:) Within 2 weeks of <Item3StartDate>.

Response option 2. We have continuous enrollment and will send the list by May 14, 2020.

Note: Because you have continuous enrollment, we would like you to include all students enrolled at the time instead of stopping at April 30th.

Response option 3. Please have a project staff member call us to establish a date.

Below item 4, there is a call-out text box with a list of important student enrollment list data elements to give the institution staff an overview of what will be requested on the list.

The Student Enrollment List will include the following information pertaining to each student:

Name and date of birth

Address, phone number, and email address

Degree program

Class level

Major or CIP code

High school graduation date and date of first enrollment

ID and Social Security Number

Veteran status

Total number of credits accumulated

Race/ethnicity and Sex

5. What student records software system does your institution use (e.g., Banner, Peoplesoft)?
<text field>
6. Will there be a software transition this academic year (e.g., to another type of software or beginning to use a software system for the first time)?
Yes/No. If yes, <text field>.
7. Are there major obstacles to participation this academic year (e.g., accreditation, merging with another institution, closing/teaching out, etc.)?
Yes/No. If yes, what are they? <text field>
8. Are there specific months that are better times for your institution to provide data to NCES?
Yes/No. If yes, what are the months and why? <text field>
9. Are there specific months that are worse times for your institution to provide data to NCES?
Yes/No. If yes, what are the months and why? <text field>

Institution Registration Page- version for systems of institutions

Some institutions may prefer to provide data via a central contact person for several campuses/schools in the NPSAS study. These institutions require a tailored version of the items, shown below.

1. Do your institutions selected for this study all have the same term structure, with the same start and end dates and/or are all institutions on the same schedule?
Some institutions have different schedules/All institutions are on the same schedule.

2. Do (any of) your institutions offer continuous enrollment for their students, rather than terms with explicit start and end dates?
All/Some/None
3. Please specify the start and end dates for the last term, enrollment, or payment period at your institutions/any of your institutions that includes the date of April 30, 2020. If there are multiple terms (including short sessions of over a month) that include the date of April 30, 2020, please enter the period with the latest starting date.
Start Date:

End Date:
4. When will you be able to provide a list of all students enrolled at any time between July 1, 2019, and April 30, 2020?

Response option 1.

(If 2 = missing:) Within 2 weeks of the start of the term that includes the date April 30, 2020.

(If 2 = none:) Within 2 weeks of <Item3StartDate>.

(If 2 = all or some:) We have continuous enrollment and will send the list by May 14, 2020. Note: Because you have continuous enrollment, we would like you to include all students enrolled at the time instead of stopping at April 30th.

Response option 2. Please have a project staff member call us to establish a date.

Below item 4, there is a call-out text box with a list of important student enrollment list data elements to give the institution staff an overview of what will be requested on the list.

The Student Enrollment List will include the following information pertaining to each student:

- Name and date of birth
- Address, phone number, and email address
- Degree program
- Class level
- Major or CIP code
- High school graduation date and date of first enrollment
- ID and Social Security Number
- Veteran status
- Total number of credits accumulated
- Race/ethnicity and Sex

5. What student records software systems do your sampled institutions use (e.g., Banner, Peoplesoft)?
<text field>
6. Will there be a software transition this academic year (e.g., to another type of software or beginning to use a software system for the first time)?
Yes/No. If yes, <text field>.
7. Are there major obstacles to participation this academic year (e.g., accreditation, merging with other institutions, closing/teaching out, etc.)?
Yes/No. If yes, what are they? <text field>
8. Are there specific months that are better times for you to provide institutional data to NCES?
Yes/No. If yes, what are the months and why? <text field>
9. Are there specific months that are worse times for you to provide institutional data to NCES?
Yes/No. If yes, what are the months and why? <text field>

(Once you click Submit)

THANK YOU

Thank you. The requested information for your institution has been submitted.

What happens next?

RTI will contact you with a deadline by which to provide the list of enrolled students. After RTI receives your student list, a random sample of students from the list will be selected for participation in NPSAS:20. You will then be asked to provide specific enrollment and financial aid data from those sampled students' records. A web-based application has been developed to assist you in completing the student record collection and securely providing the data to RTI. The online application will be available on the study website once your sample has been selected.

NCES is required to follow strict procedures to protect the confidentiality of persons 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).

Enrollment List Page

Provide Your Student Enrollment List

1. Follow these instructions to prepare your student enrollment list.
2. Check your list for errors

Please take the time to review your list for errors, including the following common errors:

- Is the contact information provided associated with the correct name (i.e., make sure that the rows did not shift)?
- Is degree program provided for all students?
- Did you include students from all campuses/schools (e.g., law school, medical school) reported under your IPEDS UNITID?
- Did you exclude students concurrently enrolled in high school or a high school completion program?

3. Provide information about your list

Date your list of students was prepared:

Contact information for staff who prepared the list:

Name

Department

E-mail Address

Telephone number

In the space below, provide any details that will clarify the layout of the enrollment list you are submitting, as well as any information necessary to correctly interpret the data provided. Define any special codes or abbreviations (e.g., major codes, class levels).

Comments:

Exclusion counts

In each of the categories shown below, approximately how many students have been excluded from your institution's enrollment list?

Count of Students

Reason

_____ Did not meet the NPSAS eligibility requirements

_____ Student requested that their information not be provided to external parties

_____ Excluded for any other reason

_____ Total

4. Upload Student Enrollment List

Press the Upload File button to locate the file that contains your student list.

*(Files must be of type: .txt, .csv, .xls, .xlsx, .doc or .zip. Please zip your file if it is larger than 3MB.)

(Upload File)

FAQs – Specific to NPSAS

NPSAS FAQs

This section contains answers to frequently asked questions (FAQs) about the National Postsecondary Student Aid Study (NPSAS). Because institutions have multiple tasks to complete in response to this data collection, the following sets of questions provide both general and specific guidelines for an institution's staff to review.

You can access general FAQs about this website [here](#).

Background and Purpose of NPSAS

Why are institutions contacted before NPSAS data are needed?

Providing institutions with the basic information needed to start planning ahead of the earliest deadline for student enrollment lists provides additional time to develop an action plan to address each of the data collection steps.

What is this study all about?

The National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), part of the U.S. Department of Education's Institute of Education Sciences, is authorized by federal law to collect, analyze, and publish statistics and other data related to education in the United States and other nations (ESRA 2002, 20 U.S.C. §9543 and HEOA 2008, 20 U.S.C. §1015). NPSAS is designed to describe how students meet the cost of education beyond high school. Data are obtained from student records. NPSAS will collect information on students' demographics, enrollment, employment, education and living expenses, and (if any) the type of financial assistance received by students (grants, scholarships, loans, awards, and stipends). NPSAS includes students from all types of postsecondary schools—private-for-profit institutions, public and private nonprofit 2- and 4-year colleges and universities, and less-than-2-year institutions in the 50 states, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico.

How was my institution selected?

Your institution was scientifically sampled from all Title IV institutions. To be eligible for inclusion in the institution sample, an institution must have satisfied the following conditions: (1) offered an education program designed for persons who have completed secondary education; (2) offered an academic, occupational, or vocational program of study lasting at least 3 months or 300 clock hours; (3) offered access to the general public, except for U.S. service academies; and (4) been located in the 50 states, the District of Columbia, or Puerto Rico.

What is the purpose of this study, NPSAS:20?

The quality and affordability of postsecondary education are vital concerns for students and their families. That is why the information gathered by NPSAS is so important. The study explores how students pay for education after high school, and provides comprehensive data on the enrollment status, education goals, employment, and demographic characteristics of postsecondary students. The current NPSAS is different from previous ones. In addition to federal financial aid estimates, NPSAS:20 will be collecting data to generate state-level financial aid estimates to inform states' policy and planning, similar to NPSAS:18-AC. Unlike NPSAS:18-AC, there will be student survey.

What is the role of the coordinator?

The coordinator's role is to serve as a liaison between the institution and the NCES data collection contractor, RTI International, for this study, assisting with all data collection efforts for NPSAS. The

coordinator may need to collaborate with staff in other units within the institution to obtain the requested information.

What are the steps involved with data collection?

NPSAS data collection comprises the following steps:

- The institution's chief administrator names a coordinator.
- The coordinator completes the Institution Registration Page on the website.
- The coordinator provides a list of enrolled students.
- A sample of students is selected from the provided list.
- The coordinator provides student records data for the sampled students.

How much time will NPSAS take to complete?

The total time required to complete all the tasks for this study is estimated to average about 25 hours per institution. This estimate includes the time expected to complete the Institution Registration Page (5 minutes), prepare the student enrollment list (2.8 hours), and provide the student record data (22 hours). If you have any comments concerning the accuracy of the time estimate, suggestions for improving the collections, or any comments or concerns regarding the status of your individual submission of these data, please write to: Postsecondary Data Portal studies, National Center for Education Statistics, PCP, 550 12th St., SW, 4th floor, Washington, DC 20202

Creating the Student Enrollment List

How will the sample at my institution be selected?

The list that you provide to the NCES data collection contractor, RTI International, will be used to select an independent random sample of undergraduates and master's, doctoral, and other graduate students, where appropriate.

How long will it take to create the student enrollment list?

The time required to create the list of enrolled students is estimated to average 2.8 hours. This includes time for reviewing list preparation instructions and preparing the student enrollment list.

What do I need to do?

First, complete the Institution Registration Page, which requests specific information about the term/enrollment periods at your institution for the 2019-20 academic year.

Next, create and upload a data file listing all students enrolled at your institution at any time between July 1, 2019, and April 30, 2020. Please review the Student Enrollment List Preparation Instructions for more information.

Refer to the Student Enrollment List Preparation Instructions for more information on the transmittal options and to determine what additional information is needed when uploading or e-mailing your list of enrolled students.

Why do you need students' home addresses and telephone numbers?

The contact information is not currently needed for this round of NPSAS, but may be needed in the future if the U.S. Department of Education later decides to do a follow up study with some or all of the sampled students.

This information is protected by the Education Sciences Reform Act of 2002 (ESRA). All of the information provided by individuals or institutions 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).

If release of this information requires a special review process at your institution, please contact the Help Desk at 1-855-500-1441 or send an e-mail to [EMAIL ADDRESS]. We will supply information about the study and the laws protecting the confidentiality of the data collected to all those involved in the process, and we will work with you to expedite the return of the other data items requested on the list of enrolled students.

When do you need the list of enrolled students?

Enrollment lists will be collected beginning in <October 2019>. We will send a packet to the assigned coordinator at each institution that will include a due date for the enrollment list along with information on how to access instructions for preparing and transmitting the list. The specific due date for each institution is based on its term structure and is determined after the Institution Registration Page is completed.

Please contact RTI at 1-855-500-1441 or contact us via e-mail at [EMAIL ADDRESS] if you have any questions or concerns about submitting your student enrollment list.

My institution uses different student degree program classifications than you request, so how should I provide degree program?

If possible, please categorize the students using the student degree program categories that we request. However, if this is not possible, then please classify the students as your institution's records indicate and provide us with the definitions of these classifications in an e-mail to [EMAIL ADDRESS].

What should I do if I cannot provide students' first names, middle initials, last names, and name suffixes as four separate fields?

When uploading your file on the website, simply let us know how your file is constructed by providing comments in the text box located on the upload page or send an e-mail to [EMAIL ADDRESS].

Why do I need to provide Social Security numbers (SSNs) in addition to student ID numbers?

We will use the SSNs of the sample students to match against the U.S. Department of Education's Central Processing System (CPS) database, which contains information from the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). For those sample students who applied for federal financial aid, we will use data available from the CPS to reduce the amount of data that institutions will need to provide during student records collection.

The release of this information to NCES without explicit consent is permissible under the Family Educational Rights Privacy Act (FERPA). FERPA explicitly states that an educational institution may disclose personally identifiable information from an education record of a student without prior consent if the disclosure is to authorized representatives of the Secretary of Education (20 U.S.C. §1232g[b][3]), which RTI International is as contractor for NCES. A definition of personally identifiable information can be found in 34 CFR 99.3. Personal identifiers, such as Social Security numbers and student numbers, are included in the definition. You can review this legislation on the U.S. Department of Education's website at <http://www2.ed.gov/policy/gen/reg/ferpa>. For more information on confidentiality and data security see <https://surveys.nces.ed.gov/Portal/Home/Confidentiality>.

What if my institution does not have student ID numbers separate from SSNs?

If your institution does not have separate student ID numbers, then either leave the student ID field blank or put SSN in the student ID field.

What will happen to the student list file after you select the sample?

The U. S. Department of Education has strict requirements to protect personally identifiable information (PII). This data will be stored securely on an Enhanced Security Network, which is certified and accredited as a NIST moderate security level network. The Department of Education and RTI International employ strict procedures for protecting the confidentiality of PII and other sensitive information in all phases of the project. Particular emphasis is placed on guidelines for the transfer of PII; maintenance, storage, and use of

direct identifiers; replacement of direct identifiers with internal codes; security of master survey files; and reporting of data security breaches in accord with the U.S. Department of Education Incident Handling Procedures. For more information on NIST security level, please see FIPS Publication 199 at <http://nvlpubs.nist.gov/nistpubs/FIPS/NIST.FIPS.199.pdf>. For more information on confidentiality and data security see <https://surveys.nces.ed.gov/Portal/Home/Confidentiality>.

Student Enrollment List: which students to include

Whom should I include on my student list? Which students at my institution are eligible for NPSAS?

Your enrollment list should include students from all campuses/schools (e.g., law school, medical school) reported under your IPEDS UNITID. Include students enrolled between July 1, 2019, and April 30, 2020 if they meet all of the following eligibility requirements (this text links to the Student Enrollment List Preparation Instructions).

Whom should I exclude from my student list? Which students at my institution are ineligible for NPSAS?

Please exclude any student who was not enrolled at your institution between July 1, 2019, and April 30, 2020, or who meets at least one of the following criteria:

- The student was not enrolled in either an academic program, a for-credit course, an occupational or vocational program that requires at least 3 months or 300 clock hours of instruction to receive a degree, certificate, or other formal award, or a noncredit course within a Title IV eligible program.
- The student was enrolled concurrently in high school and your institution during this entire period.
- The student was enrolled in your institution solely for the purpose of earning a general educational development (GED®) credential or finishing another high school completion program during this entire period.
- The student was only enrolled in noncredit courses that were not part of a Title IV eligible program.
- The student dropped out of your institution early enough to receive a full tuition refund.
- The student paid tuition solely to a different institution during this period.

Should I include students at branch or extension campuses on the list?

The answer to this question depends on how the branch or extension campus is listed in the U.S. Department of Education's Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS). If the branch or extension campus reports to IPEDS through the same IPEDS UNITID as the institution to which we have sent the NPSAS packet (our sampled institution), then include students from the branch or extension campus on the student enrollment list. If the branch or extension campus reports to IPEDS through a different IPEDS UNITID, then do not include the students from the branch or extension campus on the student list.

If you have questions about whether the students enrolled at a particular site should be listed, please call the Help Desk at 1-855-500-1441 or send e-mail to [\[EMAIL ADDRESS\]](#).

Should I include students enrolled through another registrar's office (e.g., law, dental, medical, or veterinary school) on the list of enrolled students?

If the other registrar's office reports to the U.S. Department of Education's Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS) through the same IPEDS UNITID as the institution to which we have sent the NPSAS packet (our sampled institution), then students registered by this office should be included. If the other registrar's office reports using a separate IPEDS UNITID, then students registered by this office should not be included.

If you have questions about whether the students enrolled at a particular school should be listed, please call the Help Desk at 1-855-500-1441 or send e-mail to [\[EMAIL ADDRESS\]](#).

Because this is a financial aid study, should I include on the list of enrolled students those who did not apply for or did not receive financial aid?

Yes, NPSAS includes aided as well as non-aided students.

When considering dates of enrollment to determine eligibility, the student needs to have been enrolled between July 1, 2019 and April 30, 2020, but do the student's specific term begin and end dates matter if they fall outside of that range?

No. If a student was enrolled in a term that began prior to July 1, 2019, then the student is eligible as long as he or she was still enrolled on July 1, 2019. Similarly, a student who was enrolled on April 30, 2020, is eligible even if the term continues past that date.

Should I include students who enrolled but later withdrew without completing any courses?

Include all eligible students who enrolled and paid their tuition and fees unless they withdrew early enough to receive a full refund of their tuition and fees. Please refer to the eligibility criteria (this text links to the Student Enrollment List Preparation Instructions).

Should I include students taking courses on this campus when this is not the students' home institution?

No, do not include students on your enrollment list who pay their tuition solely to another institution. We consider students to be enrolled at the institution to which they pay their tuition.

Should I include on the enrollment list nonmatriculated students, students in nondegree programs, part-time students, postbaccalaureate students, students taking correspondence courses, distance education students, foreign exchange students, continuing education students, extension division students, etc.?

Yes, include these students on the list if they otherwise satisfy the student eligibility requirements. Note that even students not enrolled in a formal degree program are eligible for the study. For example, someone who is taking a credit-bearing computer programming course to enhance his or her job skills would be considered eligible and should be included on the enrollment list.

Should I include graduate students on the list of enrolled students if they were enrolled in a graduate program but were only auditing courses (e.g., because they did not need any more credits for graduation)?

Yes, students enrolled in academic programs are eligible for this study, even if they are no longer enrolled in courses for credit.

Should I include international students on the student enrollment list?

Yes. International students should be included on the student enrollment list as long as they meet the other eligibility criteria (this text links to the Student Enrollment List Preparation Instructions).

FAQs – Student Records (SR) Collection

Where do I go for the information requested?

The information needed for each of the sampled students is typically collected from three distinct sources at your institution: the Admissions or Registrar's Office, the Bursar's or Business Office, and the Financial Aid Office. If you require assistance after reviewing the *Quick Guide to Providing Student Records Data*, please contact the Help Desk with your questions at 1-855-500-1441 toll free, or via e-mail at [\[EMAIL ADDRESS\]](#).

How long does it take to collect student records data for NPSAS:20?

Our estimates indicate that providing the requested student records data will take about 22 hours on average. If you have any concerns about the amount of time it is taking you to provide the requested data,

please call the Help Desk at 1-855-500-1441, toll-free. RTI will work with you to successfully complete this data collection effort.

How do we provide the data?

There are three methods available for providing the student records data through the PDP website: keying data into the system, filling in and then uploading an Excel template, or uploading data files created by you or an institution programmer.

What assistance is available from the NCES contractor, RTI International, staff?

The Help Desk at RTI International is available to answer your questions about the studies and using this website. Please call 1-855-500-1441 or e-mail [EMAIL ADDRESS] with your concerns. Help Desk staff are available from 9:00 a.m. to 6:30 p.m. Eastern time, Monday - Friday.

NPSAS Reference Materials

- NPSAS:20 Brochure
- Endorsements
- Confidentiality and Data Security Fact Sheet
- Chief Administrator letter
- Coordinator welcome letter
- Overview of NPSAS activities
- Coordinator enrollment list request letter
- Student Enrollment List Preparation Instructions
- Disclosure Notice
- Student Records request letter
- Quick Guide to Providing Student Records Data
- Student Records Handbook
- Student records item overview handout
- Student records Excel template codebook