

**Memorandum**

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

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DATE: May 31, 2017

TO: Robert Sivinski and E. Ann Carson, OMB

THROUGH: Kashka Kubzdela, OMB Liaison, NCES

FROM: Ted Socha, B&B:16/17 Project Officer, NCES  
Tracy Hunt-White, Team Lead, Postsecondary Longitudinal and Sample Surveys, NCES

SUBJECT: 2016-17 Baccalaureate and Beyond Longitudinal Study (B&B:16/17) Main Study Change Request (OMB# 1850-0926 v.4)

The 2016/17 Baccalaureate and Beyond Longitudinal Study (B&B:16/17) is conducted by the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), within the U.S. Department of Education (ED). B&B is designed to follow a cohort of students who completed the requirements for their bachelor's degree during the same academic year. Data from B&B are used to help researchers and policymakers better understand the experiences of bachelor's degree recipients in the years following their degree completion. The request to conduct the B&B:16/17 Main Study was approved on June 1, 2017 (1850-0926 v. 3). Data collection will begin on July 24, 2017.

This request is to make minor modifications to the B&B:16/17 instrument facsimile and to data collection materials. This request does not introduce changes to the approved survey content, estimated sample member burden, or the costs to the federal government. Updated Appendices E and F are included with this memorandum.

**Changes to Data Collection Materials (Appendix E)**

As presented in the Supporting Statement Part B of the approved package, an experiment to be conducted during data collection will determine the effect of three different versions of the confidentiality pledge (Control, "Homeland Security," and "Federal Staff") on sample members' willingness to participate in and complete the B&B:16/17 eligibility screener and survey. We inserted "[PLEDGE FILL]" to indicate that the same experimental text will be added to the study brochures sent to sample members (page E-5).

Additional changes in the contacting materials and study website include:

- (1) **Replacement of "Project Staff."** In the sentence, "Project staff is subject to large fines or imprisonment if individual responses are disclosed," the phrase "project staff is" has been changed to "NCES employees and contractors are" (page E-5).
- (2) **Placement of Paperwork Reduction Act on Website.** In appendix E, we have clarified how the text describing the Paperwork Reduction Act will appear on the website home page. We removed the label "Paperwork Reduction Act," and indicated that the text will appear in the footer (page E-6).

- (3) **Removal of the Pledge Text from Confidentiality Tab.** The confidentiality pledge text to be filled for each experimental group, located under the Confidentiality tab, has been replaced with text stating that only aggregated data will be released. Specifically, “[PLEDGE FILLED]” has been replaced with “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.” In addition, the tab has been renamed from “Confidentiality” to “Information Security” (page E-9).

### **Changes to the Instrument Facsimile (Appendix F)**

We have revised the security questions provided in Appendix F as described below.

- (1) To more accurately describe each form, two of the three security question were renamed (page F-36):
- o SECSCHPKLST, the institution picklist, was renamed from RESPCONF2
  - o SECCHALLENGE, the security challenge form, was renamed from RESPCONF3
- (2) To improve the ease and flow for web respondents, including those who log in more than once to complete the interview, question wording on the respondent name confirmation form (RESPCONF) was revised (page F-36):
- a. OLD: Before you begin, it is important to verify that we are [{If screener} contacting {else} surveying] the correct person.
  - b. NEW: Before you continue, it is important to verify that we are surveying the correct person.
- (3) The academic year referenced on the institution picklist (SECSCHPKLST) was corrected, the wording was revised for sample members completing on the Web, and language about their bachelor’s degree, specific to B&B samples, was added (page F-36):
- a. OLD: We need to verify the school you were attending during the 2011-12 academic year. Did you attend...
  - b. NEW: Please select the school you were attending for your bachelor's degree during the 2015-16 academic year from the list below.
- (4) To improve respondent comprehension of the purpose of the security challenge form (SECHALLENGE) as a second attempt to verify the correct respondent, question wording was revised (page F-36):
- a. OLD: Based on your response, it seems you may not be eligible for this study. We will review your responses and may need to contact you again if we determine that you are eligible to participate in this survey.
  - b. NEW: In order to verify that we are surveying the correct person, please provide the following information: