

MEMORANDUM

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Institute of Education Sciences
National Center for Education Statistics

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ATE: October 24, 2024
TO: Bev Pratt, OMB
THROUGH: Carrie Clarady, NCES
FROM: David Richards, NCES
Re: 2020/25 Beginning Postsecondary Students (BPS:20/25) Full-Scale (OMB #1850-0631 v.21)

The 2020/25 Beginning Postsecondary Students Longitudinal Study (BPS:20/25), conducted by the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), is designed to follow a cohort of students who enroll in postsecondary education for the first time during the same academic year, irrespective of the date of high school completion. The request to conduct the BPS:20/25 field test was last approved in December 2020 (OMB# 1850-0631 v.20), and we are now requesting to conduct the full-scale data collection.

This submission covers BPS:20/25 full-scale materials and procedures for conducting the student survey and matching sample members to administrative records. These materials and procedures are based upon findings from the BPS:20/25 field test. This memo summarizes changes required to move from the field test to full-scale collection. As an aide to readers, we have included some documents (Parts A and B, Appendices A-C) with all changes since v.20 fully tracked as a part of this package. Appendix D, a report on the results of the experiments carried out during the Field Test, is new. A full table of changes to the instrument between the Field Test (v.20) and the Full-Scale Study (v.21) is included at the beginning of Appendix E.

BPS:20/25 Field Test to Full-scale Updates

General

- Changes in the package materials include the removal of references to field test plans and the inclusion of updated plans for the full-scale study. Examples include changes to the full-scale academic years, sample sizes, burden estimates, and data collection procedures.
- Changes to A.7 to reflect the BPS:20/25 response to the revised race/ethnicity standards (SPD-15).
- Editorial revisions were made to improve clarity.

Data Collection

- Two field test data collection experiments explored the effectiveness of:
 - 1) an “address confirmation” incentive where respondents received an additional \$5 if they provided their phone number, mailing or e-mail address before the start of the survey, and
 - 2) eliminating telephone reminders for sample members who responded to NPSAS:20 and BPS:20/22.

Based on results of these experiments (which are summarized in Part B.5 and detailed in Appendix D), the address confirmation will not be implemented in full-scale, but telephone prompts will remain a part of the data collection procedures.

- Given the removal of the address confirmation for full-scale, the total incentives offered will be \$30 to \$65 in full-scale, compared to \$30 to \$70 in the field test.
- Interesting Facts included in contacting materials are updated to include findings from the BPS:20/22 First Look and associated data.
- Some contacting materials have been translated into Spanish to aide in contacting sample members who participated in a Spanish survey in prior rounds, and these contacts are noted in Appendix C.

Survey Design

- The reinterview survey is a field test only component and has been removed for full-scale.

- Some survey items administered in the field test will not be included in the full-scale survey. These decisions were based upon item-level performance in the field test and TRP feedback. All changes are summarized in Appendix E. Additionally, some of the research and policy issues to be addressed by BPS data were updated to reflect the current survey questions and study design.
- An abbreviated survey will be offered in full-scale, and these items are noted in Appendix E. An abbreviated survey was not offered in the field test.
- The abbreviated survey will be translated into Spanish and offered to those sample members who participated in a Spanish survey in prior rounds. No Spanish translation of the survey was offered in the field test.
- Although BPS does not regularly collect race and ethnicity data and instead depends on race identification provided in the base-year NPSAS, given the implementation of new race/ethnicity standards (SPD-15 2024) BPS has added the collection of race/ethnicity data to the BPS:20/25 full-scale study. (See E-136-137 to see the full item in situ.) This data is collected for methodological research purposes only; all stratification and analysis will be based on the race and ethnicity standards under which the base-year NPSAS:20 study collected data.

Data Processing

- Appendix B reflects the name change for the Central Processing System (CPS), now known as the FAFSA Processing System (FPS).
- Two new administrative sources may be pursued for matching purposes: Experian and the National Directory of New Hires (NDNH).