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ABSTRACT

This paper assesses the likely impact of proposed changes in the Office of Postsecondary Education's method of calculating parental base-year income on determining eligibility for student financial aid. In examining applicant data the study concludes that the change to use of prior, prior year (PPY) income is not a good proxy for the current prior year (PY) data. It notes that: (1) at the individual student/family level, PPY either over- or underestimates income for approximately 63 percent of all aid applicants; (2) at the institutional level, almost half the cases will require recalculation of need ; (3) at the state level, many states will be forced to collect PY income on a supplemental form; and (4) at the federal level, the over- or underestimates of income with PPY will create several serious consequences, among them redistribution of federal aid from more needy to less needy families. The report discusses each of these findings in detail. Three appendixes provide: comparative data on Title IV applicant total family income; comparative data on the number and percent of applicants with income changes; and show how the proposed changes would impact upon one public institution. (CH)

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**ANALYSIS OF THE OFFICE OF POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION'S
PRIOR, PRIOR YEAR (PPY) INCOME PROPOSAL:**

**PPY HAS SERIOUS NEGATIVE IMPLICATIONS FOR EQUITY,
BURDEN AND PROGRAM INTEGRITY**

BRIEFING PAPER

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September 1997

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of this paper is to assess the likely impact of the Office of Postsecondary Education's (OPE) prior, prior year income (PPY) proposal. In its latest form, this proposal would alter the free federal form, the federal Title IV data base and the Federal Methodology by substituting the collection and use of prior year income (PY)--commonly referred to as base year income--for the year previous to the base year or PPY income. While PPY income would still be collected on existing paper forms, the expected advantages cited for such a change are lower error rates in the income figures used in determining federal awards and freedom from verification burden for institutions.

Thus far, any unintended effects of using PPY on equity, the distribution of federal aid, and the efficiency and integrity of federal delivery have been described as minimal and acceptable. This conclusion has been accepted because many feel that PPY income is a good proxy for PY or base year income. Indeed, Appendix A, containing representative national applicant data, has been offered by OPE as evidence of the close relationship between PPY and PY.

Unfortunately, closer inspection of OPE's applicant data suggest quite the opposite. The data show clearly that PPY income is *not* a good proxy for PY income and suggest that its use would have major, negative effects on students, institutions, states and the federal government. In particular, our analysis of the OPE data indicates the following:

- at the individual student/family level, PPY over- or underestimates PY income to a moderate or significant degree for approximately 63 percent of *all* aid applicants--both dependent and independent students;
- at the institutional level, an *unacceptably large* number of cases that unfairly alter aid eligibility and create significant increases in unmet aggregate need--cases which are unpredictable a priori--will require collection of PY from all applicants, and recalculation of need for almost half, resulting in *increased* institutional burden;
- at the state level, due to concern about fairness and out year budget exposure, many states will not use the PPY on the federal form and in the federal data base and will be forced to *collect PY income on a supplemental state form*; and
- at the federal level, PPY over- or underestimates PY income in excess of \$47 billion, creating serious consequences for redistribution of federal aid *from more needy to less needy* families, preservation of an integrated delivery system, major implications for program and system integrity, as well as significant out year budget exposure.

Furthermore, these unintended effects would be exacerbated by OPE's corollary proposal to impute parental and student assets rather than collect them on the federal form. Imputation of

assets is a natural outgrowth of the PPY proposal because collection of PPY (two-year-old) asset data is not feasible; and the collection and use of PY assets would amount to double counting.

The overall conclusion of this paper is that, because of its negative effects and its requirement to ignore or impute assets, the PPY proposal should be rejected. It is possible to secure the proposal's intended advantages by simply matching PY income with the IRS--as recommended by the Inspector General (IG) in its reauthorization proposal. This approach has been used traditionally and successfully by several states to reduce income reporting error.

BACKGROUND

The Office of Postsecondary Education (OPE) is recommending "moving the base year back one year to allow for an earlier and simpler application process" as part of its reauthorization proposals. This recommendation, otherwise known as prior, prior year (PPY), would substitute PPY income for the prior year (PY) income currently reported on the FAFSA and used to calculate federal aid eligibility as required under Part F of the Higher Education Act. For example, a student that filed a FAFSA for the 1996-97 academic year, would have reported parental adjusted gross income for the tax year 1994 (PPY) as opposed to 1995 (PY) under current law.

In its earliest form, OPE's PPY proposal called for retrieving data from the IRS to achieve the objectives of: simplifying the application process by removing income from the FAFSA; reducing burden for schools by eliminating verification; and improving accountability by eliminating reporting error. However, in the revised proposal PPY will be collected on the FAFSA. Without retrieving IRS data, the benefits of reducing burden, verification and reporting errors are greatly diminished.

Proposing a change to the most fundamental element of the financial aid programs requires careful evaluation of its impact on all dimensions of the programs--the participants, application forms and processes, delivery, program management and systems. The considerations for evaluating PPY's impact on ensuring equal access for low- and middle-income students include:

- Is it fair for students and families?
- How will it impact aid eligibility and burden at institutions?
- Will it require modification of state aid processes?
- How will it affect the federal goals of equal access, integrated delivery and program and system integrity?
- What is the potential budget impact?

OPE examined its own applicant data from 1995 and 1996 (see Appendix A) and concluded that PPY income could be substituted for PY income without major redistribution of federal student aid or impact on the delivery system. This conclusion was apparently based on an analysis that minimized considerable cross-year variation in income by simply netting income increases against income decreases, disregarding the actual effects on the calculated need of students and their families.

This paper reexamines the same data (see Appendix B), carefully distinguishing between applicants showing income increases and income decreases across the two years. Then, data from the Department of Education Title IV Central Processor Applicant Data Report for 1996-97 are used, along with the frequency distributions and means from OPE's analysis, to estimate the impact on the entire population of aid applicants.

In addition, the paper evaluates the impact of PPY on students and families, institutions, states and the federal programs based on the data findings and the criteria for ensuring equal access. Finally, the paper examines the effects of PPY when coupled with OPE's corollary proposal to impute assets.

IMPACT ON STUDENTS AND FAMILIES

Careful analysis of OPE's data demonstrates that PPY is an extremely poor proxy for PY income *across all student types*. Its use would result in the inequitable treatment for at least 45 percent of all aid applicants and a major redistribution of aid awards. At the aggregate level, Table 1 indicates PPY misestimates PY income for all 1996-97 applicants by approximately \$47 billion.

For 40 percent of applicants whose income changes significantly, PPY overestimates income in excess of \$17.5 billion. This overestimate averages \$11,100 per applicant. For these students and families, the erroneously high EFC based on PPY income decreases their calculated need and thus tends to greatly reduce federal financial aid. On the other hand, PPY significantly underestimates income for 60 percent of applicants on average by \$10,800. In total, these applicants gain a windfall in aid eligibility based on an underestimate of income of over \$26.4 billion.

Dependent Students

Substituting PPY for PY misestimates parental income for 45 percent of dependent student applicants by approximately \$27 billion. Income is overestimated for 35 percent of applicants with significant income changes--by \$14,090 on average. PPY overestimates PY income by more than \$9 billion in total. For the 65 percent whose income is underestimated--on average by \$12,801--the total underestimate is in excess of \$16 billion.

For over 51 percent of dependent students in the \$40,000 to \$60,000 income range, prior, prior year (PPY) overestimates prior year (PY) income by over \$12,000 on average. At the lowest marginal contribution rate, this difference would translate into a potential change in need and eligibility of over \$2,000.

In addition to significant income changes, OPE's data suggest that for dependent student families 55 percent remain in the same income range--e.g., within \$30,000 to \$40,000--for both PPY and PY. PPY underestimates PY income by \$1,165 on average for these families. However, this underestimate does not differentiate between families whose income declines from those whose income increases within this \$10,000 range. Closer analysis reveals that a large portion have moderate income changes between \$5,000 to \$10,000 that result in misestimation of income when using PPY. Our analysis approximates that PPY either over- or underestimates income for an additional 18 percent of all dependent student applicants. Thus, perhaps as many as 63 percent of aid applicants experience income changes between PPY and PY.

Independent Students with Dependents

PPY also misestimates PY income for 35 percent of independent students with dependents by over \$9 billion. PPY overestimates income for 40 percent of these applicants by more than \$3

Table 1
Summary of Significant Income Changes
between 1995-96 and 1996-97 Aid Applicants

	<u>Dependent</u>	<u>Independent with</u> <u>Dependents</u>	<u>Independent without</u> <u>Dependents</u>
Total Significant Income Changes			
Amount	\$27.7 bil*	\$9.3 bil	\$10.3 bil
Percent of Applicants	45%	35%	56%
Significant Overestimate in Income			
Amount	\$9.4 bil	\$3.5 bil	\$4.7 bil
Percent of Income Changes	35%	40%	46%
Average Overestimate	\$14,090	\$10,560	\$7,546
Significant Underestimate in Income			
Amount	\$15.6 bil	\$5.0 bil	\$5.4 bil
Percent of Income Changes	65%	60%	54%
Average Underestimate	\$12,800	\$9,675	\$7,313

*Total dollar amounts are estimates based on applicant population.

billion in total. For the individual student, this overestimate averages \$10,560. Of the remaining 60 percent with significant income changes, the PPY underestimate totals in excess of \$5 billion--by \$9,675 on average.

Furthermore, one third of independent students had incomes within a range of zero to \$10,000 for both years. In all likelihood, PPY over- or underestimates income for some of these students enough to significantly impact their aid eligibility. Because the Department distribution tables combine both increasing and decreasing income up to \$10,000, the total misestimation of income cannot be determined.

Independent Students without Dependents (other than a spouse)

Finally, PPY also misestimates PY income for 56 percent of independent applicants without dependents by over \$10 billion. Of these applicants, PPY overestimates income for 46 percent by \$7,546 on average, the total overestimate is in excess of \$4 billion. For the remaining 54 percent, PPY underestimates PY income by \$7,313 on average--more than \$5 billion in total.

For 56 percent of these independent students in the \$5,000 to \$10,000 income range, prior prior year (PPY) income over- or underestimates prior year (PY) income by more than \$5,000 on average. Even at the lowest marginal contribution rate, this difference would translate into a potential change in need and eligibility of over \$1,000.

IMPLICATIONS FOR INSTITUTIONS

The negative impact of the use of PPY on individual students and families has important repercussions for institutions, resulting in an unacceptably large number of cases that unfairly alter students' aid eligibility and create significant increases in unmet aggregate need. Indeed, over half of all cases would require intervention by aid administrators to ensure the same level of equitable treatment for students that now exists. For example, a public institution with 10,000 dependent applicants and 5,000 independent applicants could expect to adjust aid eligibility for at least 7,245 students (see Appendix C).

Under the PPY proposal, in over 48 percent of cases, an institution would be packaging a student for whom PPY income, need and eligibility differ significantly from PY income, need and eligibility.

In the absence of intervention, 2,846 students would lose considerable eligibility: PPY overestimates income for 1,573 dependent students by \$14,900 on average; and 1,273 independent students on an average of \$7,750.

On the other hand, PPY underestimates income for 2,882 dependent student families on an average of \$12,904; and 1,518 independent students would experience an undeserved windfall based on an underestimate of income of \$7,285 on average.

Finally, even for the remaining 7,755 students, as many as 2,500 could have income changes that require adjusting their eligibility determination. However, the average amount of the income change cannot be estimated from OPE's data. These students will most likely have income changes between \$5,000 and \$10,000.

Assuming that the financial aid administrator intervenes by substituting PY income to hold harmless only those students and parents whose incomes decline, aggregate need for this campus would increase by approximately \$22 million. In the absence of additional federal resources to meet this increase in need, the majority of students would see aid packages falling far short of their expectations based on an inflated need figure based on PPY.

If an institution intervenes only to adjust those cases in which PPY income significantly overestimates PY income, and ignores cases in which PPY income significantly underestimates PY income, aggregate need at the institution would increase dramatically with no increase in available resources.

From an operational standpoint, the frequency and size of income changes between PPY and PY-- 48 percent of all aid applicants--would overload most existing professional judgement processes for recalculating need and verifying the adjustments. Fair treatment and prudent administration of aid funds demands that the responsibility for correction cannot rest solely on self-reporting by students and families since families who gain under PPY would not be inclined to report income increases. Thus, an automated institutional process based on PY income would be required to avoid a \$22 million increase in need.

If an institution intervenes in every case in which PY income differs significantly from PPY income, over 48 percent of cases would require recalculation.

However, since the federal system would not have PY data under OPE's proposal, and since the aid administrator cannot know ahead of time which students will show income changes, a separate form collecting PY income would be required from *all* aid applicants. Thus, the advantage of the PPY proposal--to eliminate the need for collecting and verifying PY income--is completely lost. Ultimately, PPY would result in a significant *increase* in burden at the institutional level.

Whether an institution intervenes only to protect those whose income has decreased significantly, or also to adjust for those whose income has increased significantly, PY income would have to be collected on a separate form for ALL applicants.

For the reasons above, and because most aid administrators will not use PPY income for distribution of federal aid, let alone their institution's own funds, both PPY and PY income figures would be collected from most, if not all, aid applicants. Unless strictly regulated, the presence of two conflicting income estimates would have great potential for undermining the uniform treatment of an individual students across institutions as well as increasing verification burden for institutions.

IMPLICATIONS FOR STATES

States will have to decide if PPY is a fair measure to award state aid, and if it is not, what mechanisms they will use to continue to collect PY income. States are opposed to using PPY for determining aid eligibility, and are concerned that any changes to the FAFSA have equity issues that have significant budgetary impact. The National Association of State Student and Grant Aid Program has conducted research that indicates the PY-based FAFSA is necessary for the administration of \$3 billion of state need-based aid for nearly two million students.

States would not use a PPY income figure that not only undermines the appearance of accuracy and fairness but also leads to out year budget exposure.

The increase in need associated with PPY suggests that most states would not use the income data on the federal form (and in the federal data base) and would be forced to collect PY income on a separate state form. The result would be states abandoning the federal delivery system and a proliferation of supplemental forms creating unnecessary complexity similar to the situation prior to the 1992 amendments when there were 33 different state aid applications. Since the 1992 amendments, only 450,000 of 10 million students rely on a fee-based supplemental form and 49 of the states have abandoned supplemental forms. All states use the federal form and data and only one continues to require a state form, although that form is free to the applicant. Removing PY from the federal form, or any data element integral to states, would be a major setback in streamlining and integrating student aid delivery for both state and federal student aid programs.

States, confronted with a federal form collecting PPY income, would collect PY income on a separate state form.

New York State Higher Education Services Corporation (HESC) sent a letter to Congressman Goodling opposing any modifications to the FAFSA, including PPY income, that would force the use of multiple forms. HESC requested that the Department consider state partnerships issues when evaluating restructuring proposals for the delivery system.

Additionally, HESC suggested that an IRS-based income verification would be more useful using PY income. It referenced a New York State income tax verification process that has successfully reduced errors on the state supplemental form. This is consistent with the recommendation of the IG to match with IRS using PY income.

IMPLICATIONS FOR FEDERAL POLICY

The most important policy considerations for the federal system are determining if the use of PPY maintains access for the neediest students, preserves the federal delivery system, enhances program and system integrity, and minimizes any out year budget exposure. The use of PPY income has the potential for immense redistributive effects from more needy to less needy families with profound repercussions for the long-term health of the Title IV programs. To avoid these redistributive effects for their own aid funds, states and institutions would be forced to collect PY income in the absence of any effort at the federal level to do so--undermining a single, integrated delivery system. Furthermore, federal program and system integrity would be severely eroded if the validity of the fundamental data element is compromised; that is, if the federal system is forced to collect and store an income measure that no one will use and one that bears little relation to individual student awards.

The use of PPY over- or underestimates income by \$47 billion, significantly affecting the distribution of aid for 45 percent of all applicants. This is contrary to the federal role of equal access because it redistributes aid from more needy to less needy students. Of the applicants with significant income changes, 40 percent would have less aid eligibility and less resources to pay for postsecondary education under PPY.

Since the use of PPY income tends to redistribute eligibility from more needy to less needy students, its use would undermine the federal pursuit of equal access.

The use of PPY would have devastating effects on what is now a national delivery system for federal, state and institutional aid. States and institutions that would not use PPY to deliver their own aid would have to obtain this information through alternative mechanisms since the FAFSA would not contain PY data. Supplemental forms collecting the income data necessary for states and institutions would proliferate. This would make the federal application and delivery process largely irrelevant, undermining an integrated delivery system. Furthermore, it would add complexity and burden for students to fill out additional, possibly fee-based forms creating systematic barriers to access.

Many institutions and most states would find it necessary not only to collect PY income but also to use it--instead of PPY income--as the basis for awards. The free federal form (FAFSA) would no longer contain the data necessary for delivering most federal, state and institutional aid.

Furthermore, the federal system would not control which income is used to determine aid eligibility creating large fluctuations in awards between institution opening the doors for fraud and abuse. This lack of accountability at the federal level for who receives how much aid would undermine congressional and public support. For instance, there would be little public faith in the fairness of the aid programs when thousands of students could receive a Pell award based on two-year-old data when their income has increased by \$30,000, \$40,000 or more in subsequent years, particularly when states and institutions use more current income to award their aid. Plus, the federal system would have no way of identifying which students and families had significant income changes.

The presence of both PPY income and PY income in individual student records, and their differential use across institutions and programs, will undermine uniformity in the federal treatment of needy students and public perceptions of program fairness.

Thus, the federal system would lose control of the most basic measure of eligibility determination in the federal methodology and its method of collection--eroding program and system integrity. If institutions were allowed to correct aid eligibility to maintain equity under PPY, the federal system would have to implement a process to collect and monitor what data was used to award aid in order to maintain program integrity. The oversight process for these award changes would increase complexity and burden, without improving the fairness of allowing different aid awards for similar students.

Unless institutions are required to upload all adjustments based on PY income including the PY income figure, the federal student aid data base will not contain the information upon which federal awards were actually made.

While PPY may be an easily verified data element, particularly if coupled with an IRS data match, it does not appreciably increase the overall accuracy of all of the income data collected. The IG found a 4.4 percent error rate in income reported on the FAFSA when it conducted a data match with IRS. However, the most problematic, error-prone and difficult-to-verify items--non taxable income, household size and number in college--remain on the form. The assertions that PPY would "eliminate verification," taken at face value, implies that the inaccuracy of these other data elements would be ignored, degrading program integrity. If the inaccuracy is not ignored, then

the proposal merely eliminates from the form the data item that is simplest to understand (“go to line 38 of the IRS form and copy it onto the FAFSA”), the least error-prone (3.4 percent in the last national study), and the easiest to verify (give me your tax form).

PPY potentially has enormous budget implications unless the delivery system can accurately identify all gains and losses for individual applicants under PPY. The propensity is for families to seek recourse if they unfairly lose aid eligibility, whereas, families who gain by the system will not. In effect, all corrections will be one-sided--ballooning the overall demand for all types of aid based on more than \$47 billion in income. Obviously, the federal system cannot afford modifications that only serve to increase aid eligibility. The application process will have to accommodate both the increase in aggregate need for families where PPY underestimates income, as well as equity adjustments to need for families where PPY overestimates income. The only way to protect the federal interest by making equity adjustments for both over- and underestimation of income is to collect PY income, in other words, using the same income data that is used now. Most likely, the greatest budgetary effect will be on subsidized loans but, eventually, PPY will have budgetary implications for all aid programs including the Pell Grant.

CONCLUSION

The PPY proposal, in its current form, will not simplify application processes, eliminate verification or improve accountability. To the contrary, it will result in a major redistribution of aid, a burdensome process to correct the inequities created by large errors in income, budget exposure and diminished program integrity.

The large errors in need would be exacerbated by OPE’s corollary proposal to impute parental and student assets rather than collect them on the federal form. Imputation of assets is a natural outgrowth of the PPY proposal because collection of PPY (two-year-old) asset data is not feasible; and the collection and use of PY assets would amount to double counting. However, imputing assets would increase the inequities created by PPY because students and families would not only be held to an unfair treatment of income, but they would be expected to have accumulated assets based on a number that over- or underestimates income in the majority of cases. However, even if imputation were feasible, the significant cross-year variation in income between PPY and PY indicates that an asset number cannot be reasonably determined.

As an alternative to PPY, the objectives of reducing burden and improving accountability can be achieved through a match of PY income reported on the FAFSA to the IRS. The IG has made such a recommendation in its reauthorization proposal. Thus, the most valid measure of income, PY, is retained in the Title IV data base. Continuing to use PY income will avoid the problems that are created by PPY. Students and families can be assured a fair eligibility determination. Institutions will not be faced with significant increases in aggregate need without federal resources to meet the demand. States will not have to collect PY through additional state forms, and a streamlined and integrated delivery system can be maintained. Finally, the federal system can ensure limited federal funds are targeted to the neediest students with adequate program and

system integrity, and control out year budget expenditures. Furthermore, a data match with PY income would eliminate the error found by the IG.

Several states have implemented a match between income data provided on the FAFSA and state tax data bases. These states have found that this match in conjunction with notification to the applicant that a match with tax records will occur has reduced reporting error to approximately one percent, and results in few adjustments to awards. According to states, the notification that a tax match will occur is one of the most effective mechanisms for obtaining valid reporting of applicant income. The experience of these states are a good indicator of what could be achieved at the federal level.

The PPY proposal should not go forward because it fundamentally undermines access and weakens the federal programs. And, attempts to adjust for the inequities at institutional and state levels undermine federal delivery and program and system integrity. Furthermore, these negative consequences are exacerbated by OPE's recommendation to impute assets. The objectives of simplification and improved accountability can be achieved by pursuing an IRS data match with PY income.

APPENDIX A

**DISTRIBUTION OF TITLE IV APPLICANTS
1995-96 TOTAL FAMILY INCOME BY 1996-97 TOTAL FAMILY INCOME
(COMPARISON OF AVERAGE 1995-96 AND 1996-97 TOTAL INCOME)**

Prepared by the Department of Education

Distribution of Title IV Applicants 1995 Total Family Income by 1996-97 Total Family Income
(Comparison of Average 1995-96 and 1996-97 Total Income)

1996-97 Total Income

1995 Total Income	0-10000	10001-20001	20001-30000	30001-40000	40001-50000	50001-60000	60001-70000	70001-80000	80001-100000	100001+	Table Total	
0-10,000	Count	199,980	62,935	15,881	5,117	2,059	1,294	353	412	118	288,795	
	Table %	8%	3%	1%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	12%	
	Mean	4,971	6,266	5,664	4,417	4,277	3,402	2,330	1,633	2,955	3,978	5,256
10,001-20,000	Count	48,054	230,095	76,816	11,822	4,647	1,706	471	529	471	375,668	
	Table %	2%	10%	3%	1%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	16%	
	Mean	13,836	14,835	16,944	16,131	16,380	15,690	16,530	16,163	17,607	14,273	15,212
20,001-30,000	Count	14,293	46,936	228,036	73,169	13,881	5,235	1,823	647	1,000	385,608	
	Table %	1%	2%	10%	3%	1%	0%	0%	0%	0%	16%	
	Mean	24,215	23,364	24,462	26,667	25,961	26,163	26,095	25,953	25,181	24,880	24,827
30,001-40,000	Count	6,176	11,587	40,408	158,337	65,346	12,940	4,294	2,117	1,588	304,028	
	Table %	0%	1%	2%	7%	3%	1%	0%	0%	0%	13%	
	Mean	34,985	34,310	33,679	34,510	36,517	36,163	36,040	35,809	36,082	34,936	34,944
40,001-50,000	Count	4,235	3,706	9,328	35,879	140,221	67,876	13,058	4,117	2,294	282,266	
	Table %	0%	0%	0%	2%	6%	3%	1%	0%	0%	12%	
	Mean	44,904	44,017	44,280	43,545	44,453	46,475	45,908	45,064	45,507	45,889	44,909
50,001-60,000	Count	2,353	2,294	5,058	6,646	27,327	113,577	57,582	12,116	5,176	234,094	
	Table %	0%	0%	0%	0%	1%	5%	2%	1%	0%	10%	
	Mean	54,885	54,383	54,553	53,734	53,500	54,312	56,300	56,069	55,468	55,108	54,824
60,001-70,000	Count	2,117	1,412	2,470	4,294	6,999	23,351	82,345	45,937	2,941	182,511	
	Table %	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	1%	3%	2%	0%	8%	
	Mean	64,865	63,486	64,022	64,333	64,039	63,542	64,287	66,127	66,036	65,868	64,772
70001-80000	Count	3,923	15,925	25,286	35,090	46,059	56,212	65,441	73,773	86,153	119,966	
	Table %	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	5%	
	Mean	74,145	74,691	74,315	74,759	73,642	73,769	73,379	74,181	75,884	75,999	74,634
80,001-100,000	Count	1,529	823	1,118	1,765	2,059	2,706	4,764	13,410	29,409	134,869	
	Table %	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	1%	3%	6%	
	Mean	88,016	89,827	90,637	87,885	86,940	87,950	87,117	86,007	87,586	92,265	88,478
100,001+	Count	2,922	14,284	25,976	34,827	44,381	55,754	66,148	75,819	90,135	113,938	
	Table %	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	5%	
	Mean	128,477	139,666	143,840	190,439	121,579	115,490	176,713	119,450	113,829	137,572	131,728
Table Total	Count	280,266	361,376	380,668	300,088	266,620	235,153	184,805	132,869	145,103	2,403,642	
	Table %	12%	15%	16%	13%	11%	10%	8%	6%	6%	100%	
	Mean	10,542	16,376	24,728	34,403	43,127	51,922	61,860	69,815	81,611	113,909	40,838
		5,079	15,336	24,818	34,944	44,937	54,851	64,822	74,739	88,768	132,504	42,449

Distribution of Title IV Applicants 1995 Total Family Income by 1996-97 Total Family Income
(Comparison of Average 1955-96 and 1996-97 Total Income)

1995 Total Income	1996-97 Total Income											Table Total		
	0-10,000	10,001-20,001	20,001-30,000	30,001-40,000	40,001-50,000	50,001-60,000	60,001-70,000	70,001-80,000	80,001-100,000	100,001+				
0-10,000	Count	373,492	90,873	9,058	1,706	353	176	118	59	118	0	118	294	476,246
	Table %	32%	8%	1%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	41%
	Mean	4,677	6,425	6,033	4,369	4,936	1,813	1,329	6,953	6,953	4,272	95,318	2,155	5,032
10,001-20,000	Count	5,323	13,439	15,186	33,380	46,383	53,851	65,852	71,526	95,318	204,860	7,274		
	Table %	5%	16%	5%	1%	1%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	26%
	Mean	6,091	14,532	16,422	16,626	15,993	16,302	13,774	13,402	14,460	14,709	15,446		
20,001-30,000	Count	10,822	30,703	109,224	31,409	4,294	1,118	353	118	0	59	188,099		
	Table %	1%	3%	9%	3%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	16%		
	Mean	23,747	23,324	24,140	26,539	25,830	25,949	24,514	24,452	27,803	24,436	24,480		
30,001-40,000	Count	2,412	5,705	17,175	44,054	16,645	1,823	471	235	176	59	88,756		
	Table %	0%	1%	2%	4%	1%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	8%		
	Mean	33,683	34,504	33,279	34,112	36,205	35,817	36,375	36,824	39,106	34,415	33,799		
40,001-50,000	Count	4,941	15,856	26,015	34,867	43,997	52,915	63,352	72,777	84,712	391,060			
	Table %	0%	2%	7%	10%	13%	17%	22%	29%	39%	54%			
	Mean	45,115	45,115	45,115	45,115	45,115	45,115	45,115	45,115	45,115	45,115			
50,001-60,000	Count	765	1,412	2,882	8,058	22,351	8,999	1,176	118	176	59	46,054		
	Table %	0%	0%	0%	1%	2%	1%	0%	0%	0%	0%	4%		
	Mean	44,785	43,922	43,975	43,361	44,562	46,093	46,232	49,225	46,346	44,661	44,661		
60,001-70,000	Count	3,565	15,691	26,053	35,794	45,115	53,560	62,980	75,318	90,118	110,113			
	Table %	0%	4%	8%	11%	14%	18%	23%	30%	39%	53%			
	Mean	65,762	65,762	65,762	65,762	65,762	65,762	65,762	65,762	65,762	65,762			
70,001-80,000	Count	5,877	14,689	25,056	36,933	45,833	55,630	65,300	74,344	87,064	117,692			
	Table %	0%	4%	8%	11%	14%	18%	23%	30%	39%	53%			
	Mean	74,344	74,344	74,344	74,344	74,344	74,344	74,344	74,344	74,344	74,344			
80,001-100,000	Count	118	0	176	118	471	529	941	2,294	1,823	294	6,764		
	Table %	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	1%		
	Mean	72,905	0	70,804	76,355	75,779	72,337	74,376	74,100	76,160	74,430	74,619		
100,001+	Count	4,545	0	23,144	35,304	44,724	54,802	65,614	74,673	86,012	239,722			
	Table %	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%			
	Mean	118	0	118	118	118	118	118	118	118	118			
Table Total	Count	446,602	310,675	195,039	93,814	51,054	25,644	15,057	8,587	7,235	3,764	1,157,472		
	Table %	39%	27%	17%	8%	4%	2%	1%	1%	1%	0%	100%		
	Mean	6,573	13,593	22,635	31,577	42,273	49,843	58,659	66,583	78,462	94,017	17,580		

Independent Students without Dependents
(other than a spouse)

Distribution of Title IV Applicants 1995 Total Family Income by 1994-97 Total Family Income
(Comparison of Average 1955-96 and 1994-97 Total Income)

1994-97 Total Income

1995 Independent Student's Total Income	Count	Table %	Mean	1994-97 Total Income												Total												
				1-5,000	5,001-10,000	10,001-15,000	15,001-20,000	20,001-25,000	25,001-30,000	30,001-35,000	35,001-40,000	40,001-45,000	45,001-50,000	50,001-55,000	55,001-60,000		60,001-65,000	65,001-70,000	70,001-75,000	75,001-80,000	80,001-85,000	85,001-90,000	90,001-95,000	95,001-100,000	Total			
				Count	Table %	Mean	Count	Table %	Mean	Count	Table %	Mean	Count	Table %	Mean		Count	Table %	Mean	Count	Table %	Mean	Count	Table %	Mean	Count	Table %	Mean
0	38,229	31.0%	10,117	1,039	555	233	118	0	0	0	17%	118	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	31,344	0%	
1-5,000	31,407	74.2%	19,449	5,999	1,882	1,939	329	213	294	294	11%	294	11%	294	11%	294	11%	294	11%	294	11%	294	11%	294	11%	294	11%	316,613
5,001-10,000	18,468	16.1%	12,336	3,407	2,376	3,236	3,681	3,681	3,681	3,681	15%	3,681	15%	3,681	15%	3,681	15%	3,681	15%	3,681	15%	3,681	15%	3,681	15%	3,681	15%	36,314
10,001-15,000	7,411	6.1%	12,320	4,407	1,821	1,821	1,821	1,821	1,821	1,821	8%	1,821	8%	1,821	8%	1,821	8%	1,821	8%	1,821	8%	1,821	8%	1,821	8%	1,821	8%	24,284
15,001-20,000	6,371	5.3%	11,549	3,761	3,761	3,761	3,761	3,761	3,761	3,761	6%	3,761	6%	3,761	6%	3,761	6%	3,761	6%	3,761	6%	3,761	6%	3,761	6%	3,761	6%	21,600
20,001-25,000	3,821	3.1%	12,333	3,215	3,215	3,215	3,215	3,215	3,215	3,215	13%	3,215	13%	3,215	13%	3,215	13%	3,215	13%	3,215	13%	3,215	13%	3,215	13%	3,215	13%	16,427
25,001-30,000	12,519	10.3%	12,025	12,025	12,025	12,025	12,025	12,025	12,025	12,025	10%	12,025	10%	12,025	10%	12,025	10%	12,025	10%	12,025	10%	12,025	10%	12,025	10%	12,025	10%	12,025
30,001-35,000	12,519	10.3%	12,025	12,025	12,025	12,025	12,025	12,025	12,025	12,025	10%	12,025	10%	12,025	10%	12,025	10%	12,025	10%	12,025	10%	12,025	10%	12,025	10%	12,025	10%	12,025
35,001-40,000	2,117	1.7%	16,998	5,332	1,821	1,821	1,821	1,821	1,821	1,821	8%	1,821	8%	1,821	8%	1,821	8%	1,821	8%	1,821	8%	1,821	8%	1,821	8%	1,821	8%	101,637
40,001-45,000	17,124	14.1%	16,979	17,903	17,903	17,903	17,903	17,903	17,903	17,903	15%	17,903	15%	17,903	15%	17,903	15%	17,903	15%	17,903	15%	17,903	15%	17,903	15%	17,903	15%	64,582
45,001-50,000	21,870	18.1%	21,111	21,870	21,870	21,870	21,870	21,870	21,870	21,870	19%	21,870	19%	21,870	19%	21,870	19%	21,870	19%	21,870	19%	21,870	19%	21,870	19%	21,870	19%	21,870
50,001-55,000	26,447	21.6%	21,870	21,870	21,870	21,870	21,870	21,870	21,870	21,870	19%	21,870	19%	21,870	19%	21,870	19%	21,870	19%	21,870	19%	21,870	19%	21,870	19%	21,870	19%	21,870
55,001-60,000	215	0.2%	1,000	832	1,388	4,176	7,323	3,444	1,333	706	3%	706	3%	706	3%	706	3%	706	3%	706	3%	706	3%	706	3%	706	3%	28,221
60,001-65,000	32,146	26.4%	32,333	32,333	32,333	32,333	32,333	32,333	32,333	32,333	28%	32,333	28%	32,333	28%	32,333	28%	32,333	28%	32,333	28%	32,333	28%	32,333	28%	32,333	28%	32,333
65,001-70,000	118	0.1%	706	333	1,412	2,333	2,425	1,117	425	1,117	1%	1,117	1%	1,117	1%	1,117	1%	1,117	1%	1,117	1%	1,117	1%	1,117	1%	1,117	1%	18,100
70,001-75,000	38,182	31.3%	37,921	36,991	36,991	36,991	36,991	36,991	36,991	36,991	33%	36,991	33%	36,991	33%	36,991	33%	36,991	33%	36,991	33%	36,991	33%	36,991	33%	36,991	33%	37,284
75,001-80,000	41,097	33.7%	41,817	41,817	41,817	41,817	41,817	41,817	41,817	41,817	37%	41,817	37%	41,817	37%	41,817	37%	41,817	37%	41,817	37%	41,817	37%	41,817	37%	41,817	37%	41,817
80,001-85,000	225	0.2%	1,000	832	1,388	4,176	7,323	3,444	1,333	706	3%	706	3%	706	3%	706	3%	706	3%	706	3%	706	3%	706	3%	706	3%	28,221
85,001-90,000	41,097	33.7%	41,817	41,817	41,817	41,817	41,817	41,817	41,817	41,817	37%	41,817	37%	41,817	37%	41,817	37%	41,817	37%	41,817	37%	41,817	37%	41,817	37%	41,817	37%	41,817
90,001-95,000	0	0%	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0
95,001-100,000	0	0%	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0
Table Total	122,529	100%	122,529	122,529	122,529	122,529	122,529	122,529	122,529	122,529	100%	122,529	100%	122,529	100%	122,529	100%	122,529	100%	122,529	100%	122,529	100%	122,529	100%	122,529	100%	

APPENDIX B

**NUMBER AND PERCENT OF APPLICANTS WITH INCOME CHANGES
BETWEEN 1995-96 AND 1996-97 TOTAL FAMILY INCOME BY INCOME LEVEL**

This analysis used the Department's PPY analysis tables titled the Distribution of Title IV Applicants 1995-96 Total Family Income by 1996-97 Total Family Income for dependent students, independent students with dependents, and independent students without dependents. These tables use applicant income for tax years ending 1994 and 1995.

The Department tables contain 2.4 million dependent student applicants, 1.2 million independent students with dependents applicants and 1.1 million independent students without dependents (other than a spouse) applicants for a total of 4.7 million. This is 58 percent of the total applicants for 1996-97. It is assumed that these tables are representative of the entire population.

A section of the Department's Table for Dependent Students is in Table 1. These income ranges correspond to the lines bolded and italicized in Table 2. This illustrates how the income increases and decreases were derived from the Department tables. Bolded cells are income changes that did not fall outside the income category specified--for dependent students this is a \$10,000 range. In the Department tables (see Appendix A), these are the highlighted cells that fall along the diagonal.

The number of applicants with decreasing income was calculated by counting the number of applicants that fell in a cell that had mean 96 income (1994 tax year income, 95-96 award year) higher than mean 97 income (1995 tax year income, 96-97 award year) by income level. In the Department's tables, these are any of the cells that fall to the left of the boxes along the diagonal. The average income decrease was calculated by taking a weighted average of the difference in mean incomes for each of the cells.

The number of applicants with increasing income was calculated by counting the number of applicants that fell in a cell that had mean 96 income (1994 tax year income, 95-96 award year) lower than mean 97 income (1995 tax year income, 96-97 award year) by income level. In the Department's tables, these are any of the cells that fall to the right of the cells along the diagonal. The average income increase was calculated by taking a weighted average of the difference in mean incomes for each of the cells.

TABLE 1

**Department of Education
Distribution of Title IV Applicants 1995-96 Total Family Income by 1996-97 Total Family Income
(Comparison of Average 1995-96 and 1996-97 Total Income)**

1995 Total Income	1996 Total Income	\$0-10k	\$10-20k	\$20-30k	\$30-40k	\$40-50k	\$50-60k	\$60-70k	\$70-80k	\$80-100	\$100k+	Table Total
	Count	14,293	46,936	228,036	73,169	13,881	5,235	1,823	588	647	1,000	385,608
\$20-30k	96 Mean	24,215	23,364	24,462	26,667	25,961	26,163	26,095	25,953	25,181	24,880	24,827
	97 Mean	4,524	16,451	25,116	33,519	44,100	54,424	64,048	75,302	89,184	189,136	26,768
\$30-40k	Count	6,176	11,587	40,408	158,337	65,346	12,940	4,294	2,117	1,588	1,235	304,028
	96 Mean	34,985	34,310	33,679	34,510	63,517	36,163	36,040	35,809	36,082	34,936	34,944
	97 Mean	4,136	15,795	26,263	35,362	43,504	54,027	64,488	74,061	88,797	165,378	36,805
\$40-50k	Count	4,235	3,706	9,528	35,879	140,221	67,876	13,058	4,117	2,294	1,353	282,266
	96 Mean	44,904	44,017	44,280	43,545	44,453	46,475	45,908	45,064	45,507	45,589	44,909
	97 Mean	3,426	15,930	25,695	36,216	45,317	53,428	63,934	74,034	88,424	126,879	46,455

Dependent Students

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TABLE 2

**Number and Percent of Applicants with Income Changes
between 1995-96 and 1996-97 Total Family Income by Income Level**

From Distribution of Title IV Applicants 1995-96 Total Family Income by 1996-97 Total Family Income
(Comparison of Average 1995-96 and 1996-97 Total Income)

Income Range	Number decrease income	Percent Decrease	Average Decrease in Mean Income	Number change to \pm \$10,000	Percent \pm \$10,000	Net Change in Mean Income	Number increase income	Percent Increase	Average Increase in Mean Income	Total Applicants
Dependent Students										
\$0-10,000	0	n/a	n/a	199,980	69.25%	\$108	88,815	30.75%	\$13,429	2,309,772
\$10,001-20,000	48,054	12.79%	(\$8,092)	230,095	61.25%	\$649	97,521	25.96%	\$11,277	
\$20,001-30,000	61,229	15.88%	(\$9,896)	228,036	59.14%	\$654	96,343	24.98%	\$12,507	
\$30,001-40,000	58,171	19.13%	(\$12,115)	158,337	52.08%	\$852	87,520	28.79%	\$12,976	
\$40,001-50,000	53,348	18.90%	(\$13,492)	140,221	49.68%	\$864	88,698	31.42%	\$11,669	
\$50,001-60,000	43,878	18.74%	(\$15,262)	113,577	48.52%	\$1,181	76,639	32.74%	\$12,370	
\$60,001-70,000	40,643	22.27%	(\$17,580)	82,345	45.12%	\$1,154	59,524	32.61%	\$12,172	
\$70,001-80,000	29,880	24.51%	(\$18,312)	50,818	41.68%	\$1,291	41,231	33.82%	\$13,183	
\$80,001-100,000	28,174	20.89%	(\$27,310)	77,286	57.30%	\$2,549	29,409	21.81%	\$21,673	
Total	363,377	15.73%	(\$14,090)	1,280,695	55.45%	\$1,165	665,700	28.82%	\$12,801	
Independent Students with Dependents										
\$0-10,000	0	n/a	n/a	373,492	78.42%	\$306	102,755	21.58%	\$9,281	1,154,531
\$10,001-20,000	58,641	19.36%	(\$7,348)	181,629	59.97%	\$654	62,581	20.66%	\$8,555	
\$20,001-30,000	41,525	22.08%	(\$9,948)	109,224	58.07%	\$708	37,351	19.86%	\$9,209	
\$30,001-40,000	25,292	28.50%	(\$11,880)	44,054	49.64%	\$755	19,409	21.87%	\$10,951	
\$40,001-50,000	13,117	28.48%	(\$14,029)	22,351	48.53%	\$553	10,587	22.99%	\$9,955	
\$50,001-60,000	7,647	31.10%	(\$15,072)	9,411	38.28%	\$671	7,528	30.62%	\$13,026	
\$60,001-70,000	4,999	32.94%	(\$17,226)	6,646	43.80%	\$1,071	3,529	23.26%	\$14,038	
\$70,001-80,000	2,353	34.79%	(\$22,714)	2,294	33.91%	\$573	2,117	31.30%	\$31,439	
\$80,001-100,000	2,235	37.26%	(\$27,791)	2,764	46.07%	\$772	1,000	16.67%	\$23,402	
Total	155,809	13.50%	(\$10,560)	751,865	65.12%	\$496	246,857	21.38%	\$9,675	
Independent Students without Dependents										
\$0	0	n/a	n/a	38,820	45.52%	\$0	46,467	54.48%	\$4,670	1,125,896
\$1,000-5,000	31,409	9.92%	(\$2,139)	180,688	57.08%	(\$94)	104,460	33.00%	\$6,361	
\$5,001-10,000	69,346	26.55%	(\$4,301)	122,929	47.06%	\$193	68,935	26.39%	\$7,270	
\$10,001-15,000	60,935	37.03%	(\$6,451)	61,876	37.60%	\$272	41,762	25.38%	\$7,356	
\$15,001-20,000	42,642	41.98%	(\$8,161)	32,585	32.08%	\$240	26,349	25.94%	\$8,912	
\$20,001-25,000	26,762	41.44%	(\$9,476)	21,468	33.24%	\$638	16,353	25.32%	\$9,031	
\$25,001-30,000	16,763	41.30%	(\$11,104)	13,293	32.75%	\$492	10,528	25.94%	\$13,488	
\$30,001-35,000	10,940	40.79%	(\$11,971)	7,352	27.41%	\$518	8,528	31.80%	\$9,036	
\$35,001-40,000	8,295	45.05%	(\$13,758)	4,529	24.60%	\$364	5,588	30.35%	\$9,919	
\$40,001-45,000	6,529	43.88%	(\$14,981)	3,764	25.30%	(\$70)	4,587	30.83%	\$9,612	
\$45,001-50,000	4,059	49.64%	(\$16,212)	1,412	17.27%	\$904	2,706	33.09%	\$10,627	
\$50,001-60,000	4,411	38.07%	(\$20,449)	4,235	36.55%	\$522	2,941	25.38%	\$10,434	
\$60,001-70,000	2,530	42.16%	(\$21,200)	2,059	34.31%	\$869	1,412	23.53%	\$19,449	
\$70,001-80,000	1,295	42.32%	(\$30,279)	1,118	36.54%	\$1,735	647	21.14%	\$19,498	
\$80,001-100,000	707	27.31%	(\$34,969)	1,353	52.26%	\$2,214	529	20.43%	\$17,413	
Total	286,623	25.46%	(\$7,546)	497,481	44.19%	\$216	341,792	30.36%	\$7,313	

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APPENDIX C

**IMPACT OF OFFICE OF POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION'S
PRIOR, PRIOR YEAR PROPOSAL AT A PUBLIC INSTITUTION**

Analysis of OPE's Prior Prior Year (PPY) Proposal* Impact at a Public Institution

PPY ('95) Income Range	Number of Applicants	Cases where PPY Overestimates PY Income		Cases Where PPY Underestimates PY Income		Total Cases Requiring Recalculation	
		n	mean income decline	n	mean income increase	n	%
Dependent Students							
\$0-10,000	1,200	n/a		369	\$13,429	369	31%
\$10,001-20,000	1,570	201	(\$8,092)	408	\$12,251	608	39%
\$20,001-30,000	1,600	254	(\$9,894)	400	\$12,507	654	41%
\$30,001-40,000	1,265	242	(\$12,115)	364	\$11,551	606	48%
\$40,001-50,000	1,175	222	(\$13,492)	369	\$11,590	591	50%
\$50,001-60,000	975	183	(\$15,262)	319	\$12,580	502	51%
\$60,001-70,000	770	171	(\$17,580)	251	\$12,172	423	55%
\$70,001-80,000	545	134	(\$18,312)	184	\$13,183	318	58%
over \$80,001	900	188	(\$27,310)	196	\$21,673	384	43%
Total	10,000	1,573	(\$14,906)	2,882	\$12,904	4,455	45%
Independent Students							
\$0	380	---	---	207	\$4,670	207	54%
\$0-5,000	1405	139	(\$2,139)	464	\$6,361	603	43%
\$5,001-10,000	1160	308	(\$4,301)	306	\$7,270	614	53%
\$10,001-15,000	730	270	(\$6,451)	185	\$10,111	455	62%
\$15,001-20,000	450	189	(\$8,161)	117	\$8,912	306	68%
\$20,001-25,000	285	118	(\$11,123)	72	\$14,301	190	67%
\$25,001-30,000	180	74	(\$11,104)	47	\$13,488	121	67%
\$30,001-35,000	120	49	(\$12,085)	38	\$9,036	87	73%
\$35,001-40,000	80	36	(\$13,758)	24	\$9,919	60	75%
\$40,001-45,000	65	29	(\$14,981)	20	\$9,612	49	75%
\$45,001-50,000	35	17	(\$16,212)	12	\$10,627	29	83%
\$50,001-60,000	50	19	(\$22,080)	13	\$12,102	32	63%
\$60,001-70,000	30	13	(\$21,200)	7	\$19,449	20	66%
\$70,001-80,000	15	6	(\$30,279)	3	\$19,498	10	63%
over \$80,001	15	4	(\$34,969)	3	\$17,413	7	48%
Total	5000	1,273	(\$7,752)	1,518	\$7,285	2,790	56%
Total Applicants	15,000						
Total Requiring Recalculation	7,246						
% Requiring Recalculation	48%						

* Based on national application frequency distributions and means supplied by the Department of Education

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