

**COLLEGE EXPERIENCES
SURVEY: METHODOLOGICAL
SUMMARY**

Final Report

December 31, 2009

David DesRoches
John Hall
Betsy Santos



MATHEMATICA
Policy Research, Inc.

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A. INTRODUCTION

In an effort to better understand the factors associated with college persistence and attrition, the Survey Research Center at Princeton University, with funding from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, is conducting the College Student Attrition Project. As part of that project, Mathematica Policy Research conducted the College Experiences Survey.

The sample frame included the undergraduate entering classes of 1999 from the University of Florida at Gainesville, the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, and Stony Brook University, including all those who later graduated, transferred, or dropped out. The data collection used a mixed-mode approach consisting of a web-based questionnaire with telephone followup. This report summarizes the College Experiences Survey data collection procedures and the results that were obtained.

B. THE COLLEGE EXPERIENCES SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE DESIGN AND CONTENT

The questionnaire design process for the College Experiences Survey included multiple iterations of content development and pretesting. Shortly after the contract award in May 2007, the principal investigator, Dr. Deborah Prentice of Princeton University, provided a set of proposed questions to Mathematica for review, and “Phase 1” of the questionnaire development began. The initial set of questionnaire topics focused on four main areas: (1) the college application process and expectations, (2) family support, (3) experiences while enrolled, and (4) reasons for dropping out or transferring to another school. A collaborative process between Princeton and Mathematica refined these content areas, culminating in a set of pretest interviews conducted beginning in January 2008. A total of five interviews were conducted with individuals who had enrolled in a college or university at roughly the same time as the target population (1999). Given that college attendance for these former students had begun nearly a decade ago, the pretest interviews indicated that responses to questions about college experiences that happened during specific years of enrollment suffered from recall issues.

These findings prompted a second phase of the questionnaire development process, during which the questionnaire domains were changed to include a stronger emphasis on student majors, problems encountered while enrolled, and students’ satisfaction with their experiences at their schools. In May 2008, the Phase 2 instrument was pretested with another six former students. Minor adjustments were made to the instrument based on the findings from these pretest interviews, and the final instrument was provided to Mathematica programmers for development of web and computer-assisted telephone interviewing (CATI) instruments in June 2008.

C. SAMPLING DESIGN

The College Experiences Survey sample included 3,299 individuals of various demographic backgrounds and graduation statuses, selected from the three institutions. It included

- 991 respondents from Stony Brook University, 1,039 from the University of Florida at Gainesville, and 1,269 from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign
- 1,657 men and 1,642 women
- 809 respondents of Hispanic origin
- Among the non-Hispanics, 820 African Americans, 829 Asians, and 841 Caucasians
- 1,119 respondents who had graduated more than four years prior to selecting the sample
- 990 respondents who had graduated within the past four years
- 1,190 respondents who had not graduated from the school from which they had been sampled

Appendix A presents a detailed breakdown of the sample.

D. DATA COLLECTION

1. Respondent Materials Development

The survey materials sent to respondents were created with two main goals in mind: to emphasize the study's purpose and the importance of participation and to encourage completing the questionnaire on the web. The College Experiences Survey materials included

- **Advance Letters.** We designed an advance letter for the survey that was sent to all sample members at the start of the data collection period. The advance letters were mailed on Princeton University letterhead, included the principal investigator's signature, and were sent with school-specific consent forms.
- **Reminder Postcards.** We designed several reminder postcards for the survey; these were sent to nonrespondents at various times throughout the survey period. The initial postcard was sent after the advance letter mailing to remind all nonrespondents about the survey. Because of confidentiality concerns, the postcard omitted login and password information, but it did include the project help line number so that sample members could call in for this information. Later in the data collection period we designed additional postcards for graduates and nongraduates so we could announce the increased incentive for completing the survey and tailor messages to nonrespondents in each group.

- **Locating Letters.** A locating letter was sent to all good addresses for which a valid phone number did not exist. The purpose of the locating letter was either to obtain updated address information from the post office, if the address was returned as incorrect; to motivate sample members to call in using the toll-free number provided; or motivate them to complete the questionnaire on the web.
- **Email Message.** Our locating efforts yielded email addresses for some sample members, and we sent these members an email message at various times throughout the survey period. Similar to the postcards, the emails did not contain login information; rather, it encouraged sample members to either call in to complete the interview or reply to the message to obtain that information.
- **Refusal Letters.** Refusal letters were mailed to sample members who had refused to participate in the survey after being contacted by telephone, or who had refused through email or by calling in to the project help line. It was the first effort at refusal conversion.
- **Specialized Letters.** In order to boost the response rates for two subgroups of high analytical value (nonrespondents in certain racial, ethnic, and gender groups, as well as nongraduates generally), we designed specialized letters for additional mailings. We sent nonrespondents in the group selected on the basis of race and gender a letter that included an incentive check (\$30 for graduates, \$50 for nongraduates) in a Priority Mail envelope. For the nongraduates, another letter, which included a \$5 bill, was mailed in a standard white envelope toward the end of the survey period.

Copies of these data collection materials are in Appendix B.

2. Schedule of Contacts to Sample Members

The advance letter was the first contact made to College Experiences Survey sample members. One week following the advance letter, a reminder postcard was mailed. A week after this reminder, telephone contact began, using CATI. The two initial mail attempts were spaced a week apart in order to give sample members sufficient time to log on to the website and complete the survey before CATI followup began, thus minimizing CATI costs. The survey sample was divided into two batches: The first was deliberately small (450 sample members) to enable us to conduct a live test to check that all processes and systems operated properly. This included an initial review of frequencies to ensure that the instrument worked as intended. The second batch included the remaining 2,849 sample members.

After several months of CATI and locating efforts, we found that locating sample members and contacting them by telephone was more difficult than expected. We did not receive telephone numbers in the university sample files, and we were able to obtain a phone number for only half of the sample members prior to the start of data collection. In contrast, we had viable mailing addresses for all of the respondents, and because the web response to the survey continued to be moderately successful, we sent two additional postcard mailings to encourage nonrespondents to log on and complete the survey online. In addition, beginning in late February 2009, we increased the frequency of the reminder postcard mailings and messages sent to email addresses collected from some sample members during the locating effort for the remainder of

the field period. Thus, nonrespondents with valid addresses were sent, on alternating weeks, an email or a postcard. Table D.1 shows the schedule of these attempts, as well as the special mailings we sent to sample members with higher analytical value.

TABLE D.1
SCHEDULE OF MAILINGS

Type of contact	Date
Advance Letter – Release 1	Oct. 14, 2008
Reminder Postcard – Release 1	Oct. 21, 2008
CATI Dial-Out Begins – Release 1	Oct. 28, 2008
Advance Letter – Release 2	Nov. 3, 2008
Reminder Postcard – Release 2	Nov. 10, 2008
CATI Dial-Out Begins – Release 2	Nov. 17, 2008
Second Reminder Postcard – all pending cases	Jan. 12, 2009
Third Reminder Postcard – all pending cases	Feb. 23, 2009
Biweekly Reminder Postcards – all pending cases	Mar. 10 – Apr. 21, 2009
Biweekly Reminder Emails – all pending cases	Mar. 03 – Apr. 14, 2009
Specialized Letter – racial/ethnic subgroup	Mar. 17, 2009
Specialized Letter – \$5 to nongraduates	Apr. 14, 2009
Email & Reminder Postcard – only to racial/ethnic subgroup	Apr. 28, 2009
Reminder Email and Letters – only to nongraduates	May 4, 2009

3. Survey Operations Center Staff Training

All new Mathematica interviewers complete a 12-hour general interviewer training (GIT) program, which explains the role of the telephone interviewer and emphasizes effective techniques for contacting sample members and establishing rapport. Other topics covered during the GIT include instruction on reading all questions exactly as worded and in a neutral and unbiased way, probing techniques, and the need for a professional and confident tone of voice. This training is conducted through the use of videotapes, the web, written materials, practice interviews, role playing, and one-on-one instruction.

Following the GIT training for new interviewers, all of the College Experiences Survey interviewers attended a project-specific College Experiences Survey training. This training, conducted over eight hours, in two four-hour segments, included 2.5 hours of hands-on practice with the CATI survey. We emphasized the importance of the initial contact, introducing the study effectively, and moving directly into the interview. The hands-on practice consisted of paired mock interviews, in which one trainee played the role of the respondent and the other played the interviewer. To ensure that each pair of interviewers had the same experiences, project staff developed detailed mock scripts for the respondents that gave interviewers experience with many of the common interviewing obstacles or experiences they would likely encounter.

4. Interviewer Training Materials

To facilitate interviewer training and provide a reference source, project staff produced a set of materials, including a training manual that the telephone interviewers and supervisors received prior to the training session. The first chapter of the manual provided information on the background of the study, the study expectations and response rate goals, and stressed the importance of confidentiality. The second chapter examined the advance letter, reminder postcard, and incentive used on the project, and provided interviewers with the email help desk and telephone help line information. The third chapter reviewed general interviewing skills covered during the GIT, including the importance of maintaining rapport, asking questions exactly as worded, obtaining accurate data, and techniques for recording responses. The fourth and final chapter covered effective engagement and rapport building with respondents, refusal avoidance and conversion, and strategies for handling gatekeepers such as parents of sample members.

The project team also developed a Frequently Asked Questions sheet for interviewers. This document stressed the importance of the study; provided information about Mathematica; and contained responses to common objections to participation, such as lack of available time, lack of interest, and confidentiality concerns.

5. CATI Interviewing

CATI interviewing for the College Experiences Survey began in October 2008. Calls were delivered to telephone interviewers via the CATI call scheduler, which ensures that scheduled callbacks are met, and that cases that do not result in contact (such as answering machines and no answers) are tried at different times of the day and evening and on weekends. A standard answering machine message was also left periodically. This interval was designed to avoid irritating the sample member, and it also gave the sample member time to respond to the message before the next call. Cases with wrong numbers and those with a series of no contacts were sent to locating.

6. Refusal Conversion

The primary reason for attempting refusal conversion is to help ensure that the responses collected are representative of the entire sample. Without refusal conversion, there is a chance that results would be skewed toward people who like to take part in surveys or who are interested in the particular topic, and who may answer the questions differently from people who initially refuse to participate in a research study.

Sample members who refused to participate were handled using a consistent process. First, all refusals were put on hold for 14 days. During this time, we sent a refusal letter that acknowledged the refusal but also emphasized the importance of participating. Once again, the letter provided the website of the survey, the project call-in number, and the sample member's password and login ID. After the 14-day waiting period, if the sample member had not completed the survey on the web or called in to complete the questionnaire over the phone, interviewers with the highest cooperation rates called the sample member. All sample members

who refused a second time were finalized. Of the 415 who initially refused, 128 ultimately completed the survey, for a 31 percent conversion rate. At the end of the study, 215 sample members were finalized as refusals, or 6.5 percent of the sample.

7. Monitoring Interviewer Performance

Telephone interviewers on the College Experiences Survey were monitored to improve data quality and to improve their interviewer techniques for encouraging sample member engagement and refusal avoidance. The monitoring process also helped identify unanticipated issues with survey questions and provided support for interviewers who had questions about individual survey items. The Mathematica monitoring process consists of listening to how the interviewer engages the sample member or gatekeeper, while simultaneously observing how the interviewer codes responses and follows the computer logic. After the monitors observe the interviewer and enter their evaluations in Mathematica's monitoring system, they meet with the interviewer to review the monitoring session, point out the interviewer's strengths, and make suggestions for improvements. Interviewers with multiple mistakes are monitored more intensely and retrained as necessary. Monitoring reports for the College Experiences Survey were generated weekly and included data such as the number and type of mistakes each interviewer made and the number of positive comments made by monitors.

8. Locating

Cases requiring locating may be systematically different from those that do not. To ignore sample members who have moved or changed contact information runs the risk of excluding respondents who differ from those who are easier to contact. For the College Experiences Survey, we conducted a substantial locating effort to find each sample member whom we could not contact using the contact information provided with the initial sample frame. The locating process used the following resources: a zip key database, directory assistance, Lexis-Nexis, Accurant, and other internet searches. All of these resources provided names, addresses, and/or phone numbers of individuals or helped verify existing contact information. A supervisor examined each case without new leads to determine what further action, if any, should be taken.

Updated contact information was stored in Mathematica's Sample Management System (SMS), which also served as the project's clearinghouse for information about each locating attempt and mail contact with sample members. Each letter and postcard sent to sample members was recorded, and SMS was then updated with any new addresses and phone numbers received. Information gathered by telephone interviewers was also passed to SMS. The system has management tools for performance evaluation, which enabled locating supervisors to measure the effectiveness of individual locators. Finally, SMS also enables supervisors to review problem cases and finalize them as unlocatable if they have been thoroughly worked and no further locating action appears warranted.

During the College Experiences Survey, almost 2,400 cases (73 percent) required some degree of locating services. Of these, approximately 70 percent were located and 710 were finalized as unlocatable.

9. Respondent Incentives

The original respondent incentive plan called for a tiered structure to encourage web response. We offered \$30 for completing the interview on the web and \$20 if completed by CATI. As the data collection progressed, the lower response rate among nongraduates prompted us to increase the respondent incentive for nongraduates to \$50, regardless of mode. Moreover, all graduate cases were offered \$30, even if they completed by telephone to encourage participation.

10. Efforts to Maximize the Response Rate

The original survey design envisioned a substantial portion of the data being collected through CATI. As previously mentioned, as the data collection progressed, it became clear that the CATI response rate would not be as high as expected due to not having telephone numbers for half of the sample members. In addition to increasing the number of mail contacts as described above, we scaled back the use of CATI attempts from having interviewers attempt to complete the survey over the telephone to prompting sample members to complete the survey online, although interviewers conducted interviews by telephone if sample members requested it. This change in approach saved resources and enabled us to extend the data collection period to maximize response rates. In an effort to reduce the disparity in response rates between the graduate and nongraduate groups, we increased the monetary incentive to nongraduates. The increase in the incentive amount was coupled with an additional mailing to announce the change, which provided additional encouragement to sample members to complete the survey. Also, we selected groups of graduates and nongraduates in racial and gender categories and sent them Priority Mail packages containing a prepaid incentive check and a letter asking for their help. Near the end of the data collection period we selected a final group of nongraduates and sent a final letter with \$5 in cash.

Through these efforts, a total of 2,053 interviews were completed, of which 1,711 were completed by web. Table D.2 shows a breakdown of completed cases by mode and school. The overall weighted response rate for the College Experiences Survey was 67 percent. Table D.3 shows the weighted response rates by school and graduation status.

TABLE D.2

COMPLETES, BY MODE AND SCHOOL

	Stony Brook University	University of Florida	University of Illinois	Total	Percentage Complete
Web	470	539	702	1,711	83
CATI	78	107	157	342	17
TOTAL	548	646	859	2,053	100

CATI = computer-assisted telephone interviewing.

TABLE D.3

COMPLETES AND RESPONSE RATES, BY SCHOOL AND GRADUATION STATUS

	Stony Brook University	University of Florida	University of Illinois	Total	Weighted Response Rate
Graduate	325	459	550	1,334	68%
Nongraduate	223	187	309	719	63%
TOTAL	548	646	859	2,053	--
Weighted Response Rate	55%	65%	72%	--	67%

E. CODING AND DATA PROCESSING

1. Overview

After data collection ended, Mathematica staff performed file production activities including coding the verbatim responses from other-specify and open-ended questions, reviewing frequencies, cleaning the data, and preparing data documentation materials. A more detailed discussion of each of these procedures follows. Quality assurance (QA) steps were followed throughout the coding and data processing. The coding supervisor reviewed all work completed by coders and made corrections before sending the output to the survey director, who, in turn, performed QA.

2. Back-Coding

Back-coding is the process of determining whether a respondent's open-ended answer to an other-specify question might better fit into one of the existing answer categories. Eleven questions in the College Experiences Survey contained other-specify alternatives, and these responses were reviewed for opportunities to back-code. Project staff also reviewed other-specify

responses to determine whether sufficient responses existed to form a new response category. If such responses accounted for 3 percent of those responding to the question, a new code was added.

The coding staff was trained on each question for which back-coding was performed, including the following:

- A2 (Activity between high school graduation and first attended college)
- B2 (When first selected a major or field of study)
- B8 (Reasons for changing major)
- B15* (Reasons for taking time off between semesters)
- B17* (Difficult or challenging situations)
- B18* (How financial difficulties were addressed in college)
- C7* (Reasons for not getting a Bachelor's degree from sampled school)
- D9a (Unit of pay for current job)
- D13a (Unit of pay for last job)
- D19 (Foreign country of citizenship)
- D20 (Foreign country where last attended high school)

* New codes were added to these questions.

3. Institution Coding

Question A4 asked whether the sampled school was the sample member's first choice when he or she applied. If it was not, the verbatim school name of the sample member's first choice was collected. Coding staff then coded the schools to a six-digit institution code using the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS).¹ Using a database of IPEDS codes, Mathematica coders reviewed each verbatim response and assigned the most appropriate six-digit code.

4. Field of Study Coding

Verbatim responses were collected for sample members' first major or field of study, and then for subsequent majors if the first major changed. Mathematica coded the verbatim responses

¹ See [<http://nces.ed.gov/ipeds/>] for more information on IPEDS.

using the Classification of Instructional Programs (CIP) taxonomy.² Mathematica coders reviewed each verbatim response and, using a database of CIP codes, assigned the most appropriate six-digit code, which is the most specific level of CIP codes.

5. Data Cleaning and Frequency Review

The main functions of reviewing the raw data through frequencies are to check that the routing of the instrument worked properly and to check for inconsistent data values. The web and CATI surveys included edit checks, although the checks in the CATI survey were more extensive. Specifically, the CATI survey checks did not allow blank or missing data, whereas the design of the web survey balanced the need to collect complete and consistent data and the desire to avoid increasing respondent frustration resulting in higher numbers of web break-offs. As a result, cases completed on the web contained more instances of inconsistent data because of fewer built-in checks. During the initial review of the frequencies, any inconsistent values or routing problems were noted for cleaning during the data editing stage. The frequency review also served as a final check that other-specify responses were back-coded properly, with any additional responses that could be back-coded noted so that these could be fixed during the editing stage. After review of the frequencies, we compiled a list of values to be edited and began constructing a set of cleaning specifications to be implemented through SAS.

6. Preparation of Codebook and Data Documentation

The main codebook for the College Experiences Survey is the questionnaire, which was annotated to include the variable names in the data file next to the appropriate questions from which the variables were derived. We also included any new codes that were added during the coding effort. The annotated questionnaire was submitted with the data file, and is attached as Appendix C. A data documentation memo was also prepared, which provides information about variables not derived from the questionnaire, including:

- Sampling variables, such as the sample member's sex, race, school name, and graduation information
- Final weighting variable
- Survey management variables, such as the unique identification numbers given to cases, final dispositions, and release numbers

The data documentation memo is included as Appendix D.

² See [<http://nces.ed.gov/pubs2002/cip2000/index.asp>] for more information on CIP.

F. WEIGHTING AND NONRESPONSE ADJUSTMENTS

The analysis weights were constructed to adjust for differences in probabilities of selection and propensity to respond among members of the sample. Because of the use of differential sampling rates and because of nonresponse, analysis conducted with unweighted data may produce biased estimates.

The weights are the product of factors. The first factor adjusts for differences in probabilities of selection. Sampling was conducted within 72 strata defined by school, gender, race, and graduation status. We used population counts provided by Princeton University for each stratum and computed the sampling weight (SW_{ih}) for each sampled case as:

$$(1) \quad W1 = SW_{ih} = 1/P_h = (n_h / N_h)^{-1}$$

where

SW_{ih} = the sampling weight with sampled student in stratum h

P_h = the probability of selection for student i in stratum h

n_h = the size of the sample selected in h

N_h = the total number of students (the population) in h

The next step was to compute the nonresponse adjustment to the weights. This adjustment was done within cells, which in most cases were the same as the sampling stratum. However, we combined two cells (Hispanic males and African American males at Stony Brook University) because each contained fewer than 20 students. The response rate adjustment for each cell j was computed as

$$(2) \quad W2_j = 1/RR_j$$

$$RR_j = \frac{n(c)_j}{n(el)_j + (er_j * n(dk)_j)}$$

$$er_j = \frac{n(el)_j}{n(el)_j + n(inel)_j}$$

where

$n(c)_j$ = the number of completes in cell j

$n(el)_j$ = the number of eligibles in cell j

$n(inel)_j$ = the number of ineligibles in cell j

$n(dk)_j$ = the number for which eligibility was not determined in cell j

Few cells contained any ineligibles, and some contained none for which eligibility was not known. A simpler formula for RR_j would suffice in those cases, but the general formula above would still lead to the correct weight.

The final weight is

$$(3) \text{ Final WT} = W1 * W2 * I(C)_{ij}$$

where

$$I(C)_{ij} = 1 \text{ if the case (ij) is a complete} \\ = 0 \text{ otherwise}$$

The weighted total for the completes should thus equal the population for each cell, adjusted for any ineligibility determined during the survey.

APPENDIX A
DETAILED DISTRIBUTION OF SAMPLE

TABLE A.1

DETAILED DISTRIBUTION OF SAMPLE

School Name	Gender	Race	Graduation Status	Sample	
Stony Brook University	Female	Asian	Grad 4 yrs	42	
	Male	Asian	Grad 4 yrs	42	
	Female	African American	Grad 4 yrs	42	
	Male	African American	Grad 4 yrs	18	
	Female	Hispanic	Grad 4 yrs	42	
	Male	Hispanic	Grad 4 yrs	18	
	Female	Caucasian	Grad 4 yrs	41	
	Male	Caucasian	Grad 4 yrs	42	
	Female	Asian	Grad >4 yrs	53	
	Male	Asian	Grad >4 yrs	48	
	Female	African American	Grad >4 yrs	31	
	Male	African American	Grad >4 yrs	30	
	Female	Hispanic	Grad >4 yrs	22	
	Male	Hispanic	Grad >4 yrs	23	
	Female	Caucasian	Grad >4 yrs	48	
	Male	Caucasian	Grad >4 yrs	48	
	Female	Asian	Non-grad	72	
	Male	Asian	Non-grad	65	
	Female	African American	Non-grad	50	
	Male	African American	Non-grad	29	
	Female	Hispanic	Non-grad	42	
	Male	Hispanic	Non-grad	43	
	Female	Caucasian	Non-grad	50	
	Male	Caucasian	Non-grad	50	
	University of Florida at Gainesville	Female	Asian	Grad 4 yrs	42
		Male	Asian	Grad 4 yrs	42
		Female	African American	Grad 4 yrs	43
		Male	African American	Grad 4 yrs	47
		Female	Hispanic	Grad 4 yrs	43
		Male	Hispanic	Grad 4 yrs	55
Female		Caucasian	Grad 4 yrs	42	
Male		Caucasian	Grad 4 yrs	42	
Female		Asian	Grad >4 yrs	33	
Male		Asian	Grad >4 yrs	45	
Female		African American	Grad >4 yrs	56	
Male		African American	Grad >4 yrs	42	
Female		Hispanic	Grad >4 yrs	42	
Male		Hispanic	Grad >4 yrs	60	
Female		Caucasian	Grad >4 yrs	48	
Male		Caucasian	Grad >4 yrs	48	
Female		Asian	Non-grad	24	
Male		Asian	Non-grad	21	
Female		African American	Non-grad	43	
Male		African American	Non-grad	36	
Female		Hispanic	Non-grad	46	
Male		Hispanic	Non-grad	39	

School Name	Gender	Race	Graduation Status	Sample	
University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign	Female	Caucasian	Non-grad	50	
	Male	Caucasian	Non-grad	50	
	Female	Asian	Grad 4 yrs	43	
	Male	Asian	Grad 4 yrs	43	
	Female	African American	Grad 4 yrs	42	
	Male	African American	Grad 4 yrs	40	
	Female	Hispanic	Grad 4 yrs	42	
	Male	Hispanic	Grad 4 yrs	51	
	Female	Caucasian	Grad 4 yrs	43	
	Male	Caucasian	Grad 4 yrs	43	
	Female	Asian	Grad >4 yrs	54	
	Male	Asian	Grad >4 yrs	49	
	Female	African American	Grad >4 yrs	57	
	Male	African American	Grad >4 yrs	72	
	Female	Hispanic	Grad >4 yrs	53	
	Male	Hispanic	Grad >4 yrs	61	
	Female	Caucasian	Grad >4 yrs	48	
	Male	Caucasian	Grad >4 yrs	48	
	Female	Asian	Non-grad	47	
	Male	Asian	Non-grad	64	
	Female	African American	Non-grad	57	
	Male	African American	Non-grad	85	
	Female	Hispanic	Non-grad	59	
	Male	Hispanic	Non-grad	68	
	Female	Caucasian	Non-grad	50	
	Male	Caucasian	Non-grad	50	
	Total Sample				3,299

APPENDIX B
DATA COLLECTION MATERIALS

ADVANCE LETTER

Dr. Deborah Prentice
Chair – Department of Psychology

September 29, 2008

[FirstName] [MiddleInitial] [LastName]
[Address1]
[Address2]
[City], [State] [postalcode]

Dear [Prefix] [LastName]:

We are asking for your help in completing the College Experiences Survey, a study sponsored by Princeton University and the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation. You were scientifically selected for this study based on information from [UNIVERSITY] about people who attended there during the past decade.

The U.S. Department of Education reports that less than 50 percent of all undergraduate students complete degrees within 5 years of starting school. This study seeks to shed light on the challenges and experiences college students face. Whether you graduated from college, attended more than one school, or did not graduate, we need your participation. In fact, your response is essential, because we cannot substitute another person for you. As token of our appreciation, **you will receive \$30 if you complete the study online.**

We understand how valuable your time is and have made the survey available to complete on the internet at www.collegewebsurvey.org. You will be asked for your *Login Identification Number* and *Password*, which are indicated below.

Login Identification Number: <username>
Password: <password>

Mathematica Policy Research, Inc., an independent research firm based in Princeton, New Jersey, is conducting the study. If you have any questions about the study, please contact Carey Arnold toll-free at 877-293-5734 or email us at collegewebsurvey@mathematica-mpr.com. Thank you in advance for your participation in this important research.

Sincerely,



Principal Investigator

CONSENT FORMS

YOUR RIGHTS AS A RESEARCH PARTICIPANT STONY BROOK

You are being asked to be a volunteer in a research study.

This study is being conducted by Mathematica Policy Research, Inc. on behalf of Professor Deborah Prentice at Princeton University. You will be participating in a research study exploring college life: how people choose which college to attend, their experiences at college, and their experiences upon leaving college.

If you decide to be in this study, you will answer survey-type questions about your experiences while attending SUNY Stony Brook University. It will take no more than half an hour to complete the survey. You will be paid \$30.00 compensation for completing this survey on the web.

Your participation in this study is voluntary and refusal to participate will involve no penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled. You may skip any questions on the survey that you prefer not to answer. You may withdraw your consent and discontinue participation in the project at any time without penalty beyond loss of the \$30.00 compensation.

There are no risks associated with participation in this experiment beyond those that exist in daily life. Although there may be no direct foreseeable benefit to you as a result of being in this study, the information you provide will be used to enhance the academic and social experience of students at Stony Brook University and at other universities.

Your responses to the survey will be kept completely confidential to the extent provided by law. Your identity will be coded, and all data will be kept in a secured, limited access location. Your identity will not be revealed in any publication of the results of this research. However, confidentiality cannot be guaranteed; your personal information may be disclosed if required by law. This means that there may be rare situations that require us to release personal information about you, e.g., in case a judge requires such release in a lawsuit or if you tell us of your intent to harm yourself or others (including reporting behaviors consistent with child abuse).

If you have any questions about the study, you may contact Professor Deborah Prentice at (609) 258-4503 or predebb@princeton.edu.

If you have any questions about your rights as a research participant in the study, contact Ms. Judy Matuk, Committee on Research Involving Human Subjects, (631) 632-9036.

CONSENT FORMS

YOUR RIGHTS AS A RESEARCH PARTICIPANT UIUC

You are being asked to be a volunteer in a research study.

This study is being conducted by Mathematica Policy Research, Inc. on behalf of Professor Deborah Prentice at Princeton University. You will be participating in a research study exploring college life: how people choose which college to attend, their experiences at college, and their experiences upon leaving college.

If you decide to be in this study, you will answer survey-type questions about your experiences while attending the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. It will take no more than half an hour to complete the survey. The survey can be completed on-line, and you will be paid \$30.00 compensation for completing the web survey.

Your participation in this study is voluntary and refusal to participate will involve no penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled. You may skip any questions on the survey that you prefer not to answer. You may withdraw your consent and discontinue participation in the project at any time without penalty beyond loss of the \$30.00 compensation.

There are no risks associated with participation in this experiment beyond those that exist in daily life. Although there may be no direct foreseeable benefit to you as a result of being in this study, the information you provide will be used to enhance the academic and social experience of students at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign and at other universities.

Your responses to the survey will be kept completely confidential to the extent provided by law. Your identity will be coded, and all data will be kept in a secured, limited access location. Your identity will not be revealed in any publication of the results of this research. However, confidentiality cannot be guaranteed; your personal information may be disclosed if required by law. This means that there may be rare situations that require us to release personal information about you, e.g., in case a judge requires such release in a lawsuit or if you tell us of your intent to harm yourself or others (including reporting behaviors consistent with child abuse).

If you have any questions about the study, you may contact Professor Deborah Prentice at (609) 258-4503 or predebb@princeton.edu; or you may contact Dr. Carol Livingstone at (217) 333-3551 or livngstn@uiuc.edu.

If you have any questions about your rights as a participant in this study, please contact the University of Illinois Institutional Review Board at 217-333-2670 (collect calls accepted if you identify yourself as a research participant) or via email at irb@uiuc.edu.

CONSENT FORMS

YOUR RIGHTS AS A RESEARCH PARTICIPANT UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA

You are being asked to be a volunteer in a research study.

This study is being conducted by Mathematica Policy Research, Inc. on behalf of Professor Deborah Prentice at Princeton University. You will be participating in a research study exploring college life: how people choose which college to attend, their experiences at college, and their experiences upon leaving college.

If you decide to be in this study, you will answer survey-type questions about your experiences while attending the University of Florida. It will take no more than half an hour to complete the survey. The survey can be completed on-line, and you will be paid \$30.00 compensation for completing the web survey.

Your participation in this study is voluntary and refusal to participate will involve no penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled. You may skip any questions on the survey that you prefer not to answer. You may withdraw your consent and discontinue participation in the project at any time without penalty beyond loss of the \$30.00 compensation.

There are no risks associated with participation in this experiment beyond those that exist in daily life. Although there may be no direct foreseeable benefit to you as a result of being in this study, the information you provide will be used to enhance the academic and social experience of students at the University of Florida and at other universities.

Your responses to the survey will be kept completely confidential to the extent provided by law. Your identity will be coded, and all data will be kept in a secured, limited access location. Your identity will not be revealed in any publication of the results of this research. However, confidentiality cannot be guaranteed; your personal information may be disclosed if required by law. This means that there may be rare situations that require us to release personal information about you, e.g., in case a judge requires such release in a lawsuit or if you tell us of your intent to harm yourself or others (including reporting behaviors consistent with child abuse).

If you have any questions about the study, you may contact Professor Deborah Prentice at (609) 258-4503 or predebb@princeton.edu.

If you have any questions about your rights as a research participant in the study, contact the University of Florida IRB office at (352) 392-0433.

REMINDER POSTCARD

Front

★ **The College Experiences Survey** ★

We need your help! We recently sent you a letter about the College Experiences Study, and we urge you to participate in this important research.

Please log on to www.collegewebsurvey.org to complete the survey. (If you have already done so, please accept our thanks.) Because we know your time is valuable, you will receive **\$30** as a “thank you” for completing the questionnaire online.

If you do not have your login identification number and password, or have any questions, please contact Carey Arnold, toll-free at 1-877-293-5734 or at collegewebsurvey@mathematica-mpr.com.

Thank you for your time and help!

(Remember, you do not need to be a current college student or graduate to participate.)

Back

College Experiences Survey (6361-150)
Mathematica Policy Research, Inc.
P.O. Box 2393
Princeton, NJ 08543-9809

Return Service Requested

REFUSAL LETTER

DATE

«FirstName» «MiddleInitial» «LastName»
«Address1»
«Address2»
«City», «State» «postalcode»

Dear «FirstName» «LastName»:

We recently contacted you about an important study sponsored by Princeton University and the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, *The College Experiences Survey*, and at that time you were unable to speak with us. The purpose of the study is to better understand the college experience, including how students choose which college to attend, the experiences they have while attending college, their satisfaction with their school, and their experiences after leaving college. We are contacting you to learn about your experiences at (UNIVERSITY NAME), and **we need your help to make this study a success.**

The survey takes approximately 20 minutes to complete. To show our appreciation for completing the survey, **we will send you a check for \$30.** Participation is easy: All you need to do is call **Carey Arnold** at our toll free number **1-877-293-5734** to set up a convenient time for a telephone interview. Or you may complete the survey online at www.collegewebsurvey.org by using the login information below:

Login Identification Number: «username»
Password: «password»

Mathematica Policy Research is an independent research company conducting the survey, and we are collecting this information for research purposes only. The information you provide will be kept confidential, and all information that is publicly released will appear in a form that does not personally identify you in any way. If you have any questions, please feel free to call us at the number above, or you can call me directly at 609-750-2018. I would be happy to answer any questions you have.

Thank you for helping us! We look forward to speaking with you.

Sincerely,



Betsy Santos
Survey Director

LOCATING LETTER

Dr. Deborah Prentice
Chair – Department of Psychology

[DATE]

«LastName»:«FirstName» «MiddleInitial» «LastName»
«Address1»
«Address2»
«City», «State» «postalcode»

Dear «LastName»:«LastName»:

We have been trying to reach you to ask for your participation in the College Experiences Survey, a study sponsored by Princeton University and the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation. The study seeks to shed light on the experiences students had while attending colleges or universities.

Please call our toll free number **1-877-293-5734** and ask for **Carey Arnold** so that we might schedule a time to complete the interview. Whether you graduated from college, attended more than one school, or did not graduate, we need your participation. In fact, your response is essential, because we cannot substitute another person for you. As token of our appreciation, **you will receive \$30 for completing the survey.**

If you prefer, you can complete the survey online at www.collegewebsurvey.org. You will be asked for your *Login Identification Number* and *Password*, which are indicated below.

Login Identification Number: «username»
Password: «password»

We will hold all the information that you provide in the strictest confidence. Your name will not be associated with your answers which will be presented in statistical form only.

Thank you in advance for your participation in this important research study.

Sincerely,



Principal Investigator

REMINDER POSTCARD FOR NONGRADUATES

Front

The College Experiences Survey

Although many students enroll in colleges and universities each fall, less than 50% graduate within 5 years. In order to help more students complete college in the future, it is crucial to understand the challenges people face while attending college.

This is where you come in.
We need you to share your experiences in college, whether or not you graduated.

Because we know your time is valuable, **you will receive \$50** as a “thank you” for completing the questionnaire online by logging on to www.collegewebsurvey.org.
(If you have already done so, please accept our thanks.)

If you do not have your login identification number and password, or have any questions, please contact Carey Arnold toll-free at 1-877-293-5734, or at collegewebsurvey@mathematica-mpr.com.

Thank you for your time and help!

Back

College Experiences Survey (6361-150)
Mathematica Policy Research, Inc.
P.O. Box 2393
Princeton, NJ 08543-9809

Return Service Requested

SPECIAL LETTER TO GRADUATES RECEIVING
PRIORITY MAILING

Dr. Deborah Prentice
Chair – Department of Psychology

March 17, 2009

«LastName»:«FirstName» «MiddleInitial» «LastName»
«Address1»
«Address2»
«City», «State» «postalcode»

Dear «LastName»:«LastName»:

We still need your help! It's not too late to participate in the College Experiences Survey, a study sponsored by Princeton University and the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation. **We've enclosed a check for \$30 as a "thank you" for completing the survey, which only takes about 20 minutes.**

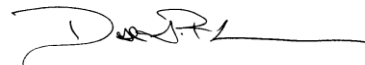
You can access the survey online at www.collegewebsurvey.org. You will be asked for your *Login Identification Number* and *Password*, which are listed below.

Login Identification Number: «username»
Password: «password»

Why is your participation important? The U.S. Department of Education reports that less than 50 percent of all college students complete degrees within 5 years, and increasing the numbers of students who complete a degree is a national priority. The survey will ask about your experiences while you attended [UNIVERSITY], in order to shed light on the challenges you may have faced while completing your degree. Your response is essential because we cannot substitute another person for you.

Mathematica Policy Research, Inc., an independent research firm based in Princeton, New Jersey, is conducting the study. If you have any questions or prefer to complete the study over the telephone, please contact Carey Arnold toll-free at 877-293-5734 or email the study team at collegewebsurvey@mathematica-mpr.com. Thank you helping us with this important research.

Sincerely,



Principal Investigator

SPECIAL LETTER TO NONGRADUATES
RECEIVING PRIORITY MAILING

Dr. Deborah Prentice
Chair – Department of Psychology

March 17, 2009

«LastName»:«FirstName» «MiddleInitial» «LastName»
«Address1»
«Address2»
«City», «State» «postalcode»

Dear «LastName»:«LastName»:

We still need your help! It's not too late to participate in the College Experiences Survey, a study sponsored by Princeton University and the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation. **We've enclosed a check for \$50 as a "thank you" for completing the survey, which only takes about 20 minutes.**

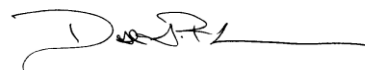
You can do the survey online at www.collegewebsurvey.org. You will be asked for your *Login Identification Number* and *Password*, which are listed below.

Login Identification Number: «username»
Password: «password»

Why is your participation important? The U.S. Department of Education reports that less than 50 percent of all college students complete degrees within 5 years. The survey will ask about your experiences while you attended [UNIVERSITY], in order to shed light on the challenges you may have faced while enrolled. Whether or not you graduated, we need your participation. In fact, your response is essential because we cannot substitute another person for you.

Mathematica Policy Research, Inc., an independent research firm based in Princeton, New Jersey, is conducting the study. If you have any questions or prefer to complete the study over the telephone, please contact Carey Arnold toll-free at 877-293-5734 or email the study team at collegewebsurvey@mathematica-mpr.com. Thank you helping us with this important research.

Sincerely,



Principal Investigator

Front

The College Experiences Survey

We recently sent you a Priority Mail package with a check and a letter asking you to complete the College Experiences Survey. We have not yet received a completed survey from you, and the survey is ending soon, so please complete it as soon as possible. If you have already completed the survey, please accept our thanks.

The survey will ask about your experiences while you attended college in order to shed light on the challenges you may have faced while enrolled. Whether or not you graduated, we need your participation. In fact, your response is essential because we cannot substitute another person for you.

If you do not have your login identification number and password, or prefer to complete the interview over the telephone, please contact Carey Arnold toll-free at 1-877-293-5734, or at collegewebsurvey@mathematica-mpr.com.

Thank you!

Back

College Experiences Survey (6361-150)
Mathematica Policy Research, Inc.
P.O. Box 2393
Princeton, NJ 08543-9809

Return Service Requested

SPECIAL LETTER TO SAMPLE MEMBERS
RECEIVING ADDITIONAL INCENTIVE

Betsy Santos
Survey Researcher

April 13, 2009

«LastName»:«FirstName» «MiddleInitial» «LastName»
«Address 1»
«Address2»
«City», «State» «postalcode»

Dear «LastName»:«LastName»:

We still need your help! It's not too late to participate in the College Experiences Survey, a study sponsored by Princeton University and the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation. However, the survey is ending soon so we urge you to complete it as soon as possible. **You will receive a check for \$50 as a "thank you" for completing the survey, which only takes about 20 minutes.** We have also enclosed a \$5 bill as a token of our appreciation.

You can do the survey online at www.collegewebsurvey.org. You will be asked for your *Login Identification Number* and *Password*, which are listed below.

Login Identification Number: «username»
Password: «password»

Why is your participation important? The U.S. Department of Education reports that less than 50 percent of all college students complete degrees within 5 years. The survey will ask about your experiences while you attended [UNIVERSITY], in order to shed light on the challenges you may have faced while enrolled. Whether or not you graduated, we need your participation. In fact, your response is essential because we cannot substitute another person for you.

Mathematica Policy Research, Inc., an independent research firm based in Princeton, New Jersey, is conducting the study. If you have any questions or prefer to complete the study over the telephone, please contact Carey Arnold toll-free at 877-293-5734 or email the study team at collegewebsurvey@mathematica-mpr.com. Thank you helping us with this important research.

Sincerely,



APPENDIX C

COLLEGE EXPERIENCES SURVEY ANNOTATED

MPR Reference No.: 6361-160

MATHEMATICA
Policy Research, Inc.

**College Experiences
Survey**

Annotated Questionnaire

July 20, 2009

INTRODUCTION

Hello, my name is [INTERVIEWER'S FULL NAME]. I am calling from Mathematica Policy Research on behalf of the Survey Research Center at Princeton University. We are conducting a survey about college experiences at [SCHOOL]. You should have received some information in the mail about this project.

SCREENING

In order for us to confirm our information, were you a freshman student at [SCHOOL] beginning in the fall of 1999?

YES..... 01

NO..... 00 → **THANK AND END**

[ConfirmStudent]

Let me assure you that your participation in the survey is completely confidential. You will receive [\$30/\$50] to thank you for your time. I will begin the survey now.

CONTINUE 01 → **GO TO A1**

CALLBACK 00

REFUSAL..... r

SECTION A. APPLYING TO COLLEGE

A1. Did you enroll in college right after you graduated from high school, or did you take 6 months or longer off prior to enrolling?

- ENROLLED RIGHT AFTER HIGH SCHOOL 01 → **GO TO A3**
- TOOK 6 MONTHS OR LONGER OFF 00
- DON'T KNOW d
- REFUSED r

[A1]

A2. Between the time you graduated from high school and first attended college, did you do any of the following? (Did you/were you) . . .

CIRCLE ONE FOR EACH

	YES	NO	DON'T KNOW	REFUSED
a. Work? [A2a]	01	00	d	r
b. Involved in family-related activities such as caring for family members? [A2b]	01	00	d	r
c. Travel? [A2c]	01	00	d	r
d. Do something else? (SPECIFY) [A2d]	01	00	d	r

[A2d_OthSpecify]

A3. Back when you were applying to [SCHOOL], how many schools did you apply to altogether? Was it . . .

- One, 01
- Two, or 02
- Three or more? 03
- DON'T KNOW d
- REFUSED r

[A3]

IF A3 = 1, GO TO A7

A4. At that time, what was your first choice school? Was it . . .

[SCHOOL], or 01

Some other school? (SPECIFY)..... 02

DON'T KNOW..... d

REFUSED..... r

[A4]

[A4_OthSpecify]

A5. How many of the schools you applied to, including [SCHOOL], offered you admission?
Was it . . .

One,..... 01

Two, or..... 02

Three or more? 03

DON'T KNOW..... d

REFUSED..... r

[A5]

IF A4 = [SCHOOL], GO TO A7

IF A5 = 1, GO TO A7

A6. Although you chose to attend [SCHOOL], did you seriously consider attending another
school where you were accepted?

YES 01

NO 00

DON'T KNOW..... d

REFUSED..... r

[A6]

A7. All colleges or universities have their strengths and weaknesses. Using a 10 point scale where 1 means “very unfavorable” and 10 means “very favorable,” how would you have rated [SCHOOL] on these characteristics at the time that you applied?

[First/Next], using the 10 point scale, how would you have rated [SCHOOL] on [ITEM] at the time you applied?

PROBE: Remember, tell us how you would have rated the school at the time you applied, not based on your current thoughts or experiences.

CIRCLE ONE FOR EACH

	VERY UNFAVORABLE		VERY FAVORABLE	DON'T KNOW	REFUSED	N/A							
a. Academic programs..... [A7a]	01	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	10	d	r	
b. Extracurricular programs including sports..... [A7b]	01	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	10	d	r	
c. Location..... [A7c]	01	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	10	d	r	
d. [SCHOOL]’s reputation [A7d].....	01	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	10	d	r	
e. The financial aid you were offered..... [A7e]	01	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	10	d	r	n/a
f. The financial cost of attending compared to other schools..... [A7f]	01	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	10	d	r	
g. The social life..... [A7g]	01	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	10	d	r	
h. The job opportunities a [SCHOOL] graduate might have..... [A7h]	01	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	10	d	r	

A8. Did others in your life have opinions about whether you should attend [SCHOOL]? For example, did [GROUP] generally discourage you, encourage you or offer no opinion on your attending [SCHOOL]?

CIRCLE ONE FOR EACH

	DISCOURAGED YOU	ENCOURAGED YOU	NO OPINION	DON'T KNOW	REFUSED
a. Your parents..... [A8a]	01	02	03	d	r
b. Other family members	01	02	03	d	r
c. Most of your friends..... [A8c]	01	02	03	d	r
d. Your high school teachers and advisors..... [A8d]	01	02	03	d	r

A9. Collectively, how much did the opinions of these people affect your decision? Would you say . . .

- Not at all, 01
- A little, or..... 02
- A lot? 03
- DON'T KNOW..... d
- REFUSED..... r

[A9]

A10. The following statements ask about family attitudes toward education. For each statement, please answer whether it was very true, somewhat true, or not at all true of your family.

CIRCLE ONE FOR EACH

	VERY TRUE	SOMEWHAT TRUE	NOT AT ALL TRUE	DON'T KNOW	REFUSED
a. My family always assumed I would graduate from college	01	02	03	d	r
b. My family made sacrifices so that I would graduate from college	01	02	03	d	r
c. My family had strong views on what I should and shouldn't study in college.....	01	02	03	d	r
d. My family did not know much about college	01	02	03	d	r

A11. When you were applying to college, how helpful was the advice you received from high school teachers and advisors? Would you say . . .

- Very helpful,..... 01
- Somewhat helpful, 02
- Not too helpful, or..... 03
- Not at all helpful? 04
- DON'T KNOW..... d
- REFUSED..... r

[A11]

A12. Not including any advance placement (AP) courses taken in high school, did you ever take college courses for credit before enrolling at [SCHOOL]?

- YES 01
- NO 00
- DON'T KNOW..... d
- REFUSED..... r

[A12]

SECTION B. YOUR EXPERIENCE AT [SCHOOL]

Some people start college knowing what major or field of study they want to pursue—either something specific like majoring in journalism or being pre-med, or something more general like being interested in business or engineering. Others are undecided about their major or field of study when they start college. Those who are undecided often take a variety of classes to help them pick their major or field of study.

B1. When you started at [SCHOOL], did you have an idea about what general or specific course of study you wanted to pursue?

- YES 01 → **GO TO B5**
- NO 00
- DON'T KNOW d
- REFUSED r

[B1]

B2. When did you first select a major or field of study? Was it during your . . .

PROBE: If you changed your major several times, we are interested in the first major or field of study that you selected.

- First year at [SCHOOL], 01
 - Second year at [SCHOOL], 02
 - Third year at [SCHOOL], 03
 - Some other time, (SPECIFY) or 04
- } → **GO TO B5**

-
- Did you never select a major or field of study? 00
 - DON'T KNOW d
 - REFUSED r

[B2]

[B2_OthSpecify]

B3. Did you leave [SCHOOL] before selecting a major or field of study?

- YES 01
 - NO 00
 - DON'T KNOW d
 - REFUSED r
- } → **GO TO B5**

[B3]

B4. Did you leave [SCHOOL] because you transferred to another college or university?

- YES 01
- NO 00
- DON'T KNOW..... d
- REFUSED..... r

[B4]

GO TO B14

B5. What was your first major or field of study?

- FIELD OF STUDY: _____
- DON'T KNOW..... d
- REFUSED..... r

[B5]

IF B2 = 00, d, r AND B3 = 00, d, r AND MAJOR PROVIDED AT B5, RE-ASK B2 BEFORE MOVING ON TO B6

B6. Did you stay with this major or field of study the [whole/rest of the] time you were at [SCHOOL]?

- YES 01 → **GO TO B12**
- NO 00
- DON'T KNOW..... d
- REFUSED..... r

[B6_1 THRU B6_5]

B6a. How long did you stay with this major or field of study before you decided to change majors? Was it . . .

- One academic year or less, or 01
- More than one academic year? 02
- DON'T KNOW..... d
- REFUSED..... r

[B6a_1 THRU B6a_5]

B7. Did you change your major from [INSERT FROM B5 OR B11] while attending [SCHOOL]?

- YES 01
 - NO 00
 - DON'T KNOW d
 - REFUSED r
- } → GO TO B12

[B7_1 THRU B7_5]

B8. Here are some statements about why people change their major or field of study. Thinking about when you changed from [INSERT FROM B5 OR B11] to another major or field of study, which of these, if any, applied to you? Please answer yes or no to each. The first statement is. . .

CIRCLE ONE FOR EACH

	YES	NO	DON'T KNOW	REFUSED
a. I didn't really like many of the courses in the area .. [B8a_1 THRU B8a_5]	01	00	d	r
b. I didn't do particularly well in these courses..... [B8b_1 THRU B8b_5]	01	00	d	r
c. I couldn't fit the courses I needed into my schedule..... [B8c_1 THRU B8c_5]	01	00	d	r
d. I couldn't get into the courses I needed	01	00	d	r
e. My academic interests changed	01	00	d	r
f. My career goals changed	01	00	d	r
g. Was there some other reason why you changed majors? (SPECIFY)..... [B8g_1 THRU B8g_5]	01	00	d	r

[B8g_OthSpecify_1 THRU B8g_OthSpecify_5]

B9. Did you select a new major or field of study at [SCHOOL]?

- YES 01
 - NO 00
 - DON'T KNOW d
 - REFUSED r
- } → GO TO B12

[B9_1 THRU B9_5]

B10. Once you decided to drop [INSERT FROM B5 OR B11], how long did it take you to select a new course of study? Was it . . .

- Right away, 01
- Within a semester or two, or 02
- More than a year? 03
- DON'T KNOW d
- REFUSED r

[B10_1 THRU B10_5]

B11. What was your new major or field of study?

- FIELD OF STUDY: _____ → **GO BACK TO B6**
- DON'T KNOW d
- REFUSED r

[B11_1 THRU B11_5]

B12. Did you get a Bachelor's degree from [SCHOOL]?

- YES 01 → **GO TO B14**
- NO 00
- DON'T KNOW d
- REFUSED r

[B12]

[IF B12 = 01 AND EITHER B7 OR B9 = 00 ASK B12S:]

B12S. What was your major or field of study for this degree?

- FIELD OF STUDY: _____
- DON'T KNOW d
- REFUSED r

[B12S]

B13. Did you transfer from [SCHOOL] to another school?

- YES 01
- NO 00
- DON'T KNOW d
- REFUSED r

[B13]

B14. I am going to ask you about your undergraduate enrollment status at [SCHOOL] for each semester starting with fall 1999. Please count semesters spent studying abroad or participating in a university exchange program as not enrolled.

In the fall semester of [YEAR], were you enrolled full time, part time, or not enrolled as an undergraduate student?

And in the spring semester of [YEAR], were you enrolled full time, part time, or not enrolled as an undergraduate student?

CIRCLE ONE FOR EACH				CIRCLE ONE FOR EACH			
FALL SEMESTER				SPRING SEMESTER			
	FULL-TIME	PART-TIME	NOT ENROLLED		FULL-TIME	PART-TIME	NOT ENROLLED
1999 [Fall_1]	01	02	03	2000 [Spring_1]	01	02	03
2000 [Fall_2]	01	02	03	2001 [Spring_2]	01	02	03
2001 [Fall_3]	01	02	03	2002 [Spring_3]	01	02	03
2002 [Fall_4]	01	02	03	2003 [Spring_4]	01	02	03
2003 [Fall_5]	01	02	03	2004 [Spring_5]	01	02	03
2004 [Fall_6]	01	02	03	2005 [Spring_6]	01	02	03
2005 [Fall_7]	01	02	03	2006 [Spring_7]	01	02	03
2006 [Fall_8]	01	02	03	2007 [Spring_8]	01	02	03
2007 [Fall_9]	01	02	03	2008 [Spring_9]	01	02	03
2008 [Fall_10]	01	02	03	2009 [Spring_10]	01	02	03

ASK B15 FOR EACH PERIOD RECORDED AS “NOT ENROLLED” FOLLOWED BY FULL- OR PART-TIME. IF NONE, GO TO B16:

B15. For which of the following reasons did you take time off between [SEMESTER/YEAR] and [SEMESTER/YEAR]? Was it . . .

CIRCLE ONE FOR EACH

	YES	NO	DON'T KNOW	REFUSED
a. Your personal health or well-being? [B15a_1 THRU B15a_4]	01	00	d	r
b. A family member's health or well-being? [B15b_1 THRU B15b_4]	01	00	d	r
c. Your school finances? [B15c_1 THRU B15c_4]	01	00	d	r
d. Your academic performance? [B15d_1 THRU B15d_4]	01	00	d	r
e. Being unhappy with the social or academic atmosphere at [SCHOOL]? [B15e_1 THRU B15e_4]	01	00	d	r
f. Studying abroad or participating in a university exchange program? [B15f_1 THRU B15f_4]	01	00	d	r
g. (Some other reason/What was the reason you took time off)? (SPECIFY) [B15g_1 THRU B15g_4]	01	00	d	r
<hr/>				
[B15g_OthSpecify_1 THRU B15g_OthSpecify_4]				
* h. Working..... [B15h_1 THRU B15h_3]	01			

* New code added after data cleaning.

B16. While attending [SCHOOL], did you mainly live . . .

- At home with your family, 01
- At school (either on campus or off campus), 02
- Or, was your time equally split between living at home and at school? 03
- DON'T KNOW d
- REFUSED r

[B16]

B17. While attending [SCHOOL], did you face any difficult or challenging situations regarding . . .

CIRCLE ONE FOR EACH

	YES	NO	DON'T KNOW	REFUSED
a. Your personal health or well-being? [B17a]	01	00	d	r
b. A family member's health or well-being? [B17b]	01	00	d	r
c. Your school finances? [B17c]	01	00	d	r
d. Your academic performance? [B17d]	01	00	d	r
e. Balancing academics, social life, and extracurricular activities? [B17e]	01	00	d	r
f. Some other difficult situation or challenge? (SPECIFY) [B17f]	01	00	d	r
<hr/>				
[B17f_OthSpecify]				
*g. Being away from home/homesick..... [B17g]	01			
*h. Dealing with roommates..... [B17h]	01			
*i. Friend's personal health or well-being [B17i]	01			
*j. Personal..... [B17j]	01			
*k. Having to work during school [B17k]	01			
*l. Problems with personal relationships [B17l]	01			

* New codes added after data cleaning.

IF B17c = YES, ASK B18. OTHERWISE, GO TO C1:

B18. Here are some things that students do to address financial difficulties in college. Which of these options, if any, did you try? Did you . . .

CIRCLE ONE FOR EACH

	YES	NO	DON'T KNOW	REFUSED
a. Work while attending classes? [B18a]	01	00	d	r
b. Only take as many courses as you could afford? ... [B18b]	01	00	d	r
c. Borrow money from family members that you had to pay back?..... [B18c]	01	00	d	r
d. Take out or increase the size of a personal loan from a bank or some other source, not including student loans?..... [B18d]	01	00	d	r
e. Apply for student financial aid or request additional student financial aid including student loans, scholarships, or grants? [B18e]	01	00	d	r
f. Take time off from school to work?..... [B18f]	01	00	d	r
g. Apply to transfer to another school for financial reasons? [B18g]	01	00	d	r
h. Do something else to address financial difficulties? (SPECIFY) [B18h]	01	00	d	r
<hr/>				
[B18h_OthSpecify]				
*i. Worked during breaks [B18i]	01			

* New code added after data cleaning.

SECTION C. DEGREES AND SATISFACTION WITH SCHOOL

C1. Thinking back, how often did you get the academic advising you needed at [SCHOOL]?
Would you say . . .

CIRCLE ONE ONLY

- All the time, 01
- Most of the time, 02
- Some of the time, 03
- Only occasionally, or 04
- Never? 05
- DON'T KNOW d
- REFUSED r

[C1]

C2. While you were at [SCHOOL], would you say you knew how to get whatever help or
information you needed?

- YES 01
- NO 00
- DON'T KNOW d
- REFUSED r

[C2]

C3. How would you rate the housing options that were available to you at [SCHOOL]? Would
you rate them as having been . . .

- Excellent, 01
- Good, 02
- Fair, or 03
- Poor? 04
- DON'T KNOW d
- REFUSED r

[C3]

C4. Did you receive financial aid during any period of your enrollment at [SCHOOL]?

- YES 01
- NO 00
- DON'T KNOW d
- REFUSED r



[C4]

C5. How well did the financial aid you received meet your needs? Would you say . . .

- Very well, 01
- Reasonably well, 02
- Not so well, or 03
- Not at all? 04
- DON'T KNOW d
- REFUSED r

[C5]

C6. Overall, how satisfied were you with your experience at [SCHOOL]? Were you . . .

- Very satisfied, 01
- Somewhat satisfied, 02
- Not too satisfied, or 03
- Not at all satisfied? 04
- DON'T KNOW d
- REFUSED r

[C6]

**IF B12 = 01 (R GRADUATED FROM SCHOOL), GO TO C11.
 IF B3 = 01 (R LEFT SCHOOL BEFORE SELECTING A MAJOR) OR B12 = 00 (R DID NOT GRADUATE), d, r, CONTINUE.**

C7. You mentioned earlier that you did not graduate from [SCHOOL]. Which of these reasons played a role in your not getting a Bachelor's degree from [SCHOOL] . . .

CIRCLE ONE BOX FOR EACH

	YES	NO	DON'T KNOW	REFUSED
a. Your personal health or well-being? [C7a]	01	00	d	r
b. A family member's health or well-being? [C7b]	01	00	d	r
c. Your school finances? [C7c]	01	00	d	r
d. Your academic performance? [C7d]	01	00	d	r
e. Being unhappy with the social or academic atmosphere at [SCHOOL]? [C7e]	01	00	d	r
f. No extracurricular activities of interest? [C7f]	01	00	d	r
g. Something else? (SPECIFY) [C7g]	01	00	d	r

[C7g_OthSpecify]				
*h. Changed major..... [C7h]	01			
*i. Lack of direction or time management skills [C7i]	01			
*j. Transferred to another school [C7j]	01			

* New codes added after data cleaning.

ASK C8 IF MORE THAN TWO "YES" ANSWERS IN C7:

C8. Among the reasons you cited, [READ ALL 'YES' ITEMS FROM C7], which two contributed the most to your not getting a Bachelor's degree from [SCHOOL]?

ENTER LETTER OF APPROPRIATE REASON FROM QUESTION C7 ABOVE.

[C8a] MOST IMPORTANT

[C8b] SECOND MOST IMPORTANT

DON'T KNOW..... d

REFUSED..... r

C9. Did you enroll in another 4 year college or university?

- YES 01
- NO 00 → **GO TO C11**
- DON'T KNOW d
- REFUSED r

[C9]

C10. Did you get a Bachelor's degree from another 4-year college or university?

- YES 01 → **GO TO C12**
- NO 00
- DON'T KNOW d
- REFUSED r

[C10]

C11. How likely is it that you'll complete a Bachelor's degree in the future? Would you say . . .

- Very likely, 01
- Somewhat likely, or 02
- Not at all likely? 03
- DON'T KNOW d
- REFUSED r

[C11]

C12. Are you currently enrolled either full- or part- time in a degree program at a college or university?

- YES 01
- NO 00
- DON'T KNOW d
- REFUSED r

[C12]

C13. What is the highest level of education you have completed so far?
Would you say . . .

IF B12 = NO, d, r AND C10 = NO, START HERE:

- High school graduate (diploma or equivalent diploma [GED]),..... 01
- Technical, trade, or vocational degree, 02
- Some college, but no degree, 03
- Associate's degree,..... 04

IF B12 = YES OR C10 = YES, START HERE:

- Bachelor's degree, 05
- Some graduate, but no degree,..... 06
- Master's degree, or 07
- Professional school or doctorate? 08
- DON'T KNOW d
- REFUSED..... r

[C13]

SECTION D. BACKGROUND

The final set of questions are for background purposes.

D1. In what year were you born?

19 |__|__|

DON'T KNOW..... d

REFUSED..... r

[D1]

D2. In what year did you graduate from high school?

19 |__|__|

DON'T KNOW..... d

REFUSED..... r

[D2]

D3. The next questions are about your family. Did [INSERT] not attend college, attend college but not graduate, or graduate from college?

CIRCLE ONE FOR EACH

	DIDN'T ATTEND COLLEGE	ATTENDED COLLEGE, DIDN'T GRADUATE	GRADUATED COLLEGE	DOES NOT APPLY	DON'T KNOW	REFUSED
a. Your father..... [D3a]	01	02	03	n/a	d	r
b. Your mother..... [D3b]	01	02	03	n/a	d	r

D4. Which one statement best describes your family?

CIRCLE ONE ONLY

- I have no older brothers or sisters, 00
- I have older brothers or sisters, but none
have attended college, 01
- I have older brothers or sisters who started
college but none who completed a degree, or 02
- I have at least one older brother or sister who
has completed a college degree 03
- DON'T KNOW d
- REFUSED r

[D4]

D5a. While growing up (between birth and age 18), did [INSERT] live with you more than half the time?

CIRCLE ONE FOR EACH

	YES	NO	DON'T KNOW	REFUSED
a. Your mother [D5aa]	01	00	d	r
b. Your father [D5ab]	01	00	d	r

D5b. Did you live with any step-parents between birth and age 18?

- YES 01
- NO 00
- DON'T KNOW d
- REFUSED r

} → GO TO D5d

[D5b]

D5c. While growing up (between birth and age 18), which of the following step-parents lived with you more than half the time?

IF EITHER a. OR b. = 00 AT D5a, START WITH THE CORRESPONDING RESPONSE OPTION AT D5c.

CIRCLE ONE FOR EACH

	YES	NO	DON'T KNOW	REFUSED
a. Stepmother [D5ca]	01	00	d	r
b. Stepfather [D5cb]	01	00	d	r

D5d. While growing up (between birth and age 18), did any [INSERT] live with you more than half the time?

CIRCLE ONE FOR EACH

	YES	NO	DON'T KNOW	REFUSED
a. Other <u>adult</u> family members or relatives [D5da]	01	00	d	r
b. Other <u>adults</u> not related to you [D5db]	01	00	d	r

D6. Are you currently working for pay?

YES	01	} → GO TO D11
NO	00	
DON'T KNOW	d	
REFUSED.....	r	

[D6]

D7. In what month and year did you begin your current job?

PROBE: If you have more than one job, I'm referring to the job where you usually work the most hours per week.

PROBE: Your best estimate is fine.

____/____
MONTH YEAR

DON'T KNOW..... d

REFUSED..... r

[D7Month]
[D7Year]

D8. Still thinking about your current job, about how many hours do you work at this job in a typical week?

PROBE: Your best estimate is fine.

____ AVERAGE NUMBER HOURS PER WEEK

DON'T KNOW..... d

REFUSED..... r

[D8]

D9a. For this job, are you paid hourly, weekly, twice per month, monthly, or some other way?

HOURLY..... 01

WEEKLY..... 02

TWICE PER MONTH..... 03

MONTHLY..... 04

OTHER (SPECIFY)..... 05

DON'T KNOW..... d

REFUSED..... r

[D9a]
[D9a_OthSpecify]

D9b. How much do you usually earn [TIMESCALE FROM D9a] on this job, before taxes or other deductions?

PROBE: Your best estimate is fine.

\$ |_|_|_|_|,|_|_|_|_| . |_|_|_| ENTER SALARY RATE → **GO TO D15**

DON'T KNOW..... d

REFUSED..... r

[D9b]

D10. What is your best estimate of what your annual salary on this job falls into? Would you say . . .

CIRCLE ONE ONLY

Less than \$10,000, 01

\$10,001 – \$25,000, 02

\$25,001 – \$40,000, 03

\$40,001 – \$75,000, 04

\$75,001 – \$100,000, or 05

\$100,001 or more? 06

DON'T KNOW..... d

REFUSED..... r

[D10]

GO TO D15

D11. In what month and year did you last work for pay?

MARK HERE IF NEVER WORKED FOR PAY AND GO TO D15

PROBE: Your best estimate is fine.

|_|_| / |_|_|_|_|
MONTH YEAR

DON'T KNOW..... d

REFUSED..... r

[D11Never_1]

[D11Month]

[D11Year]

D12. Still thinking about the last job you held, about how many hours did you work at this job in a typical week?

PROBE: Your best estimate is fine.

|_|_| AVERAGE NUMBER HOURS PER WEEK

DON'T KNOW..... d

REFUSED..... r

[D12]

D13a. For your last job, were you paid hourly, weekly, twice per month, monthly, or some other way?

HOURLY..... 01

WEEKLY..... 02

TWICE PER MONTH..... 03

MONTHLY 04

OTHER (SPECIFY)..... 05

DON'T KNOW..... d

REFUSED..... r

[D13a]

[D13a_OthSpecify]

D13b. How much did you usually earn [TIMESCALE FROM D13a] on your last job, before taxes or other deductions?

PROBE: Your best estimate is fine.

\$ |_|_|_|,|_|_|_| ENTER SALARY RATE→ **GO TO D15**

DON'T KNOW..... d

REFUSED..... r

[D13b]

D14. What is your best estimate of what your annual salary on this job falls into? Would you say . . .

CIRCLE ONE ONLY

- Less than \$10,000, 01
- \$10,001 – \$25,000, 02
- \$25,001 – \$40,000, 03
- \$40,001 – \$75,000, 04
- \$75,001 – \$100,000, or 05
- \$100,001 or more? 06
- DON'T KNOW d
- REFUSED r

[D14]

The next questions are for classification purposes only.

CODE WITHOUT ASKING IF POSSIBLE:

D15. Are you . . .

- Male, or 01
- Female? 02

[D15]

D16. Are you Hispanic or Latino?

- YES 01
- NO 00
- DON'T KNOW d
- REFUSED r

[D16]

D17. What is your racial background?

CIRCLE ALL THAT APPLY

- American Indian or Alaska Native, 01
[D17_1]
- Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander, 02
[D17_2]
- Asian, 03
[D17_3]
- Black or African-American, or 04
[D17_4]
- White? 05
[D17_5]
- DON'T KNOW d
- REFUSED r

D18. Are you a U.S. citizen?

- YES 01 → GO TO D20
- NO 00
- DON'T KNOW d
- REFUSED r

[D18]

} → GO TO D20

D19. Of which foreign country are you a citizen?

- _____ FOREIGN COUNTRY
- DON'T KNOW d
- REFUSED r

[D19]

D20. In what U.S. state, U.S. territory, or foreign country did you last attend high school?

_____ STATE/TERRITORY
[D20State]

OR

_____ FOREIGN COUNTRY
[D20Foreign]

- DON'T KNOW d
- REFUSED r

D21. Which of the following best describes your religious preference?

- Christian 01
- Jewish..... 02
- Muslim 03
- Other non-Christian (e.g., Hindu, Buddhist)..... 04
- Atheist..... 05
- Agnostic..... 06
- Something else, or 07
- No preference 08
- DON'T KNOW..... d
- REFUSED..... r

[D21]

D22. We're almost done. Just a few more questions. Are there other experiences about [SCHOOL] we haven't asked about that you would like to share?

- YES 01
- NO 00
- DON'T KNOW..... d
- REFUSED..... r

} → GO TO D24

[D22]

D23. What were those experiences?

INTERVIEWER: PROBE

[D23]

D24. Knowing more about the types and number of courses that students took helps lend additional insights into the college experience. Would you be willing to release a copy of your transcript from [SCHOOL]? Your information will remain confidential and will be used only for research purposes.

YES 01
NO 00
DON'T KNOW d
REFUSED r

[D24]

D25. Thank you for participating in this survey. Your answers will help us better understand people's experiences during and after attending college. We would like to know more about the types of college experiences that students had. Would you be willing to talk with us in a more in-depth interview at a later time?

YES 01
NO 00
DON'T KNOW d
REFUSED r

[D25]

END. Those are all our questions. Thank you very much for your participation in the survey. May I please have your name and address so that we can send you a check for [\$30/\$50]?

RECORD NAME AND ADDRESS

NAME _____
ADDRESS LINE 1 _____
ADDRESS LINE 2 _____
CITY/TOWN _____
STATE _____
ZIP CODE _____

APPENDIX D
DATA DOCUMENTATION MEMO

MEMORANDUM

TO: Debbie Prentice, Princeton University

FROM: David DesRoches and Betsy Santos

DATE: 7/20/2009

CSAP - 33

SUBJECT: College Experiences Survey Data File Documentation

This memo provides information about the College Experiences Survey data file. This includes information about variables not documented in the CSAP annotated questionnaire. It also documents variables included from the sample frame and those used in constructing the survey weights.

I. VARIABLE-SPECIFIC INFORMATION

A. Weighting variable

<u>VARIABLE</u>	<u>DEFINITION</u>
finalWgt	Final sample weight variable

B. Survey Management Variables

<u>VARIABLE</u>	<u>DEFINITION</u>
MPRID	The identification number provided by MPR to each Sample member

MEMO TO: Debbie Prentice
FROM: David DesRoches and Betsy Santos
DATE: 7/20/2009
PAGE: 2

B. Survey Management Variables (Continued)

VARIABLE	DEFINITION
Final	Final Disposition Code 10 = Telephone Complete 30 = Web Complete 200 = Refusal by known respondent 209 = Refusal by known respondent - adamant 210 = Refusal by gatekeeper 211 = Refusal by gatekeeper - adamant 220 = Refusal by unknown person 240 = Hung up during introduction 330 = Effort ended/Case retired 400 = Language Barrier (Non-Spanish) 401 = Language Barrier (Spanish) 410 = Physical/Cognitive Barrier 430 = Unavailable during field period 440 = Deceased 590 = Unlocatable
Release	The sample was released in two batches: 1 = 1st release sent 10/14/2008 2 = 2nd release sent 11/3/2008

MEMO TO: Debbie Prentice
FROM: David DesRoches and Betsy Santos
DATE: 7/20/2009
PAGE: 3

C. Variables provided with sampling frame

VARIABLE	DEFINITION
FullSchoolName	School name in text format
Sex	Gender variable provided by schools 1 = Male 2 = Female
School Number	School number 1 = Stony Brook University 2 = University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign 3 = University of Florida at Gainesville
Gradstatus	Graduation status provided by schools (text format)
GradMonth	Month of graduation provided by schools 5 = May 6 = June 8 = August 12 = December
GradYear	Year of graduation provided by schools (YYYY format)
GradDate	Date of graduation provided by schools (text format)
RaceString	Race and ethnicity provided by schools (text format)

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