

What's New in NCES Sample Surveys and Data Products

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Agenda

Today's Topics

- NCES sample surveys background and context
- Study updates
- How NCES sample survey data are used
- Accessing the data
- Looking forward to current and future collections

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Today I will first provide context that will serve to ground the discussion and give some background on NCES' sample surveys. NCES conducts a variety of postsecondary surveys that are interrelated but have different purposes and uses. This session will provide an overview of the studies and how they can be used. Updates will be provided on current, recent, and future NCES sample studies and data releases. I'll also discuss how you can access the data for your own work, including through DataLab, the NCES online suite of data analysis tools. Finally we will take some time to talk about what is coming in the future with NCES sample surveys.

National Center for Education Statistics (NCES)

- Primary federal entity for collecting and analyzing data related to education in the U.S.
- Housed within the U.S. Department of Education's Institute of Education Sciences
- Fulfills a Congressional mandate to collect, collate, analyze, and report complete statistics on the condition of American education; conduct and publish reports; and review and report on education activities internationally
- RTI International administers the sample surveys on behalf of NCES

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Note that while today we will focus on the postsecondary work at NCES, it's important to note that NCES collects and analyzes data for all levels of education in the US, not just postsecondary. NCES RTI performs survey design and data collection work for NCES, including IPEDS, but today we'll be talking primarily about the postsecondary sample surveys from NCES.

Context

Research Goals Across NCES Sample Surveys

To generate a nationally representative descriptive portrait of students in postsecondary education and to understand

- How students and their families finance postsecondary education
- Persistence and attainment
- Student outcomes

NOTE:

NCES sample surveys are distinct and separate from IPEDS

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It's important to understand the overall purpose of the NCES sample surveys, which together serve to paint a portrait of US higher education students. The collection of surveys examine topics like how students pay for education, factors affecting students' persistence and degree/credential attainment, including transfer and drop-out information, and student outcomes. Note that the sample surveys are distinct from IPEDS. While IPEDS does collect some data on similar topics as the sample surveys, such as financial aid information, IPEDS is institution-level data. Sample surveys, on the other hand, are designed to be nationally representative at the student level.

NCES Postsecondary Sample Surveys

The Cross-Sectional Foundation:



National Postsecondary Student Aid Study (NPSAS)

Study of student financial aid and demographics

The Longitudinal Complements:



Beginning Postsecondary Students Longitudinal Study (BPS)

Study of persistence and attainment



Baccalaureate and Beyond Longitudinal Study (B&B)

Study of workforce outcomes, family formation, graduate school, debt repayment

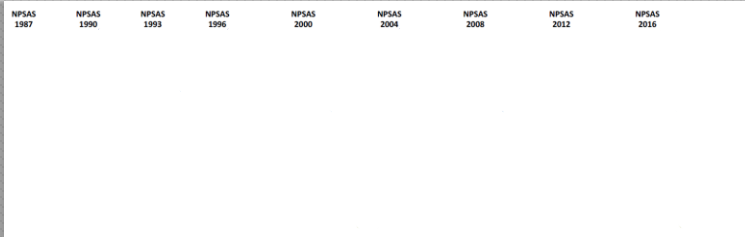
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There are three large postsecondary sample surveys that NCES conducts, which are all interrelated. NPSAS is the foundation and is a cross sectional snapshot of students in one academic year. NPSAS also serves as the foundation for two longitudinal studies, which follow students over time. Since NPSAS is so large and comprehensive, it's a good opportunity to oversample certain student populations to examine in more detail. BPS is a study of first time college students that follows students over the course of 6 years, tracking their progress through postsecondary education. B&B is a study of bachelor's degree recipients, which follows them over 10 years to examine outcomes. The surveys all serve different purposes, but each serve as a different piece to the puzzle of understanding higher education in the US.

History and Timeline

NCES Postsecondary Sample Surveys

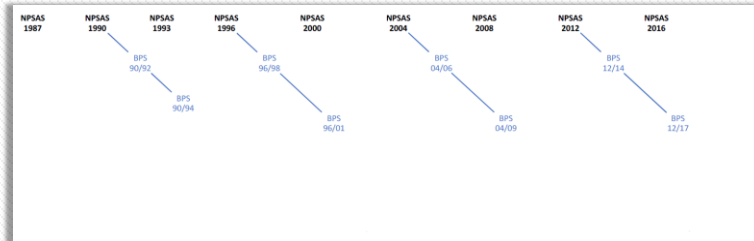


1987 > > > > > > > > > > 2016

NPSAS has generally been conducted every four years. Each NPSAS typically results in a longitudinal study, and the BPS and B&B studies are conducted on an alternate basis.

History and Timeline

NCES Postsecondary Sample Surveys



1987 > > > > > > > > > > 2016

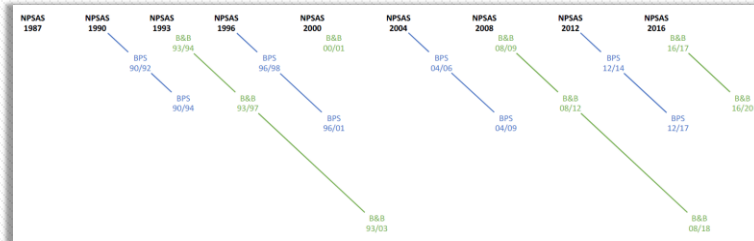
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These NPSAS studies resulted in BPS studies. The indicators such as BPS:12/14 refer to the base NPSAS year and the year of the follow up, so BPS:12/14 is the 2014 follow up from NPSAS:12. BPS tracks students over the course of six years after beginning their postsecondary education.

History and Timeline

NCES Postsecondary Sample Surveys



1987 > > > > > > > > > > 2016

These NPSAS studies resulted in B&B studies. This graphic gives you a sense for the amount of data NCES collects with the sample surveys and how they are all connected. B&B follows students for 10 years after receiving their bachelor's degree.

Study Updates: NPSAS



NPSAS:16 data released in early 2018

- First Look report available at nces.ed.gov/surveys/npsas

NPSAS:18-AC *currently in data collection*

- Will provide more current/frequent national data
- State-level data on a wide scale for the first time
- Administrative data only, no student interview

NPSAS:20 in development

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NPSAS study updates:

NPSAS:16 data were released in early 2018. The First Look report is available on NCES' website and the data are available for use in DataLab (which we will discuss further). The 2017-18 National Postsecondary Student Aid Study, Administrative Collection (NPSAS:18-AC) is currently in data collection. NPSAS:18-AC is different in that it is the first NPSAS to occur only two years after the previous. With NPSAS on a 4-year cycle, by the end, available data begin to become outdated. Conducting NPSAS on a 2-year cycle will provide more current data for the field. It will also be the first to provide state level data on a wide scale, hopefully for all 50 states, DC, and Puerto Rico if response rates are sufficient. Since it does not include a student interview, student records data from postsecondary institutions are the primary source of data. As such, institution participation is particularly important for the success of the study and the availability of state-level data. If your institution was selected, we encourage you to submit data. NPSAS:20 is in development and will include a student interview, but will likely also have a large administrative data component to produce state-data again.

Study Updates: BPS



BPS:12

- BPS:12/17 student interview data expected in 2019 (final follow up from NPSAS:12)
- Student Records data from postsecondary institutions were collected in 2017
- Transcripts from postsecondary institutions are *currently being collected*

BPS study updates:

Transcripts are currently being collected as the last component of BPS:12. If your institution was selected for the BPS transcript collection, we encourage you to participate. Transcripts are one of the only reliable sources for data on the course taking patterns of students and how those might affect outcomes.

Study Updates: B&B



B&B:16/17 data expected in 2019

- First follow up from NPSAS:16

B&B:08/18 currently in data collection

- Final follow up from NPSAS:08
- First 10-year follow up since B&B:93/03

B&B study updates. B&B:08/18 is currently ongoing, which will be the first 10-year follow up since 1993/2003.

How NCEs Sample Survey Data are Used

Policy Changes

- Example: FAFSA “Prior-Prior Year” changes

Publications

- For the general public as well as researchers, policymakers

Research

- Example: “Repayment of Student Loans as of 2015 Among 1995–96 and 2003–04 First-Time Beginning Students” (NCEs)

Advocacy

- Informing discussions around affordability and access

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NCEs sample survey data are used in a variety of different ways in practice.

Policymakers and lawmakers use them to inform decisions around higher education since the datasets are so comprehensive. Changes to the FAFSA process, including the prior-prior year changes, relied on NSPAS data. This allows students to use tax data from one year prior and thus file the FAFSA earlier. This in turns enables them to make more informed decisions about postsecondary education.

NCEs sample survey data are often cited and used in publications. One prominent example is the College Board’s “Trends” series, which includes “Trends in Higher Education” and “Trends in Student” aid. These publications are annual and often utilize NPSAS data. They are intended for both researchers and also the general public.

Researchers use NCEs sample survey data extensively. Robert Kelchen is one well known researcher who does. NCEs also conducts its own research using the data. One recent example is “Repayment of Student Loans as of 2015 Among 1995–96 and 2003–04 First-Time Beginning Students.” This report presents selected findings about the repayment of federal student loans using data from the 2015 Federal Student Aid Supplements and two older BPS cohorts. The report presents estimates of both

cohorts' cumulative borrowing and repayment statuses as of June 30, 2015, some 20 years after the 1995–96 cohort and 12 years after the 2003–04 cohort began postsecondary education.

NCES sample survey data are also used by advocacy organizations. The Institute for Higher Education Policy (IHEP) uses NPSAS data in a variety of publications and research papers that explore access to and affordability of higher education.

You Can Use the Data Too!

Enhance Your Benchmarking...

→ NCES sample survey data are useful complements to IPEDS



National Postsecondary Student Aid Study
A cross-sectional study mandated by congress that focuses on how students and families pay for college. Useful for examining financial aid and for benchmarking measures within an academic year.

Beginning Postsecondary Students Longitudinal Study
Focuses on the persistence and attainment of first-time-beginning students over six years. Good for benchmarking persistence and attainment by subgroups not covered in the IPEDS Graduate Rates (GR) survey component.

Baccalaureate and Beyond Longitudinal Study
Examines longer term outcomes for bachelor's degree recipients over the course of ten years after degree attainment. Ideal for benchmarking to alumni surveys.

Institutional researchers can use NCES sample survey data for their own research as well. Since the studies are nationally representative and contain so much detailed demographic information, they can be used to address some of the limitations of IPEDS inherent with its aggregate nature. Each of the NCES sample surveys can be used to benchmark in different ways. Check out the feature article written with Sean Simone, NCES project officer at the time, in the June 2018 issue of eAIR and still available on the web, for more detail.

How are NCES Data Released?



NCES Publications and Reports

→ Various types with simple or more involved analyses



Restricted-Use Data Files

→ For more intense research purposes



DataLab - nces.ed.gov/datalab

→ Publicly available online suite of data analysis tools

NCES sample survey data are available in a variety of ways from static publications and reports, to full restricted-use micro level data sets. In the “middle ground” area is DataLab, which allows users to use online tools to perform their own analyses.

NCES Publication Types

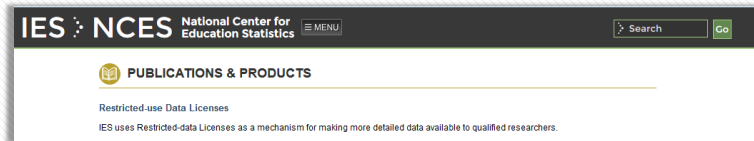
First Look	First preview of data. Up to 15 pages of tables and 1 page of selected findings.
Data File Documentation	Study methodology report.
Statistics in Brief	Short topical report with simple statistics. Peer reviewed.
Web Tables	Brief introduction outlines contents but not findings, followed by tables and occasionally figures.
Statistical Analysis Report	May include multivariate analysis. Peer reviewed.
Data Point	Two pages, 2 figures or tables.

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NCES publications are available in a variety of formats with varying levels of detail and analysis. Some are short, simple reports, others are very long and extensive, containing large amounts of data.

Restricted-Use Data License



- Interested researchers can apply via the NCES website
Instructions can be found at <http://nces.ed.gov/pubsearch/licenses.asp>

The restricted use data license is for more intense research purposes. Since it contains micro-level data and personally identifiable information, researchers must apply for a license, a process that includes numerous safeguards designed to maintain data security.

Access NPSAS and NCES Datasets



QuickStats

For novice users who want to create simple tables and charts using frequently used variables.

PowerStats

For advanced users who want to create complex tables and regressions.

TrendStats

For users interested in tracking trends across multiple survey years. TrendStats allows you to create complex tables spanning multiple data collection years, and adjust estimates for inflation.

- Intuitive and powerful data analysis tools
- Create tables and perform analyses using 30+ NCES datasets
- Includes NPSAS, BPS, and B&B
- No restricted-use license needed

Table 1. National Center for Education Statistics
 Enrollment in public and private schools by grade level and gender: 2011-12

Grade level	Public	Private
Total	36.1	1.8
Pre-kindergarten	0.1	0.1
Kindergarten	1.2	0.2
Elementary school	21.3	0.8
High school	13.5	0.7
Postsecondary	0.6	0.0
Other	0.3	0.0

nces.ed.gov/datalab

DataLab is NCES' primary vehicle for distributing data. It's ideal for most users because it offers powerful analysis tools that are easy to use and don't require any special access or statistical software. All NCES sample survey data are available in DataLab, as are a number of other NCES datasets. DataLab's drag-and-drop interface is intuitive and user friendly, and all tools share the same basic functionality. Each tool offers a different level of analysis potential.

DataLab: QuickStats

DATALAB *Fast, flexible, powerful.*

Questions? Contact NCES
nces.info@rti.org

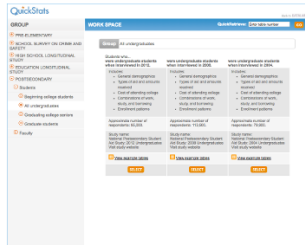
QuickStats

PowerStats

TrendStats

CREATING A CUSTOMIZED TABLE IN QUICKSTATS

1 2 3



The screenshot shows the 'WORK SPACE' interface in QuickStats. On the left, there is a navigation menu with categories like 'GROUP', 'POSTSECONDARY', 'SCHOOL SURVEY ON CRIME AND SAFETY', 'HIGH SCHOOL LONGITUDINAL STUDY', 'EDUCATION LONGITUDINAL STUDY', and 'POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION'. The main area displays a list of variables under the heading 'WORK SPACE'. The variables are organized into columns and include options like 'All variables', 'Selected variables', and 'Available variables'. At the bottom, there are three buttons: 'ADD', 'REMOVE', and 'RESET'.

1. CHOOSING A GROUP

Who are you interested in? Students or faculty? Just drag and drop your desired group to the Work Space.

GO TO:

PRE-ELEMENTARY
EDUCATION

SCHOOLS AND STAFFING
SURVEY

SCHOOL SURVEY ON
CRIME AND SAFETY

HIGH SCHOOL
LONGITUDINAL STUDY

EDUCATION
LONGITUDINAL STUDY

POSTSECONDARY
EDUCATION

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INTERNATIONAL

QuickStats is the most simple tool that is perfect for quick and simple analyses using the most commonly used variables. Users are not even required to create an account or log in. It's an easy way to get a quick snapshot of something.

DataLab: PowerStats

DATALAB *Fast, flexible, powerful.* Questions? Contact NCEES nces.info@rti.org

QuickStats PowerStats TrendStats

KEY FEATURES OF POWERSTATS

- PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION**
General percentage of a population in each category of a variable, displayed in columns.
- AVERAGES, MEDIANS, & PERCENTS**
Computes any of three statistics (averages, medians, or percentages) for your selected variables, displayed in columns.
- CENTILES**
Produces values of a continuous variables at centiles, displayed in columns.

GO TO:

- PRE-ELEMENTARY EDUCATION
- SCHOOLS AND STAFFING SURVEY
- SCHOOL SURVEY ON CRIME AND SAFETY
- HIGH SCHOOL LONGITUDINAL STUDY
- EDUCATION LONGITUDINAL STUDY
- POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION

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PowerStats is the most used tool and can be used for more sophisticated analyses, including regressions. PowerStats contains more variables and analysis potential. You are required to create an account and log in, but it only requires an email address and password, so no special approval is necessary.

DataLab: PowerStats

PowerStats Usage Statistics | My Preferences | PowerStats Home | DataLab | Log out

All undergraduates: 2012 (NPSAS2012UG)

VIEW: Estimates Only | Estimates and Standard Errors | Estimates and Confidence Intervals | Printer-Friendly Version

SAVE: Save to My Tables | Save to My Variables | Save at NCES and Send Me the URL | Download as CSV | Download for Excel | Download as PDF | Download Table Specifications

SHARE: Post My Table to User Tables | Email to a Friend

TABLE T-Test Tool | Edit Table | Create Table

NPSAS institution sector (4 with multiple) by Cumulative amount borrowed for undergrad.

	Public 4-year (%)	Private nonprofit 4-year (%)	Public 2-year (%)	Private for profit (%)	Others or attended more than one school (%)	Total
Estimates						
Total	28.4	11.7	38.1	12.9	9.0	100%
Cumulative amount borrowed for undergrad						
0	25.1	8.1	54.5	4.4	7.9	100%
\$1-5,999	28.2	8.7	41.3	13.1	8.8	100%
\$6,000-12,399	29.3	12.0	28.0	21.0	9.6	100%
\$12,400-24,299	31.9	16.8	19.9	20.7	10.8	100%
\$24,300 or more	34.3	20.4	11.7	23.5	10.1	100%

The names of the variables used in this table are: BORAMT1 and SECTOR4. The variable names are unique identifiers. To locate these variables, enter the variable name in the search box.

The weight variable used in this table is WTA000.

Source: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, 2011-12 National Postsecondary Student Aid Study (NPSAS:12).

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Here is an example of the type of table you can create in PowerStats. Users can also save tables and specifications and recall them later. It's also possible to access the Tables Library and produce and customize tables from existing NCES publications.

DataLab: TrendStats

TrendStats DATA LAB
Usage Statistics | TrendStats Home | Log out

NPSAS: 1996-2012 Undergraduates

VIEW
Estimates Only
Estimates & Standard Errors
Estimates & Confidence Intervals
Printer-Friendly Version
SAVE
SHARE

Estimates Only Edit Table | Edit Table Title | Create New Table | T-Test Tool

Institution sector (4 with multiple) by Race/ethnicity (with multiple) on years 2000, 2004, 2008 and 2012

Institution sector (4 with multiple)						
	Public 4-year	Private not-for-profit 4-year	Public 2-year	Private for-profit	Others or attended more than one school	Total
Estimates						
Total						
2000	31.3	14.1	42.5	4.9	7.2	100%
2004	29.9	13.6	40.8	7.7	8.0	100%
2008	28.4	12.5	40.3	10.3	8.5	100%
2012	28.4	11.7	38.1	12.9	9.0	100%

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INTERNATIONAL

TrendStats is the tool that can be used to analyze trend data over time. NPSAS is the postsecondary data set available in TrendStats. It does adjust for inflation.

Looking Forward: Current Studies

THANK YOU!



NPSAS:18-AC

- Enrollment lists and Student Records data are currently being collected
- Institution participation is particularly important for state-level data



BPS

- Transcripts are currently being collected for BPS:12
- Especially valuable for data on course-taking patterns

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RTI and NCES would like to thank institutions and their staff that have participated in the sample surveys. As a reminder, NPSAS:18-AC is in collection now. Because institution participation is particularly important for state-level data, we encourage selected institutions to submit data. Transcript are also being collected for the BPS:12 study. Since transcripts are especially important for course-taking data, we encourage institutions selected to participate.

Looking Forward: Future Studies



NPSAS:20 Goals

- Maximize utility of the data
- Minimize institution burden

Considerations and Explorations

- Potential new sources of data
- Potential for collecting data in new formats/structures
- Continually working to improve processes and approaches

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NPSAS:20 is currently in development. RTI and NCES are exploring new approaches to with the goal of minimizing institution burden and maximizing the utility of the data. NPSAS:20 will be a traditional NPSAS in that it will include a student interview, but it will also likely have a large administrative data component to enable state-level data similar to NPSAS:18.

For more information



Postsecondary Data Portal

- Secure site for institutions to provide data for NCES sample surveys
- Convenient collection of links for more info on the studies and DataLab

surveys.nces.ed.gov/portal

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919-541-6333

The Postsecondary Data Portal (PDP) is the website where institutions provide data for NCES sample surveys, but it is also a convenient central site to link to more information for the postsecondary sample surveys as well as DataLab.