

Institutions participating in the CBE Experiment will be required to collect, maintain, and provide information for students whose Title IV aid is administered under the experiment. Institutions will be required to respond to survey questions provided by the Department regarding the implementation of its CBE programs and the modified disbursement system under the experiment.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Through this experiment the Department seeks to gain a better understanding of how the flexibility in the delivery of Title IV student assistance might facilitate the implementation of CBE programs by institutions and how this flexibility relates to students' costs, borrowing, and completion.

The Department is also interested in learning how the flexibility provided in the experiment for Return of Title IV Funds (R2T4) and Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) make it easier for institutions to implement CBE programs and maintain the integrity of the Title IV student aid programs. We also seek to learn how institutions ensure regular and substantive interaction between students and instructors. Additionally, we seek to learn how institutions prohibit payment of Title IV aid for credits from prior learning that were not based on instruction during the payment period.

Finally, we hope to better understand the process by which institutions develop CBE programs, including the process of obtaining accrediting agency approval for such programs and determining, with their accrediting agencies, the clock or credit hour equivalencies for the defined competencies in their programs.

Specific research questions for the experiment include the following:

1. What roles do accrediting agencies, state agencies, and other entities play in establishing CBE programs?
 - Did the institution apply to an accrediting agency, state agency, or another entity for review or approval of a CBE program?
 - How do these entities evaluate and, if applicable, approve CBE programs?
 - What standards, if any, do these entities have in place regarding CBE programs?
2. How do institutions implement CBE programs?
 - What are institutions' processes for assessing student learning in CBE programs?
 - How are institutions' CBE programs designed with regard to faculty roles?
 - Do students receive academic and other support services for enrollment in CBE programs? If so, what kinds of support services are provided and how are they delivered?
 - How do institutions establish credit hours or credit hour equivalencies for CBE programs?
 - How do institutions measure student progression in CBE programs?

3. What do individual CBE programs look like?
 - Description of the CBE program(s) and the credential(s) awarded
 - Description of how the program was conceived, designed, and implemented
 - What is the length of the program, in credit or clock hours or the equivalents?
 - What is the expected length of the program in weeks, months, or years?
 - Number, or anticipated number, of students enrolled in the program annually
 - Does the institution offer the same program in a traditional mode?
 - Is the entire program offered using CBE, or only a portion of it?
 - How much are students charged for the program?
4. What are the implications for the administration of financial aid?
 - How are institutions implementing the modified disbursement method?
 - What benefits or challenges are associated with the modified disbursement method?
 - How feasible would it be for institutions to implement the modified disbursement method on a larger scale to facilitate the expansion of CBE programs?
5. What are the characteristics of students who are enrolled in CBE programs?
 - Financial information from FAFSA/ISIR
 - Academic performance in the CBE program (qualitative and quantitative)
 - Postsecondary enrollment during and following enrollment in the CBE program
 - Financial aid history prior to enrollment in the CBE program

For research questions 1-4, institutions will be required to respond to survey questions when beginning the experiment and then annually at the end of each award year. Surveys will include both multiple-choice responses and open-ended questions. It is expected that responses will come from both academic administrators and financial aid administrators.

For research question 5, Institutions will use the (Institutional Student Information Record (ISIR) Analysis Tool, a secure web-based application, developed by the Department to report student identifiers, ISIR information, and academic and historical enrollment information. Note: Using the student identifiers, the Department will access its systems (COD, NSLDS) to obtain federal aid information and enrollment information, including completion and withdrawal.

The Department reserves the right to modify or add research questions at a later time.

You can find additional information on reporting later in this section.

REPORTING PROCESS

As indicated above institutions will complete and submit an annual survey to address research questions 1-4 and use the ISIR Analysis Tool to supply individual student level data to answer research question 5.

FSA plans to administer the annual survey in the early fall following the end of each award year a school participates in the CBE experiment. Results of this survey will document the experiences of schools in awarding Title IV assistance within various CBE contexts and provide school-level contextual information for the analysis of individual student level data.

ISIR Analysis Tool

FSA plans to utilize the ISIR Analysis Tool to collect individual financial aid applicant information supplied by students (and their parents) on the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA), as well as a few additional data elements supplied by the school for students enrolling in the CBE offerings affected by the experiment. In addition to providing a means for participating schools to report student level participation in the CBE experiment, the ISIR Analysis Tool will provide statistical reports for schools to generate and use to improve their understanding of the effect of implementing the experiment on their campus.

- ▶ **Preparation**—In order to take full advantage of the capabilities of the ISIR Analysis Tool, schools will be required to upload two types of data: First, the information financial aid applicants supplied on their FAFSA, and second, CBE-specific data schools supply on their students affected by the experiment.
- ▶ **Uploading data**—The process of uploading ISIR (FAFSA) data will be straightforward for schools participating in the CBE experiment. The separate requirement of uploading experiment-specific information is also not difficult, but will involve a three step process of 1) creating the data fields to store the information within the ISIR Analysis Tool; 2) creating ASCII text files that contain the extra data and identify the individual whose data it is; and 3) populating the created “user-defined” data fields with the information.
- ▶ **Training**—FSA will provide further training on how to utilize the ISIR Analysis Tool and how to prepare the flat ASCII files.

As will be explained fully in a future training, uploading the ISIR data from the students affected by your participation in the CBE experiment is not difficult.

How to access the ISIR Analysis Tool

The first step is to sign up to use the ISIR Analysis Tool. In order to use the ISIR Analysis Tool, you first must enroll for FAA Access to CPS Online. The Department published an [Electronic Announcement \(EA\) on May 12, 2015](#), announcing the availability of the 2015–2016 ISIR Analysis Tool. To get access to use this web-based application, users must work with the Primary or Secondary Destination Point Administrator at their institution to enroll. Below we have outlined the steps per the May 12, 2015, EA.

Enrollment and Authentication for the ISIR Analysis Tool Web Site

Your staff members must be enrolled for FAA Access to CPS Online and the ISIR Analysis Tool to access the ISIR Analysis Tool. The Primary Destination Point Administrator (DPA) or Secondary DPA of the TG number currently used by your school to send and receive FAFSAs and ISIR corrections automatically has access to the FAA Access to CPS Online Web site and can add or modify rights. The Primary or Secondary DPA needs to enroll financial aid staff members for access to the FAA Access to CPS Online and ISIR Analysis Tool Web sites. The Primary DPA must be enrolled for FAA Access to CPS Online before he or she can enroll additional staff members.

If your school is enrolled for 2014-2015, your enrollment carries over to 2015-2016. If your school is not enrolled, your school’s Primary or Secondary DPA can complete the enrollment for FAA Access to CPS Online Web site services for your school, including access to the ISIR Analysis Tool, through the SAIG Enrollment Web site, located at <https://fsawebenroll.ed.gov>.

A Federal Student Aid User of Electronic Services Statement must be printed by the Primary DPA and signed by new users of the FAA Access to CPS Online, R2T4 on the Web, or ISIR Analysis Tool Web sites. While you are not required to mail the Federal Student Aid User of Electronic Services Statement to FSA’s Participation Management system, you must retain signed copies at your school.

To access the FAA Access to CPS Online Web site, you must use an FSA User ID and password. Any FAA Access users at your school who do not have an FSA User ID can acquire one by completing the following steps:

Step	Action
1	Go to the SAIG Enrollment Website and click on the “FSA User ID Registration” link on the left-hand side of the home page.
2	Enter the identifying information requested and click on “Submit.”
3	Follow the remaining steps, which include establishing a password and setting up challenge questions.

During the FSA User ID registration process, the user will be presented with the e-mail address reflected within the SAIG Enrollment Web site. We will use this e-mail address to send the FSA User ID.

Note: As first explained in a [January 13, 2012, Electronic Announcement](#) on the IFAP Web site, one of the technology security initiatives we implemented in 2012 is a security process called Two Factor Authentication (TFA). Through TFA, when logging in to certain Federal Student Aid systems, including the FAA Access to CPS Online Web site, an authorized user is required to use a traditional User ID and Password as well as provide a One-Time Password (OTP). The OTP is generated by a registered token device that is in the physical possession of the user. If you have questions about TFA or need additional tokens, send an e-mail to TFA_Communications@ed.gov.

Creating a Flat ASCII File

To upload the ISIR records of the applicants participating in the experiment, you will need to create an ASCII (flat text) file that lists all applicants participating in the CBE experiment. The flat file should include the following:

- ▶ Student SSN
- ▶ First two letters of the student’s last name (all CAPS).

User-Defined Data

To add user-defined data specific to the CBE experiment, you must first create the fields in the tool by completing the following steps:

Step	Action
1	Identify and create the “user-specified” fields related to your CBE Program in the Tool.
2	Create a flat ASCII file that identifies the student (SSN and first two characters of last name-ALL CAPS) and contains the “user-specified” data identifying the individual user-specified field value for each student.
3	Upload the flat ASCII file into the Tool.

After uploading the required ISIR and user-specified information, a school will be able to generate a statistical report that allows school staff to explore their initial implementation of the CBE experiment.

The data will be used to make informed policy decisions for future changes to law and/or regulations.

References and Resources



[July 31, 2014, Federal Register](#)

[Experimental Sites Website](#)

[Electronic Announcement for 2015–2016 ISIR Analysis Tool](#)

[Electronic Announcement for the Demo Site](#)

