

**The Department of Education's
Experimental Sites Initiative
Four New Experiments Announced
Webinar # 1
August 20, 2014**

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The
Experiments

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Participate

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The ESI Web
Site

The New Experiments

Competency-Based Education

Limited Direct Assessment

Prior Learning Assessment

Federal Work-Study

Responsibilities of Institutional Offices



Administrative Capability
668.16(b)(1) and (4)

Implementing the experiments is the responsibility of the entire institution

Competency-Based Education

Objective

- To learn how flexibility in aid disbursement may support self-paced competency-based education programs and benefit needy students enrolled in those programs

Competency-Based Education

Requirements to Participate

- Must offer a program in which at least one academic year is offered solely through competency-based education;
AND
- Program must be approved or recognized by an accrediting agency as a competency-based education program

Competency-Based Education

Traditional Postsecondary Programs

- Measure students' progress based on:
 - Number of credit or clock hours completed, and
 - Weeks of instructional time that have elapsed
- Classes have defined start and end dates

Competency-Based Education Programs

- Measure students' progress by assessing learning on the basis of mastery of a defined set of competency standards
- Programs are self-paced and courses do not have specific end dates

Disbursement

Current Rules

- Disbursements for tuition and living expenses made at same time
- Disbursements for a term-based program are made each term
- Disbursements for a nonterm program are made when the student completes 50% of credits and weeks in Title IV academic year

Experiment

- Disbursements for direct and indirect costs may occur at different times
- Disbursements may be made for direct costs when competencies have been mastered
- Disbursements for indirect costs must be made at regular intervals

Direct and Indirect Costs

Direct Costs

- Tuition and Fees
- Books and supplies

Indirect Costs

- Room and Board
- Transportation, miscellaneous expenses, etc.

Example

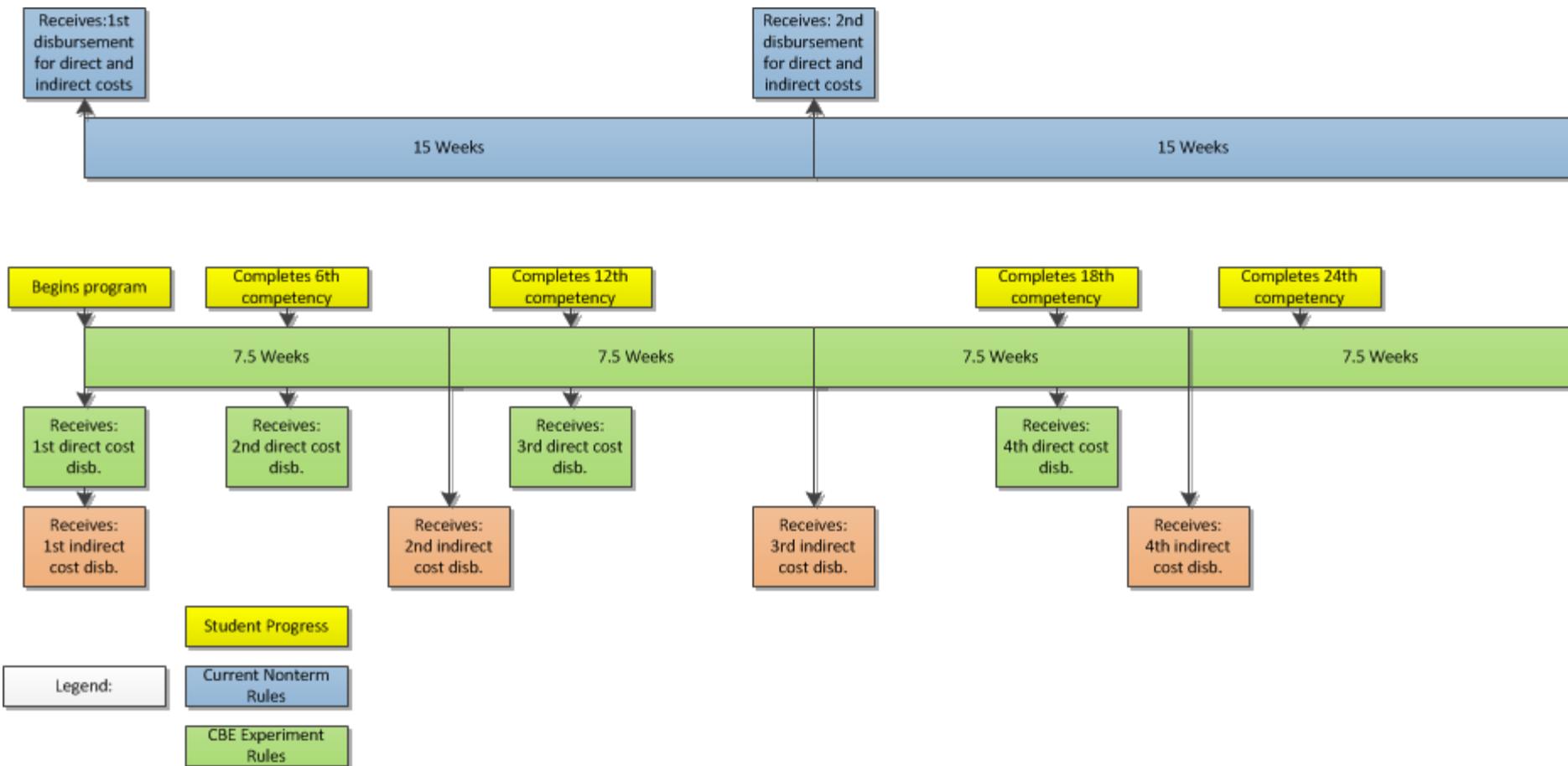
One-year certificate program

Program's Title IV academic year:

- 24 competencies (one credit hour per competency)
- 30 weeks of instructional time

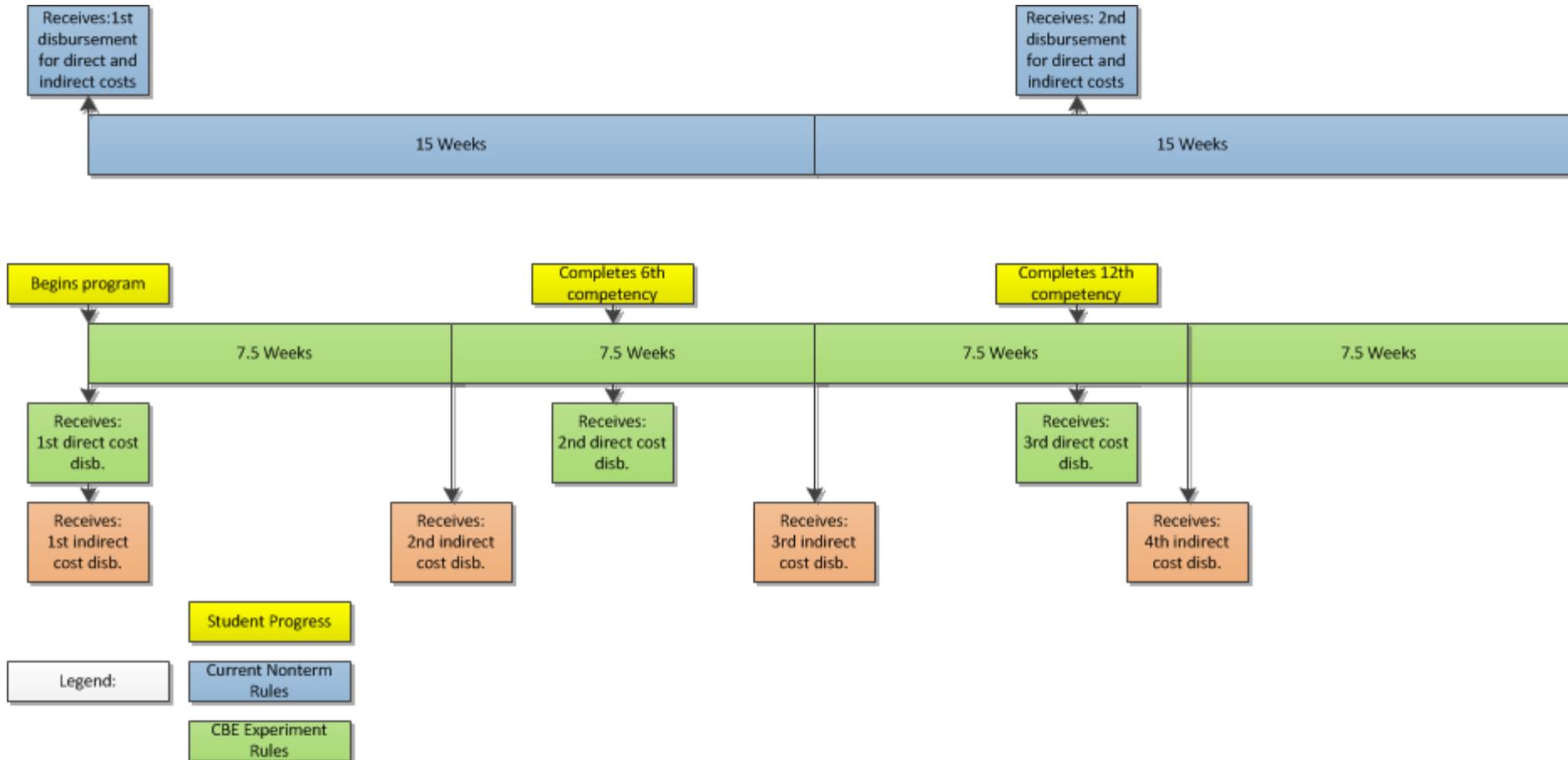
Student #1

- Accelerating through program



Student #2

- Moving slowly through program



Payment Periods

Current Rules

- Term program: Each term is a payment period
- Nonterm program: A payment period is 50% of the credits and weeks in the defined Title IV academic year

Experiment

- Two types of payment periods: direct costs payment periods and indirect costs payment periods
- Payment periods are no more than 25% of the defined Title IV academic year

Satisfactory Academic Progress

Current Rules

- Must check once annually but can check more often
- Quantitative evaluation determines whether a student is on pace to complete within 150% of normal time. Calculated by dividing credits completed over credits attempted

Experiment

- Must check at least once when the student finishes the weeks in the program's Title IV academic year, but can check more often
- Quantitative evaluation is whether student is on pace to complete the program within 150% of the normal time over a given calendar period

Return of Title IV Funds (R2T4)

Current Rules

- R2T4 required if a student withdraws during the payment period

Experiment

- Because payment periods are shorter and disbursements are smaller, R2T4 calculations are not required
- Institutions must pay grant funds or notify students of loan funds that could have been disbursed on date of withdrawal

At-A-Glance

Competency-Based Education

Topic	Flexibility	Outcome
Disbursements	School separates direct and indirect cost disbursements	Students have access to Title IV funds when needed
Satisfactory Academic Progress	Pace may be evaluated by measuring competencies completed over calendar time	Flexibility in how institutions evaluate students' progress
Return of Title IV Funds	R2T4 not required	Alleviates administrative burden on institutions

Limited Direct Assessment

Objective

- To examine schools' innovative approaches to:
 - Combining direct assessment and traditional credit hours in educational programs, and
 - Providing remedial coursework using direct assessment

Limited Direct Assessment

Requirements to Participate

- Must offer at least one course or competency using direct assessment in a program that also uses credit or clock hours; or
- Must offer at least one remedial course or competency using direct assessment

Limited Direct Assessment

Current Rules

- Must use direct assessment for the entire program, not a mixture of direct assessment and traditional credit hours or clock hours (a “hybrid” program)
- Can include only credit hour remedial coursework in a student’s enrollment status; may not include remedial coursework offered using direct assessment

Experiment

- Programs offering a mix of direct assessment and credit/clock hours are eligible
- Can include remedial coursework offered in credit hours or using direct assessment in a student’s enrollment status

At-A-Glance

Limited Direct Assessment

Topic	Flexibility	Outcome
Direct Assessment Programs	Waiver of restriction on hybrid programs	More flexibility for institutions to offer direct assessment programs
Remedial Coursework	Can include remedial coursework offered using direct assessment in a student's enrollment status	Provides students who need remediation with opportunity to participate in direct assessment programs

Prior Learning Assessment

Objective

- To learn how allowing the costs of prior learning assessments to be included in cost of attendance (COA) may influence students' total educational costs, borrowing, and time required to complete the program

Prior Learning Assessment

Requirements to Participate

- Must provide academic credit in when the student successfully demonstrates prior learning through an assessment
- This experiment cannot include the costs of transcript evaluations or placement testing as a Title IV eligible expense

Prior Learning Assessment

Current Rules

- Costs for prior learning assessments may not be included in COA
- Time and effort spent preparing for prior learning assessments may not be included in a student's enrollment status

Experiment

- COA can include costs incurred by the student for assessments of prior learning
- Federal Pell Grant enrollment status may include up to three credit hours associated with a student's efforts to prepare materials for a prior learning assessment

At-A-Glance

Prior Learning Assessment

Topic	Flexibility	Outcome
Cost of Attendance	Prior learning assessment cost can be included in cost of attendance	Ability of needy students have prior learning apply toward program completion
Pell Grant Enrollment Status	Up to 3 additional credit hours to Pell Grant enrollment status	Potential additional Pell Grant eligibility to help students pay for living expenses during a prior learning assessment

Federal Work-Study

Objective

- To learn whether a reduced Federal Work-Study (FWS) matching requirement for students employed as near-peer counselors encourages institutions to increase the number of FWS students employed as counselors

Federal Work-Study

Requirements for Participation

- Must place students in Federal Work-Study funded positions that provide counseling to high school students about college readiness, student aid, career counseling, or financial literacy

Federal Work-Study

Current Rules

- Except under limited circumstances, the Federal Share of compensation paid to students employed under the FWS Program may not exceed 75%

Experiment

- The matching share of the FWS compensation is reduced or eliminated, allowing 100% of Federal funds to compensate FWS near-peer counselors who provide counseling to high school students about college readiness, student aid, career counseling, or financial literacy

At-A-Glance

Federal Work-Study

Topic	Flexibility	Outcome
Federal Share of FWS Compensation	Up to 100 percent federal share provided to FWS students employed as near-peer counselors in high schools	Increased number of students employed as near-peer counselors in high schools

Evaluation of Experiments

The Department is developing evaluation strategy and institutional reporting requirements, both of which could vary by experiment

How to Apply

Letters of Application

- Should be on institutional letterhead, signed by at ***least two institutional officials***:
 - The institution's financial aid administrator, and
 - An academic official at the institution
- Must include the institution's official name and OPEID, mailing address, email address, FAX number and telephone number of a contact person, and the experiment(s) in which the institution wishes to be considered for participation
- Send as a **PDF file** to: experimentalsites@ed.gov no later than September 29th

Selection Process

Review and Screening

Past Compliance

Cross Section of Institutions



Institution participates if...

ED sends approval to institution from
ExperimentalSites@ed.gov

Institution accepts invitation to participate

Institution and ED sign amended PPA

Program Approval

Direct Assessment and Certain Non-Degree Programs *Must be Approved*

- Once an institution is selected for the experiment, Direct Assessment and certain non-degree programs must be approved by the Department before those programs can be part of the Competency-Based Education or Limited Direct Assessment experiments

ESI Website

<https://experimentalsites.ed.gov>

How to Apply

Federal Register Notice

Apply to Participate

Screening & Approval Process

Dear Colleague Letters & Electronic Announcements

Implement an Experiment

Action Plans

Training

Q&As

Guidance

Experiments

Experiments

List of Participants

ESI Reporting

Data Collection Instrument

Analysis Reports

Archives

Contact Information

Contact ESI staff at:

experimentalsites@ed.gov



Questions and Answers