**FWS Experiment Webinar Transcript
July 11, 2019**

Good afternoon, financial aid professionals. And good morning to our colleagues on the west coast.

Welcome to the FWS experiment session. My name is Warren Farr and I am one of your presenters today also joining me today is Tammy Abernathy, Michael Cagle, Craig Munier, and David Rhodes. Tammy and Michael will also be presenting today.

Before we begin, I would like to go over a few housekeeping items.

Today's webinar will be conducted in listen only mode. You all should have a copy of today's PowerPoint presentation that was forwarded to you in an email this morning.

If you have questions during the webinar. Click on the Q&A icon in the menu bar at the bottom of your screen. A Q&A box will open. Click in the box that says type your question here, type your question and click send.

We will entertain questions at the very end of the session. Although an answer may be provided to you during the session, some questions will be read aloud at the end, and answered, so that everyone can benefit from the question and answer.

The session will also be taped and posted to the ESI website for viewing within the next several days.

Now, let me turn this session over to Craig Munier who would like to provide some opening remarks.

Thanks, Warren. Hey, Good morning or afternoon, depending on where you are in the country. We're pleased that you could join us today for this webinar.

The purpose of our webinar today is to provide some guidance to schools that are interested in participating in the federal work-study experiment.

During the webinar we plan to provide a brief overview of the experiment that will serve as a reminder of the purpose of the experiment, the statutory and regulatory waivers that will be provided as part of the experiment, the evaluation expectations as well as other important information.

Our agenda today includes an overview of the experiment, including brief explanations of the details that were included in the Federal Register notice that was published on May 23, 2019.

As a reminder, in case you missed it. We also posted an electronic announcement on June 28 that extended the period of time for schools to apply for the experiment to September 23, 2019.

We’ll discuss the waivers and the application process, both of which are outlined in the Federal Register notice and finally we'll spend some time after the session to review some of your questions and make sure that we provide as much information to you throughout this session.

Implementing an experiment, any of the experiments in the experimental sites initiative requires coordination amongst a variety of offices on your campus.

Special to this particular experiment, of course, will, you'll need to coordinate with any outside employers that you plan to partner with.

Institutions should view participating in an experiment as a collaborative effort. That means you'll need to work with other offices on your campus, such as the financial aid office, career Center, Student Employment office, Business office, placement office, faculty, registrar admissions, communications, and the president's office. Believe it or not, that's not an exhaustive list. So, you may want to think about other offices, some of which may be unique to your institution. That will best ensure the success of your participation in the experiment should you be invited to do so.

Although under the experiment schools are exempt from certain parts of the regulation, you are required to continue to adhere, of course, to all other title IV requirements.

You can see the administrative capability regulations on your screen. This is the regulation that requires institutions, not just the financial aid staff to craft policies that are compliant with federal laws and regulations.

These experiments are no exception, it's vitally important that you develop and carefully document your policies and procedures related to this experiment. You also want to ensure that you are in compliance with both federal and institutional policies throughout your participation.

Remember administering federal student aid is an institutional responsibility. It is not just the responsibility of the financial aid staff.

Remember that talking with the financial aid staff can assist you with the application and approval process for the experiment as they are well versed on federal financial aid regulations.

At this point, let me turn it over to Tamy and let's get started. Thanks again for joining.

Thank you. Let's review the Department’s objectives for this particular experiment.

The alternative methods of Title IV, HEA administration that the secretary is committing under this particular experiment are designed to test how the following changes will increase partnerships between institutions and industry, improve student retention and completion, reduce student debt levels and yield strong post-graduation employment outcomes.

This experiment will test how:

Removing the limit on the portion of an institution’s federal work study funds that may support student employees in the private sector, private sector companies.

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Increasing the number of hours worked per week that an FWS student who's enrolled in a work-based learning program may work.

Reducing the share of wages that must be covered by private sector employers and allowing institutions to pay low-income students for work experiences required by their programs such as student teaching or clinical rotation.

We want to see how these changes are impacted in instituting this experiment.

The department is interested in using the FWS experiment to create and strengthen employer institution partnerships and private sector employment.

We are also trying to engage employers and curriculum development and program evaluation. We want to expand the number and kinds of off campus job opportunities for students. And of course, increase the number of formal work-based learning opportunities such as apprenticeship and internships.

Slide number eight.

The department seeks to understand how federal work study employment opportunities align with the academic program or career goals of the student participants, including students in the Liberal Arts or humanitarian programs that may use the federal work study program to explore potential career options.

At this point we're going to talk a little bit about the waivers that are specifically addressed in for this particular experiment.

So how does the Department reach our objectives. How do we get help in in understanding what and how do we get the help to understand what our objectives are?

So, we're going to see on the left-hand column. This provides the current rules and the right-hand side highlights the waivers that are offered under this particular experiment.

The first waiver is found in 34 CFR part 675. This is a restriction in students in the FWS program to work part time. So, this experiment will waive this requirement and it will allow students to work full time in positions related to the students’ academic programs such as apprenticeships, clinical rotations, or student teaching.

The second waiver under the experiment is 34 CFR 675.23 which limits the amount of an institution’s FWS allocation and re-allocation for an award year to pay the compensations of FWS students employed by a private for-profit organization to 25 percent. The experiment waives this restriction and allows schools to use 100 percent of FWS allocation and reallocation for employment in private for-profit organizations.

The third waiver relates to 34 CFR 675/26(a)(3) which limits the Federal share of the compensation to a student employed by a private for-profit organization to 25 percent. The experiment waives this restriction and increases the federal share of compensation for employment in private for-profit organizations to 75 percent (which is the same as the current non-profit or community service employment amount).

The fourth waiver relates to 34 CFR 675.32 which caps the amount of an institution’s FWS allocation to support a JLD Program at the lesser of $75,000 or 10 percent. The experiment waives this CAP and allows total FWS allocation to support JLD program.

The fifth waiver relates to 34 CFR 675.18(g) which requires seven percent of FWS funds to be spent on Community Service positions. The experiment waives this seven percent Community Service requirement.

So last waiver is a statutory waiver and it's found in the Higher Education Act Section 442(a)(4)(A) and (B) will be a test on the statutory and regulatory citations, a little bit later. Just kidding.

Finally, the sixth waiver relates to HEA section 442(a)(4)(A) and (B) which permits the Secretary to allocate to eligible institutions up to 10 percent of the amount appropriated for FWS in excess of 700 million in any fiscal year. The experiment permits additional FWS funding allocation to institutions participating in the experiment.

And this time is preparing to allocate to eligible institutions, up to 10% of the amount appropriated for federal work study that is in excess of 700 million in any fiscal year.

So, what this means is if we received information that there's an allocation of over 700 million, then we can take 10% over that 700 million. We are now permitted to give this allocation to the school to participate in this experiment. However, the department does not anticipate a significant amount of additional funding within this additional allocation, but we're hoping that combined with the other waivers that were permitting under this experiment, it will allow you on your campus to rearrange your funding so that you can have adequate funding to launch this experiment. And of course, pay to students.

At this point I'm going to turn it over to Michael will discuss the application process or the experiment.

Thank you Tamy. And now we're on slide number 12 and we're going to spend a few minutes talking about the application and selection process.

So first of all, the notice, as Craig mentioned earlier was extended for the deadline of our application and the department will consider applications now for this experiment until September 23, 2019. So you still have a while to apply if you haven't applied already. So, if your institution would like to apply. We want to spend some time talking about the instructions that are outlined in the Federal Register notice that is dated May 23, 2019.

There is a link to the Federal Register notice from our ESI website and also from IFAP, but we're going to show you at the very end of this presentation, we will show you the experimental sites website which has some great guidance. We will show that to you in just a few minutes. There's also an electronic announcement that was posted the IFAP and the electronic announcement, obviously, is the one that extended the deadline.

So, if you're interested in participating in the experiment, you must create a PDF file on institutional letterhead signed by the president or Chancellor of the institution.

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The letter must include the institutions OPE ID number, the name of a contact person at the for the experiment at the institution. And with that contact person we also want the mailing address, the email address and telephone number of the contact person and the institution must indicate the offices or departments that will participate in the experiment, as well as the role each office will play.

And if you recall the beginning of the session, Craig mentioned several different offices on your campus that might be involved in the experiment.

We want you to list the offices will be involved in administering the experiment if you're chosen on your campus as well as their role that they'll play. This does not have to be a long description, just something that we need you to include in your letter of interest.

All right, let's move on to slide number 13

In the application and selection section of the Federal Register notice you'll notice that it indicates that the Secretary will consider four items now on the screen here. One is evidence that demonstrates a strong record of title IV administration. The second is evidence that demonstrate strong standards of financial responsibility. Now these two items are important. However, these two items are gathered internally from the department systems.

And so, it's not necessary for your institution to include any information related to those items. Items one and two will be looked at, but you don't have to submit anything to the department as part of your letter of application.

However, you do need to look at items three and four and item three here on this screen is highlighted. We want you to include the percentage of students enrolled at the institution who are Pell eligible or federal work study eligible.

So that's something that you'll need to include in your letter of interest at all as well.

All right let's move on to slide number 14.

Item four is something else that that is in the Federal Register notice that we need you to include in your letter of interest.

And those include four different areas here. First, the types of private sector job opportunities work and learn programs or required externship or student teaching experiences that will be targeted by the institution as a result of the experiment.

Also how the paid training experiences being targeted will be incorporated into the academic programs of study and also the extent to which the experience is well structured and academically relevant to the student's program of study, and the institution's commitment to target opportunity for students in high need employment areas and those high need employment areas will be based on State or local determinations or indications by the Department of Labor that an occupation is what we call a bright outlook occupation.

And you can see on the screen that we've highlighted where you can refer to for those type of occupations and it's also included in the Federal Register notice but we included it here on the screen so that you can you can see exactly where that is.

All right, let's move on to slide number 15

Alright, so once the required information is gathered and completed your institutions should send an email with the PDF file attachment to the address here on the screen : experimentalsites@ed.gov.

You need to be sure in the subject line of the email that you include ESI 2019 – FWS Experiment, just so that we know that that's an application coming in.

And also, the text of your email should include the name and address of the institution. You can also include it in the actual PDF file, but by having it in actual body of the email, it's helpful to us. That's why we asked you to include it there.

Alright, let's spend a few minutes on slide number 16 and talk a little bit about the reporting and evaluation requirements.

Now federal student aid is trying to minimize reporting burden imposed on participating schools.

And reporting is going to focus on experiment specific information so schools participating in the experiment will be asked to complete an annual survey.

And the survey will collect information on things such as job development activities relevant to all federal work study students including institutions with JLD funds and any unforeseen challenges or opportunities that are identified in conjunction with administering the experiment. And that's part of the information that we’ll include in the annual survey that is sent out for you to complete.

On slide 17 you can see some other important information about reporting and evaluation. Some of the other information to be collected for the evaluation include the three bullets there on the screen.

The enrollment, completion and withdrawal of students who received title IV funds while enrolled at the institution during the student’s participation in the experiment is one thing.

Also, the department may obtain data on students’ employment and earning from other federal agencies so that we can better understand the effects of the experiment on both students before and after graduation.

Now, keep in mind that specific evaluation and reporting requirements will be finalized prior to the start of the experiment.

So, this just gives you an idea of some of the things that the department is looking at for reporting and evaluation. It is very similar to some of the other experiments as far as a survey and the process that we go through for evaluation.

On slide number 18 I mentioned to you earlier that we have an experimental sites website and that is up on your screen: **experimentalsites.ed.gov.**

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It includes the *how to apply* link which has the Federal Register notice. So that's one good way that you can get to the Federal Register notice

And if you haven't already done so, this might be a good opportunity for you to make note that, then this is a website that's available to you and you perhaps when you get back to your desk you can you can go ahead and bookmark for easy reference.

There's also a bunch of other resources related to the experimental sites here that you might find interesting. Some of the history about experimental sites and some of the other experiments that we have going on.

But I guess the most important thing about this this particular website is that all the information related to this experiment will be posted here. Once the experiment is up and running, you will have a place you can go and get all the relevant information for this experiment.

So, in a nutshell, that is the experiment. How we anticipate it will be working and I think the most important thing that we wanted to stress today is just how to apply and perhaps answer any questions that you might have that we haven't answered yet.

So, I'm going to now take the opportunity to open this up for the Q&A feature. Now obviously many of you are asking questions now, and I'm going to refer to my colleagues over in DC. Do we have questions that we want to read aloud? Are there some that were answered? How are we doing on the questions?

***The remaining of the webinar focused on specific questions asked by the participants. The Department will post common questions and answers related to the experiment on the Experimental Sites website at a later date.***