NAEP Database Training Seminar Announcement

Using the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP)
Database for Research and Policy Discussion

Monday, January 10, 2011, through Thursday, January 13, 2011
Washington, DC

The National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), Institute of Education Sciences, U.S. Department of Education, will sponsor a 3 1/2-day advanced studies seminar on the use of the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) database for education research and policy analysis. The main NAEP database contains nationally representative achievement scores on 4th, 8th, and 12th graders from public and non-public schools in a variety of academic subjects. The database also contains background information on the students who were assessed and their learning environment.

This seminar is aimed at faculty and advanced graduate students from colleges and universities. Education researchers and policy analysts with strong statistical skills from state and local education agencies and professional associations are also welcome.

OVERVIEW

NAEP, also known as "the Nation's Report Card," is the only nationally representative and continuing assessment of what America's students know and can do in various subject areas. Since 1969, assessments have been conducted periodically at the 4th-, 8th-, and 12th-grade levels in reading, mathematics, science, writing, history, geography, the arts, and other fields. By making information on student performance—and instructional factors related to that performance—available to policymakers at the national, state, and local levels, NAEP is an integral part of our nation's evaluation of the condition and progress of education.

At the national level, NAEP is divided into two assessments: the main NAEP and the long-term trend NAEP. Since 1990, NAEP assessments have also been conducted on the state level. For more information about NAEP, please review the materials posted on the survey website (http://nces.ed.gov/nationsreportcard).

PURPOSE AND EXPECTED OUTCOME

The goal of the seminar is to provide education data analysts and researchers with opportunities to gain a deeper understanding of NAEP and get hands-on experience exploring and analyzing one of the most comprehensive education resources in the nation. This seminar has the specific aim of stimulating interest in using NAEP data to address current and future education research questions.

The seminar will include the following topics and activities:

- an overview of NAEP design and database contents;
- methodological and technical issues that must be taken into account when analyzing NAEP data;
- example analyses and practice with NAEP-specific software; and
- hands-on experience in conducting individualized statistical analysis projects using NAEP data.

At the conclusion of the seminar, participants shall submit a summary of a preliminary study design that uses NAEP data, including a clear specification of study issues, rationale for the study, study approach (specifications of population, variables, etc.), and preliminary analysis results if available. When the study is finished, a copy of the paper or report should be sent to NCES.

QUALIFICATIONS

Participants attending this seminar should have a solid understanding of basic statistics including procedures required for analyzing survey data (i.e., data collected from multi-stage probability samples as opposed to simple random samples), have some familiarity with measurement theory, and be experienced in the use of personal computers. They also should be proficient in the use of the SPSS statistical software package. Participants will be expected to know how to perform basic SPSS procedures, including recoding data and running descriptive analyses (e.g., frequency distributions, cross-tabulations, means). Applicants will be evaluated on the following criteria:

- consistency of the proposed research agenda with the data available in NAEP. Applicants are encouraged to explore the NAEP database on-line prior to proposing a research agenda (http://nces.ed.gov/nationsreportcard/nde/);
- experience in educational research and potential ability to benefit from participation in the seminar; and
- knowledge and skills in statistical analyses and the use of statistical computer packages. (Please see the attached application form for specific questions pertaining to your level of experience.)

FINANCIAL SUPPORT

There is no fee to attend this seminar. NCES will provide training materials as well as computers for the hands-on practice. NCES will also pay for transportation, hotel accommodations, and a fixed per diem for meals and incidental expenses during the training seminar.

LOCATION

The seminar will be held in Washington, DC, on **Monday, January 10, 2011, through Thursday, January 13, 2011**. The exact location has yet to be confirmed. Accepted applicants will be sent information about both the meeting and lodging arrangements.

REGISTRATION INFORMATION AND APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS

If you are interested in attending the seminar, please complete and return the following documents:

1. The application form.
2. A copy of your resume, highlighting your experience with statistical analysis.
3. A 1- to 2-page statement, clearly describing your research study and how the study can be furthered by your participation in the seminar.
4. A letter of recommendation from your faculty advisor if you are a graduate student.

Your proposed research study should include specifications of issues, rationale, and study approach. Space is limited for the seminar. Only complete applications will be considered, and only two applicants from the same organization or institution can be accepted.

All applications should be received no later than **November 30, 2010**. Applications will be reviewed and selected candidates will be informed by **December 7, 2010**. Selected candidates will receive the seminar agenda and information about travel arrangements.

Applications should be returned to: Nicole Schray
CDS2
1900 L St. NW, Suite 505
Washington, DC 20036

Fax: (202)-296-2539

Contact Nicole Schray through e-mail at nschray@cds2.com or by telephone at (202)-296-2528, if you have any questions regarding this seminar.

NOTE: Applicants are allowed to attend no more than two NCES sponsored training seminars within a 6-year period.

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