

2021 Virtual Federal Student Aid Training Conference Sessions

Session #	Session Name - 2021	Session Description - 2021
FS1	Academic Calendars (for Foreign Schools)	THIS SESSION IS FOR FOREIGN SCHOOLS ONLY. This session will describe how the structure of the academic programs at your institution impact the awarding and disbursing of Federal Direct Loans. Guidance will be provided on the requirement for defining the <i>Title IV</i> academic year for each program, how the structure of the academic program determines the amount of Direct Loans to be awarded using a Standard Academic Year (SAY) or a Borrower Based Academic Year (BBAY), and how the program structure impacts the timing of Federal Direct Loan disbursements.
FS2	Administering <i>Title IV</i> for Non-Term Credit Hour Programs (for Foreign Schools)	THIS SESSION IS FOR FOREIGN SCHOOLS ONLY. This session will discuss how to administer Direct Loans for non-term credit hour programs, including programs that have to be administered as non-term <i>Title IV</i> programs because they have unequal non-standard terms. The session will include information in defining the academic year, determining payment periods, and proper awarding and disbursing of <i>Title IV</i> funds using Borrower Based Academic Year (BBAY) 3.

FS3	Foreign Schools Audit Guide Update	THIS SESSION IS FOR FOREIGN SCHOOLS ONLY. We will discuss the audit guide, including recent amendments, and take questions from the audience related to what they are experiencing with the new audit guide.
	GENERAL SESSIONS	
GS1	Welcome and Opening Remarks	FSA Chief Operating Officer Richard Cordray will deliver opening remarks.
GS2	Keynote Address by U.S. Secretary of Education	Secretary Miguel Cardona will deliver the keynote address and discuss efforts to promote success for all students pursuing higher education.
GS3	Verification	This session will include a discussion of the verification requirements for the 2022–23 <i>Free Application for Federal Student Aid</i> (FAFSA®) cycle and review of significant verification policy changes related to the 2021–22 FAFSA cycle.
GS4	Federal Update	The U.S. Department of Education (ED) will present information and updates about <i>Title IV</i> activities and initiatives, including information about ED’s regulatory efforts, major operational updates, and reminders.
GS5	Federal Update: FAFSA Simplification Policy Implications	In this session you will hear details of the <i>FAFSA Simplification Act</i> passed in December 2020. Specifically, this session will provide an in-depth, look into FSA's implementation and outreach, and community engagement plans.
	BREAKOUT SESSIONS	

BO1	<p>Improving the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS) Student Financial Aid Survey Component</p>	<p>This session will review and clarify student financial aid survey component concepts and definitions, with an eye towards survey reporting changes under consideration to align survey data items and reporting periods between student categories and across institution types within the student financial aid survey component. We will also discuss ways to align financial aid data submitted to IPEDS with 12-month enrollment and outcome measures data collected.</p>
BO2	<p>Higher Education Emergency Relief Fund (CARES, CRRSAA, & ARP)</p>	<p>Congress set aside billions of dollars allotted to the Education Stabilization Fund through the <i>Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act</i>, the <i>Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations (CRRSAA) Act</i>, and the <i>American Rescue Plan (ARP) Act</i> for the <i>Higher Education Emergency Relief Fund (HEERF)</i>. The Office of Postsecondary Education (OPE) will provide an overview of these funds and their distribution, as well as reporting requirements for recipients of HEERF. The Office of the Inspector General (OIG) Non-Federal Team will discuss HEERF auditing requirements for proprietary, public, and non-profits. They will discuss the new audit guide for proprietary schools as well as the single audit compliance supplement and addendum as well as common deficiencies found in recent audits.</p>

BO3	The Fight Against Fraud: How You Can Help Prevent Misuse of Education Funds	Listen to experienced criminal investigators from the Office of Inspector General (OIG) unravel the complex world of education fraud investigations. The presenters will discuss real cases and provide examples of fraud indicators to help you detect and prevent potential misuse of ED programs in your institutions. The presenters will also provide guidance on how to report potential fraud to the OIG. A question-and-answer period is planned as part of this presentation.
BO4	COVID 19: What Now and What Next	In this session you will hear information and updates about ED’s COVID-19 higher education policy and related regulatory relief efforts as a result of the federally declared national emergency. Specifically, this session will provide an in-depth, chronological review of ED’s guidance related to COVID-19 that affect the <i>Title IV, HEA</i> Programs. ED will further discuss guidance for relief and flexibilities provided under the <i>CARES Act</i> . Our experts will also be responding to questions from the community about COVID-19 and <i>CARES Act</i> requirements submitted prior to the session.
BO5	Meeting Department Requirements Post-Disaster Recovery	During the past few years, many institutions have been impacted by natural disasters. Some of these disasters have disrupted schools from meeting deadlines for submitting FISAPs, CDR Appeals/Challenges, institutional agreements or other documentation requested by ED. This session will discuss key reminders and information on the special resources available to institutions impacted by natural disasters.

BO7	<i>National Student Loan Data System (NSLDS®) Update</i>	In this session, we will recap the changes made to the NSLDS® website and reports for schools in 2021. This will include a high level review of updates made to support loan data, enrollment reporting, and other NSLDS functionality as well as a preview of Next Gen NSLDS.
BO8	Submitting the FISAP - It's a Balancing Act!	This session will focus on gaining a better understanding of how to successfully complete the annual Fiscal Operations Report and Application to Participate (FISAP) form for institutions that participate in federal Campus-Based Programs.
BO9	<i>Title IV Reconciliation: Achieving Peak Performance</i>	This session will highlight key <i>Title IV</i> reconciliation concepts, deadlines, and recent enhancements to FSA systems, to help you fine-tune your processes and achieve peak performance. If you are a financial aid or business office professional experienced in reconciliation or you have a thirst for what's new, then this session is for you!

BO10	Consumer Information and FSA Assessments	Consumer information, what a behemoth! As a perennial “favorite” on the list of top 10 program review findings, many schools have difficulty fully complying in this area. Are you one of them? Don’t you wish there was a convenient, organized way to methodically tackle this issue? One that could help you “win” the consumer information version of whack-a-mole that you’ve been playing? Look no further! This session will highlight the reporting requirements schools must meet for consumer information disclosures to the public and to ED. It will also demonstrate how to use the <i>FSA Assessments</i> tool to identify and correct areas of non-compliance, including helpful example scenarios. Don’t miss this informative session, your secret weapon for improving consumer information compliance!
BO11	FSA Training Center Virtual Demonstration	Please join us for a virtual walkthrough of FSA's Training Center website, where we will review FSA's updated training resources, including the newly developed training for new financial aid administrators.
BO12	Administering <i>Title IV</i> Aid for Transfer Students	This session will address various issues that arise when administering federal student aid for transfer students. Discussions will cover transfer monitoring and demonstrate how to correctly award and disburse both Federal Pell Grants and Direct Loans in standard term credit-hour, clock-hour, and non-term credit-hour programs. Additionally, we will provide example scenarios about what to do when a transfer student withdraws during overlapping payment periods for Federal Pell Grants and Direct Loans.

BO13	Top Audit and Program Review Findings	This year we will focus on solutions and corrective actions to address the top findings from audits and program reviews. We surveyed deficient compliance audits and program review reports issued in fiscal year 2020 to bring you the latest information. Come learn how to strengthen internal controls and improve your compliance with <i>Title IV</i> regulations and statutes.
BO14	The Clery Act: Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) and Hate Crime Reporting	Campus safety is a major issue for every school, large or small, urban, suburban, or rural, public or private. An effective safety program is an essential part of your school’s overall risk management strategy and is one of the best ways to protect your “brand.” In this session, you will learn about the <i>Clery Act’s</i> requirements on sexual assault prevention and how these rules intersect with <i>Title IX</i> of the <i>Education Amendments of 1972</i> . Hate crime reporting and prevention will also be covered. Participants will receive practical advice and effective strategies for developing and implementing vital campus safety and crime prevention policies, procedures, and programs.

BO15	Third-Party Debt Relief: Implementing the <i>STOP Act</i>	Join a panel of ED officials to learn more about efforts to implement the statutory provisions under the <i>STOP Act</i> and the steps we can take to work collectively to educate and protect federal student aid recipients from debt relief companies seeking commercial advantage and financial gains. We will discuss the impacts and requirements for students, schools, and third-party servicers. The Department has established methods to prevent improper access and detect common patterns of improper use of any system involved in the processing of payments on Federal Direct Loans. Department officials will also discuss the recently published Third-Party Authorization Form.
BO16	Public Service Loan Forgiveness (PSLF) and Temporary Expanded PSLF (TEPSLF)	This session will include discussions about the programmatic aspects and implementation of the Public Service Loan Forgiveness Program and the Temporary Expanded PSLF opportunity, updates to the Department's processes, and the PSLF Help Tool updated in spring 2021.
BO17	Maintaining Your Institutional Eligibility	This session will cover what financial aid administrators need to know about maintaining their school's eligibility to participate in the <i>Title IV</i> Programs. Topics include information about the recertification process focusing on the various requirements and preparations schools should be conducting in the three to six months prior to submitting their application; what events trigger the need to submit an updated eligibility application; the information a school needs to submit for different types of eligibility applications; and

		<p>common errors and pitfalls to avoid while submitting eligibility applications.</p>
<p>BO18</p>	<p>Return of <i>Title IV</i> Funds: New Regulations and Q&A</p>	<p>Do you have questions about the new Return of <i>Title IV</i> Funds (R2T4) regulations? Have you been waiting to stump the feds with other tricky R2T4 questions? This is your chance! This session will provide an overview of the new R2T4 requirements and provide resources where you can obtain more information. Then it will offer an extended question-and-answer period with ED experts on the topic. This year, our experts will be responding to frequently asked questions asked by the community prior to the session.</p>

BO19	<p>Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) Guidance: A Series of Q&As</p>	<p>Every institution that participates in the <i>Title IV</i> programs must develop a SAP policy. However, no two SAP policies are exactly alike since institutions have a lot of flexibility with how they incorporate both required and optional components within their policy. Because of the variety of elements and importance of maintaining a proper SAP policy, schools have had lots of questions and concerns about their SAP policies over the years. This session will present ED guidance shared with schools over the last several years in a question and answer format, including new information associated with the SAP regulations that became effective July 1, 2021.</p>
BO20	<p>FSA Partner Connect: Year One and What's Next</p>	<p>Let's take a closer look at Partner Connect, FSA's first digital platform for partners launched on March 29, 2021, at FSAPartners.ed.gov! In this session, we'll provide an overview of the solution including the features that are now available. We'll also highlight future improvements such as a new and approved E-App as well as take questions from participants.</p>

BO21	New - Federal Student Aid Information Center	<p>The new Federal Student Aid Information Center will handle inquiries previously handled by FSAIC, the Student Loan Support Center, the FSA Feedback Center, the FSA Ombudsman, and the Borrower Defense Hotline ensuring that 1) students, borrowers, and customers receive easier, more seamless customer interactions with FSA across the life cycle of <i>Title IV</i> student aid through an enterprise-wide, FSA-branded, digital platform; and 2) customers receive a consistent experience solely under the FSA brand across the life cycle of student aid and across all vendors. The new Federal Student Aid Information Center will offer one address, one website, more channels of support, expanded hours and days of operations, end-to-end bilingual customer service, and support more areas of the life cycle than ever before! Same great number, but now behind one brand and standards!</p>
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<p>BO22</p>	<p>Protecting Student Data: What you need to know about Controlled Unclassified Information</p>	<p>Protecting the confidentiality of Controlled Unclassified Information (CUI) is critically important to the mission and business success of federal agencies. It is also important to FAAs because this is a shared responsibility. How should FAAs handle their sensitive federal financial and privacy data like FSA does for its millions of citizens? Join us in this discussion of the FSA Campus Cybersecurity Program and its approach in implementing required protective measures for data classified as CUI. FSA’s Chief Information Officer, Mia Jordan, will share with you best practices and lessons learned from implementing the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) Special Publication Special Publication (SP) 800-171 Rev. 2, <i>Protecting Controlled Unclassified Information in Nonfederal Systems and Organizations</i>.</p>
<p>BO23</p>	<p>Cybersecurity - The Challenges Facing FAAs</p>	<p>This session focuses on the cybersecurity challenges facing Financial Aid Administrators (FAAs) and Information Technology (IT) managers. The session will begin with a brief overview of federal IT cybersecurity initiatives and the threat landscape that affects institutions of higher education (IHEs). This session will discuss compliance requirements, threats to the schools, and best practices for data protection and identity theft. Additionally, the session will define what constitutes a breach, discuss common and not so common examples of breaches, describe how to report a breach to FSA, and the FSA process to manage breach reports. This session will close with a question</p>

		<p>and answer period by FSA experts in cybersecurity.</p>
<p>BO24</p>	<p>Student Financial Empowerment</p>	<p>Come hear about Federal Student Aid’s initiative regarding student financial empowerment (SFE). SFE is a broad concept impacting many levels of a student’s educational journey, including elementary, secondary, and postsecondary. SFE is about empowering students with the tools and information, especially at the secondary level, which they can use to make informed decisions about their educational and career pursuits. This session will focus on FSA’s work to expose students at <i>Title I</i> secondary schools as early as middle school to U.S. Department of Education and FSA tools in their classrooms.</p>

BO25	<p>We're Listening: How FSA is Using User Experience (UX) Research to Inform its Products and Services</p>	<p>Get an inside look at how Federal Student Aid is designing its products and services to work better for students, parents, borrowers, and financial aid professionals. As part of FSA's modernization of its consumer-facing tools, FSA is investing in user experience (UX) research like usability testing to help improve products like the FAFSA, the <i>Loan Simulator</i>, and the PLUS App. We've held more than 100 hours of one-on-one sessions with parents, students, and borrowers all across the country. In this session, FSA's Product Design Group will share some of the insights we've learned about our audiences, how we approach design, and how we continue to iterate and improve our features to align with a more personalized, user-friendly experience for students, parents, and borrowers. We'll also share how you can be a part of this process!</p>
BO26	<p>StudentAid.gov and Mobile App Walkthrough and Coming Attractions</p>	<p>Get the latest information and updates on FSA's key customer platforms—StudentAid.gov and the myStudentAid mobile app. In this session, we'll provide an overview of the website and mobile app, and we'll walk through features that continue to advance the vision of a more personalized, user-friendly experience for parents, students, and borrowers. We'll also highlight improvements you and other FSA customers can expect in the future. Our focus is on highlights we would like the FAA's to know about.</p>

BO27	Program Review Essentials - Encore Presentation from 2020	ENCORE PRESENTATION RECORDED IN 2020. Does the thought of a program review keep you up at night? Would you like a better understanding of the overall process? If so, this session is for you. We will walk through the entire program review process, discuss selection criteria that typically trigger a program review, and provide helpful information about what to expect and what is expected of you if your school is chosen for one. You will also learn what you can do ahead of time to be prepared in case you receive the call. Do not miss this helpful and informative session!
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