

# Methodology Report

## National Education and Employment Survey (NEES)

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PRESENTED TO:  
Lumina Foundation

PRESENTED BY:  
NORC at the University of Chicago

Written by:  
Bronwyn Nichols Lodato  
Cynthia Simko  
Michael Yang, Ph.D.  
Eve Zurawski  
Janet Cuanas  
Stephanie Jwo  
Ed Sipulski

**LUMINA FOUNDATION**

Courtney Brown, Ph. D., Director of Organizational Planning and Evaluation

Lumina Foundation

30 S. Meridian St., Suite 700

Indianapolis, IN 46204

Phone: (317) 951-5317

Email: [cbrown@luminafoundation.org](mailto:cbrown@luminafoundation.org)

**NORC AT THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO**

Bronwyn Nichols Lodato, NEES Project Director

NORC at the University of Chicago

1155 E. 60th

Chicago, IL 60637

Phone: (773) 256-6092

Email: [nichols-bronwyn@norc.org](mailto:nichols-bronwyn@norc.org)

## Table of Contents

<b>Study Background and Purpose</b> .....	<b>1</b>
<b>Sample Design</b> .....	<b>2</b>
Dual Frame Design .....	2
Sample Selection .....	3
<b>Data Collection</b> .....	<b>3</b>
Data Collection Schedule .....	3
Preparation Activities .....	4
<i>Internal Review Board (IRB)</i> .....	4
<i>Questionnaire Development and Programming</i> .....	4
<i>Project Website, Email In-Box, Toll-Free Number</i> .....	4
<i>Materials Development</i> .....	5
<i>Interviewer Training – CATI</i> .....	5
Data Collection Administration .....	6
Incentives .....	7
Data Security and Confidentiality .....	7
<b>Final Data Delivery</b> .....	<b>8</b>
Coding .....	8
<i>Questions with Existing Code Frames (Q2, Q16, Q17, Q25)</i> .....	9
<i>Code Frame for Q7</i> .....	9
<i>Code Frame for Q8 and Q48 – Industry Coding</i> .....	9
<i>Code Frame for Q47</i> .....	9
Data Cleaning and File Preparation .....	10
Data Transfer and Security .....	10
<b>Final Results</b> .....	<b>10</b>
<b>Appendix A. Questionnaire</b>	
<b>Appendix B. Advance Letter</b>	
<b>Appendix C. Prompting Postcards</b>	

## List of Tables

<b>Table 1:</b>	NEES Sample Breakout.....	3
<b>Table 2.</b>	NEES Schedule of Key Activities .....	3
<b>Table 3.</b>	Incoming Calls to Project’s Toll-Free Number .....	5
<b>Table 4.</b>	NEES Data Collection Schedule .....	6
<b>Table 5.</b>	Web-mode Survey Non-response Prompting Email Schedule .....	7
<b>Table 6.</b>	Question Text and Coding Summary .....	8
<b>Table 7.</b>	Final Unweighted Results NEES.....	10

## Study Background and Purpose

In the fall of 2015, the Lumina Foundation (Lumina) issued a grant to NORC at the University of Chicago (NORC) to conduct a national survey of adults titled the National Education and Employment Survey (NEES). The purpose of the NEES was to determine the percentage of adults in America who hold a high-quality certificate, license, or certification as their highest credential. The results of this effort would inform Lumina’s objectives for its Goal 2025 initiative.<sup>1</sup> Lumina—through Goal 2025—is committed to improving the nation’s postsecondary education system by increasing the proportion of Americans with high-quality degrees, certificates, and other credentials to 60 percent by the year 2025. By ensuring access to higher-education opportunities after high school, more individuals will ultimately achieve a greater earning capacity, which in turn leads to better quality of life, stronger economies, and thriving communities, as well as a stronger nation overall.

Although there has been data available to understand how degree-based educational credentials (associate’s degrees and higher) affect employment outcomes, there is little data that measure the prevalence of non-degree-based educational credentials such as certifications, licenses, and certificates and their impact on employment outcomes. In 2009, representatives from several federal organizations such as the Bureau of Labor Statistics, the National Science Foundation, and the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) formed a group that would ultimately develop a survey called the Adult Training and Education Survey (ATES), which is to be fielded by the NCES.<sup>2</sup> Lumina was a stakeholder in this survey and proposed using results from this study for their Goal 2025 initiative.

In order to obtain data for Lumina’s 2016 Stronger Nation Report, NCES approved Lumina’s request to field ATES survey items in a separate survey. NORC and Lumina collaborated to field selected ATES survey items and developed the sampling and methodological approaches for the effort.

Between January and February 2016, the NEES asked a nationally representative sample of adults between the ages of 25 and 64 (see *Sample Design* section of this report) a series of questions in the following topic areas:

- Education (highest level, field of study, etc.)
- Certifications and licenses (acquisition, type, preparation, etc.)

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<sup>1</sup> The Lumina Foundation. *Goal 2025*. Accessed April 12, 2016. Available from [https://www.luminafoundation.org/goal\\_2025](https://www.luminafoundation.org/goal_2025)

<sup>2</sup> Bielick, S., Cronen, S., Stone, C., Montaquila, J., Roth, S.B., and Boivin, S. *The Adult Training and Education Survey (ATES) Pilot Study: Technical Report* (NCES 2013-190). U.S Department of Education. Washington DC: National Center for Education Statistics, 2013.

- Certificates (acquisition, type, preparation, etc.)
- Work experience programs (internships, residency, compensation, work experiences, etc.)
- Employment (jobs, full-/part-time status, job title, salary, etc.)
- Background (marital status, race/ethnicity, etc.).

The NEES was administered in both web and telephone (Computer-assisted Telephone Interview, or CATI) and an incentive was offered for participation. Lumina’s Program Officer for this study was Dr. Courtney Brown and NORC’s Project Director was Bronwyn Nichols Lodato.

## Sample Design

The following describes the sampling approach that was designed and implemented in support of the NEES.

### Dual Frame Design

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NORC employed a dual frame sample design for the NEES effort. A dual frame design involves two sampling frames (here named Frame A and Frame B), and a sample is selected independently from each frame. For this study, Frame A was the NORC National Frame, which is an address-based frame that covers the entire U.S. household population. Using this frame allowed the NEES to take advantage of NORC’s AmeriSpeak panel, yielding the representative sample for Frame A.

The Frame A sample was selected using sampling strata defined by age, race/ethnicity, education, and gender (48 strata in total). The size of the selected sample per sampling stratum was determined by the population distribution for each stratum. In addition, sample selection took into account expected differential survey completion rates by demographic groups so that the set of panel members with a completed interview was a representative sample of the target population.

The second frame, Frame B, was developed to ensure African American and Hispanic coverage and therefore was divided into two separate components: Frame B African American and Frame B Hispanic American. Frame B was derived from targeted lists from a sample vendor that NORC frequently uses to support list sample surveys. Upon completion of the data collection effort, NORC’s sampling team created and applied sampling weights to each complete and partial case. (Partial cases were defined as having responses through Question 24).

## Sample Selection

Table 1 presents the breakout of the selected sample:

**Table 1:** NEES Sample Breakout

Group	NEES Sample Breakout		Total Sample Size
	Frame A Sample Size	Frame B Sample Size	
African American	1,069	2,870	3,939
Hispanic	739	3,287	4,026
Other	1,574	0	1,574
<b>Total</b>	<b>3,382</b>	<b>6,157</b>	<b>9,539</b>

## Data Collection

The following section provides an overview of the activities NORC carried out to prepare for and implement the NEES data collection.

### Data Collection Schedule

Table 2 presents the schedule of project activities. Preparatory activities for the NEES began in November of 2015, and data collection officially launched on January 5, 2016. After confirming data delivery requirements with Lumina, NORC implemented post-data collection activities between February 16, 2016 and March 1, 2016. These tasks included final data cleaning, coding, final case status assignment, and sampling weight development. On March 2, 2016, the final data file was delivered to Lumina.

**Table 2.** NEES Schedule of Key Activities

Event	Date
Preparation for data collection	November 2015
Data collection began	January 5, 2016
Interim data delivery	February 6, 2016
Data collection ended	February 14, 2016
Data cleaning and sampling weights	February 15–February 29, 2016
Final data delivery	March 2, 2016

## Preparation Activities

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### Internal Review Board (IRB)

To ensure that NORC adheres to the appropriate standards for collecting data and conducting human subjects research, projects are required to complete and submit an application to the NORC IRB prior to the start of data collection. After careful review of the NEES application and research activities, NORC's IRB certified the NEES research as "Exempt" under Category 2, Protocol Number: 15.12.17, dated December 29, 2015.

### Questionnaire Development and Programming

To support the NEES data collection needs for both web and CATI administration, NORC programmed the NEES survey using Voxco Survey Software<sup>3</sup>. For the NEES's coding effort during the data-cleaning process, NORC utilized its in-house customized coding application, iCode, for select survey items (survey items 8 and 48), while utilizing other code frames for additional open-ended items. (See *Coding* section for an overview of coding tasks).

NORC received drafts of the English and Spanish versions of the ATES questionnaire from NCES in December 2015. NORC experts reviewed the questionnaire content to identify items that would closely align with Lumina's Goal 2025 priorities while staying within the instrument length parameters. Lumina approved the final version of the NEES survey (containing 62 items) in late December 2015. The survey can be found in Appendix A.

The instrument was programmed and tested thoroughly in both web and CATI administration modes. Both the English and Spanish versions were tested. As part of the testing, NORC staff reviewed item text, response options, range limits, and skip patterns to ensure that the instrument functioned as intended.

### Project Website, Email In-Box, Toll-Free Number

In an effort to provide accessible information to potential respondents interested in learning more about the study, NORC created a project page hosted on the main NORC website<sup>4</sup>. It included general background information about the NEES, its sponsor—the Lumina Foundation—and NORC. Contact information for the project and Project Director was also included.

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<sup>3</sup> Voxco Survey Software. (2016). Retrieved from [www.voxco.com](http://www.voxco.com)

<sup>4</sup> <http://www.norc.org/Research/Projects/Pages/national-education-and-employment-study.aspx>



NORC hosted a toll-free number and email inbox to allow the NEES sample members to communicate their questions, concerns, and feedback about the study. The toll-free number could also be used by participants to complete the survey with an NORC telephone interviewer. Table 3 presents the number of calls received on the toll-free number and their distribution by call type.

**Table 3.** Incoming Calls to Project’s Toll-Free Number

Type of Call	Number of Calls
Complete Survey	29
Report Issues	4
Change Phone Number	7
Request Callback	13
Refusal	5
Other	51
<b>Total</b>	<b>109</b>

The NEES email in-box received correspondence from three individual sample members. All three initiated email correspondence to update contact information, provide availability, and inquire about incentives.

### Materials Development

The NEES project team developed a number of study materials to facilitate both initial contact and follow up prompting with sample members. Respondent letters, non-response prompting postcards, email text, and Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) contained information about the study, Lumina, NORC’s role, and communicated the importance of the sample member’s participation in the survey. Advance letters sent to Frame B respondents can be found in Appendix B, and non-response prompting postcards can be found in Appendix C.

### Interviewer Training – CATI

NORC recruited and trained all interviewers selected to administer the CATI instrument to sample members in both Frame A and Frame B. This final preparation activity for the NEES data collection ensured that interviewers conducting the CATI were fully trained and completely prepared to administer the survey. NORC utilized a team of experienced interviewers, and the CATI training focused on informing interviewers about the study’s purpose, reviewing respondent contacting materials and protocols, and familiarizing interviewers with the survey instrument through mock interviews. Each interviewer had to pass a certification interview prior to being authorized to move into actual production.

Bilingual Spanish interviewers attended an additional hour of training to review the Spanish version of the questionnaire. The NEES project trainer, who also is a certified bilingual supervisor, led the group through mock scenarios using the Spanish instrument.

### Data Collection Administration

Table 4 lists the schedule of key activities conducted throughout the six-week data collection field period for the NEES. In addition to the initial advance notifications, the schedule shows that NORC administered a series of non-response prompts via telephone, mail and email in order to maximize survey participation.

**Table 4.** NEES Data Collection Schedule

Week	Date	Activity
1	December 30, 2015	Advance Letter Batch #1
1	January 5, 2016	Phone Interviewing Begins
1	January 7, 2016	Web Survey Launched
2	January 13, 2016	Postcard Prompt #1
3	January 20, 2016	Advance Letter Batch #2
3	January 21, 2016	Postcard Prompt #2
4	January 27, 2016	Targeted Prompting Begins
4	January 29, 2016	Postcard Prompt #3
5	February 2, 2016	Postcard Prompt #1 Batch #2
5	February 4, 2016	Incentive Letter Mailing #1
6	<b>February 14, 2016</b>	<b>Data Collection Ends</b>
6	February 17, 2016	Incentive Letter Mailing #2

Although both Frames A and B were fielded at the same time and followed similar outreach protocols, the prompting approach was tailored to the mode of administration. Specifically, Frame A AmeriSpeak web-mode panelists were sent an email invitation with a link to the survey whereas CATI respondents were sent an advance letter. Additionally, web respondents were prompted via email whereas CATI respondents received postcard prompts. All sample members were offered an incentive (See *Incentives* section). Reminder emails were sent according to the schedule listed in Table 5.

**Table 5.** Web-mode Survey Non-response Prompting Email Schedule

Date	Notes
January 20	Email reminders to survey partials and nonrespondents
January 26	Email reminders to survey partials and nonrespondents
January 30	Email reminders to survey partials and nonrespondents
February 3	Email reminders to survey partials and nonrespondents, Hispanic only
February 6	Email reminders to survey partials and nonrespondents, Hispanic only
February 9	Email reminders to survey partials and nonrespondents, Hispanic only
February 13	Email reminders to survey partials and nonrespondents, Hispanic only

### Incentives

To encourage response to the NEES and to accelerate the rate of completes, Lumina approved NORC to offer incentives. The AmeriSpeak panel (Frame A), whether having completed the NEES by telephone or web, received an incentive equivalent to \$10. (AmeriSpeak incentives are in the form of points that accumulate in the panel member’s account for later redemption). To encourage the Frame B sample’s participation, NORC utilized a pre- and post-paid incentive structure. NORC included a \$1 bill in the advance letter and upon completion of the survey, the respondents received an additional cash incentive of \$10. With authorization from Lumina, NORC conducted an “Early Bird” experiment to assess the impact of a higher incentive in improving early survey participation, offering \$15 to a select group of respondents if they contacted NORC within the first week of data collection and completed the survey. Results from the experiment are forthcoming.

### Data Security and Confidentiality

Throughout the NEES data collection, NORC maintained its long-standing adherence to protecting respondent confidentiality and instituted stringent data security controls. To ensure confidentiality of data during the NEES effort, each respondent was assigned a unique ID number, with no identifying name or address information connected to it. The web-based instrument was launched from NORC’s secure web server, with all appropriate firewall protection enforced. Completed surveys were encrypted and transmitted over a secured data line to where they were stored on NORC’s secured servers.

## Final Data Delivery

To ensure data files were complete, accurate, and delivered according to Lumina specifications, NORC executed an interim data delivery on February 5, 2016. Two weeks later, data collection ended and a final file was prepared and delivered on March 2, 2016. The following section details coding and data delivery activities.

### Coding

The NEES survey had eight survey items that captured open-ended responses. These responses required review and, for some items, the development of a code frame in order to apply an appropriate code. There were four survey items that included an “Other, Specify” (open-ended) option and four items that were entirely open-ended.

Table 6 summarizes the question number and, where applicable, type of coding conducted.

**Table 6.** Question Text and Coding Summary

Question #	Question Text	Coding Summary
Q2	Which one of the following best describes the field of study for the highest level of school you have completed?	Coding applied to items where “Other, Specify” was selected. Utilized existing code frame within the survey question.
Q7	What is the name of your most important certificate or license?	Entirely open-ended. Code frame developed based on sources enumerated below.
Q8	What kind of work is your most important certification or license for?	Entirely open-ended. Census Bureau Industry coding applied.
Q16	What was the field of study for your last post-secondary certificate?	Coding applied to items where “Other, Specify” was selected. Utilized existing code frame within the survey question.
Q17	Who gave you your last post-secondary certificate?	Coding applied to items where “Other, Specify” was selected. Utilized existing code frame within the survey question.
Q25	What type of work was your last work experience program for?	Coding applied to items where “Other, Specify” was selected. Utilized existing code frame within the survey question.
Q47	In your current or last job, for whom did you work?	Item asks for employer name. No coding conducted.
Q48	What kind of business or industry was this?	Entirely open-ended. Census Bureau Industry coding applied.

The following sections detail the coding steps applied to each of the eight open-ended responses. The steps were determined by taking into consideration the individual item’s coding needs and applying the overall best approach.

- **Questions with Existing Code Frames (Q2, Q16, Q17, Q25)**

Survey items Q2, Q16, Q17, and Q25 had existing code frames (i.e. response options) within the survey question. When a respondent did not choose one of the response options listed, he or she often selected “Other, Specify” and provided a text response. These responses were reviewed, and an attempt was made to back-code the verbatim text entry into the existing code frame. Where that was not possible, either a new code was created to account for responses or the response was coded as “Other.” After the initial review and coding, a second review (Quality Control check) took place to ensure consistency in application of the code frame.

- **Code Frame for Q7**

Q7 (What is the name of your most important certificate or license?) used a two-stage coding approach, applying the National Survey of College Graduates<sup>5</sup> (NSCG) codes at Stage 1, followed by a combination of NSCG and ATES Pilot Study<sup>6</sup> groupings for Stage 2. These groupings resulted in a final code frame. The NSCG and ATES Pilot frame were provided by NCES to assist the coding process for certificates as needed. (NCES administers the National Household Education Survey<sup>7</sup> [NHES] and the ATES survey).

- **Code Frame for Q8 and Q48 – Industry Coding**

Q8 (What kind of work is your most important certification or license used for?) and Q48 (What kind of business or industry was this?) both used the 2012 Census Industry Code Frame<sup>8</sup>, followed by the application of a broad grouping (based on the Census Industry broad field labels) and numeric code assignment by NORC. Again, NORC applied a two-stage process, with Stage 1 utilizing NORC’s iCode system, followed by the project team’s review and application of a broad industry code at Stage 2.

- **Code Frame for Q47**

Q47 was delivered without coding due to the question content.

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<sup>5</sup> United States Census Bureau, U.S. Department of Commerce, Economics and Statistics Administration. *2015 National Survey of College Graduates (NSCG) Certification Coding*. (Washington DC, 2015)

<sup>6</sup> National Center for Education Statistics, U.S. Department of Education. *The Adult Training and Education Survey (ATES) Pilot Study - Technical Report*. (Washington DC, 2013)

<sup>7</sup> United States Census Bureau, U.S. Department of Commerce, Economics and Statistics Administration, *Credentials for Work Survey Part of the 2014 National Household Education Survey*. (NHES-2B) (Washington DC, 2014)

<sup>8</sup> United States Census Bureau. *Census 2012 Detailed Industry Code List*. Retrieved from <http://www.census.gov/people/io/methodology/>

## Data Cleaning and File Preparation

In addition to survey specific cleaning programs developed during the interim data delivery, NORC consistently ran checks on the data to ensure that the frequency distributions for each variable matched what was expected. NORC checked the data to confirm that the skip logic delineated in the NEES questionnaire was followed correctly. Through individual case edits, NORC also removed any cases that were out of scope because of age. NORC reviewed all files to ensure that the variables to be delivered were in the correct code frame, were the correct variable type, and had the correct variable and value labels.

A total of 1,870 cases were defined as complete and 20 were considered partial completes with enough data up to Question 24. The final count for Frame A was 1,445 cases, including 17 partials, while the final count for Frame B was 445 cases, including three partials.

The final delivery also included weights that took into account the demographic characteristics of the NEES participants. NORC’s statisticians calculated weights separately for Frame A and Frame B.

## Data Transfer and Security

The Secure File Transfer Protocol (SFTP) site was used to ensure the safe transfer of the raw data files and other documentation from NORC to Lumina. NORC was in charge of setting up the appropriate folders and access for Lumina to navigate and access the data.

# Final Results

The table below presents the final unweighted results for the NEES data collection.

**Table 7.** Final Unweighted Results NEES

Group	Frame A CATI & Web*	Frame B CATI	Total Sample	Completion Goals	Final Results
African American	1,069	2,870	3,939	515	595
Hispanic	739	3,287	4,026	477	407
Other	1,574	0	1,574	733	888
Total	3,382	6,157	9,539	1,725	1,890

\*For Frame A, a total of 1,134 cases were completed in web mode, while 311 were completed via CATI.

# Appendix A. Questionnaire

## Education

### 1. (Q1) What is the highest degree or level of school you have completed?

Mark  ONE Only.

- (1) Elementary or high school, but no high school diploma or GED®
- (2) High school diploma
- (3) GED® or alternative high school Credential
- (4) Some college credit but less than one year of college credit
- (5) 1 or more years of college credit, no degree
- (6) Associate's degree (for example, AA, AS)
- (7) Bachelor's degree (for example, BA, BS)
- (8) Master's degree (for example, MA, MS, MEng, MEd, MSW, MBA)
- (9) Professional degree beyond a bachelor's degree (for example, MD, DDS, DVM, LLB, JD)
- (10) Doctorate degree (for example, PhD, EdD)

### 2. (Q2) Which one of the following best describes the field of study for the highest level of school you have completed?

Mark  ONE only.

If there was more than one, please choose the one you consider most important.

- (1) General studies, no major, or undeclared major
- (2) Accounting, finance, insurance, or real estate
- (3) Administrative support
- (4) Agriculture
- (5) Audio, broadcasting, multimedia, or graphic technologies
- (6) Business management, administration, or marketing
- (7) Communications or journalism
- (8) Computer science or information technology
- (9) Construction, repair, manufacturing, or transportation
- (10) Cosmetology
- (11) Education
- (12) Engineering or architecture
- (13) English language or literature
- (14) Fine arts or music
- (15) Healthcare
- (16) Law or legal studies
- (17) Law enforcement, security, or firefighting
- (18) Liberal arts
- (19) Psychology
- (20) Religious vocations or theology
- (21) Science or mathematics
- (22) Social or human services or public administration
- (23) Social sciences, political science, economics, or history
- (24) Other — Specify: 

3. **(Q3)** Are you currently enrolled at a college, university, technical or trade school, or other school?

- (1) No
- (2) Yes, as a part-time student
- (3) Yes, as a full-time student

4. **(Q4)** Have you taken any classes to learn English as a second language, sometimes called ESL or ESOL classes?

- (1) No
- (2) Yes

## Certifications and Licenses

5. **(Q5)** Do you have a currently active professional certification or a state or industry license? Do not include business licenses, such as a liquor license or vending license.

*A professional certification or license shows you are qualified to perform a specific job and includes things like Licensed Realtor, Certified Medical Assistant, Certified Teacher, or an IT certification.*

- (1) No → GO TO question 15
- (2) Yes

6. **(Q6)** If yes, how many currently active certifications and licenses do you have?

*If you had to get a certification in order to get a license, count each certification and license separately.*

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number of certifications and licenses

7. **(Q7)** The next few questions ask about the certification and license that you consider to be your most important. What is the name of your most important certification or license?

- (1)

8. **(Q8)** What kind of work is your most important certification or license for?

- (1)

9. **(Q9)** Is your most important certification or license required by a federal, state, or local government agency (such as a state board) in order to do that kind of work?

- (1) No
- (2) Yes
- (77) Don't know

10. **(Q10)** Can your most important certification or license be revoked or suspended for any reason?

- (1) No
- (2) Yes
- (77) Don't know

11. **(Q11)** In what year did you first get your most important certification or license?

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12. Did you prepare for getting your most important certification or license by...

Mark  ONE box for EACH ITEM below.

(1)	(2)
No	Yes
▼	▼

- a. **(Q12\_1)** taking classes from a college, technical school, or trade school? .....
- b. **(Q12\_2)** taking classes or training from a company, association, union, or private instructor? .....
- c. **(Q12\_3)** Studying on your own using textbooks or online resources? .....

13. **(Q13)** Is your most important certification or license for your current job?

- (1) Not applicable, not currently working
- (2) No
- (3) Yes



**14. How useful has your most important certification or license been for each of the following?**

**a. (14\_1) Getting a job**

- (1) Not useful
- (2) Somewhat useful
- (3) Very useful
- (4) Too soon to tell

**b. (14\_2) Keeping a job**

- (1) Not useful
- (2) Somewhat useful
- (3) Very useful
- (4) Too soon to tell

**c. (14\_3) Keeping you marketable to employers or clients**

- (1) Not useful
- (2) Somewhat useful
- (3) Very useful
- (4) Too soon to tell

**d. (14\_4) Improving your work skills**

- (1) Not useful
- (2) Somewhat useful
- (3) Very useful
- (4) Too soon to tell

## Certificates

**15. People sometimes earn certificates from an education or training program. These are different from certifications or licenses. Do not include certifications or licenses here. Have you ever earned any of the following types of certificates?**

**a. (Q15\_1) A certificate for completing a training program from an employer, employment agency, union, software or equipment manufacturer, or other training provider**

- (1) No
- (2) Yes

**b. (Q15\_2) A certificate for completing a vocational program at a high school**

- (1) No
- (2) Yes

**c. (Q15\_3) A high school equivalency certificate, such as a GED®**

- (1) No
- (2) Yes

**d. (Q15\_4) A certificate—not a degree—for completing a program at a community or technical college, or other school after high school. Do not include teaching certificates or college degrees**

- (1) No → **GO TO question 24**
- (2) Yes


**16. (Q16) We will refer to the certificates in question 15d as “post-secondary certificates.” What was the field of study for your last post-secondary certificate?**

Mark  ONE only.

- (1) Accounting, finance, insurance, or real estate
- (2) Administrative support
- (3) Agriculture
- (4) Audio, broadcasting, multimedia, or graphic technologies
- (5) Business management, administration, or marketing
- (6) Computer science or information technology
- (7) Construction trades
- (8) Cosmetology
- (9) Culinary arts
- (10) Education
- (11) Engineering technologies or drafting
- (12) Fine arts or music
- (13) Funeral service or mortuary science
- (14) Healthcare
- (15) Law enforcement, security, or firefighting
- (16) Law or legal studies
- (17) Liberal arts
- (18) Manufacturing or production (for example machinist, welder, boilermaker)
- (19) Mechanic or repair technologies
- (20) Transportation
- (21) Other — Specify: 

**17. (Q17) Who gave you your last post-secondary certificate?**

Mark  ONE only.

- (1) A community college
- (2) A vocational, technical, trade, or business school
- (3) Another college or university
- (4) Somewhere else — Specify: 

**18. (Q18) About how many hours of instruction did you complete in order to earn your last post-secondary certificate?**

- (1) 960 hours (1 full-time school year) or more
- (2) 480 hours (half a full-time school year) to 959 hours
- (3) 160 to 479 hours
- (4) 40-159 hours
- (5) Less than 40 hours

**19. (Q19) Which one of the following was required for enrolling in your last post-secondary certificate program?**

Mark  ONE only.

- (1) Being enrolled in or having completed an advanced degree program (Master's or higher)
- (2) Being enrolled in or having completed a Bachelor's degree program
- (3) Having completed high school or a high school equivalency (such as a GED®)
- (4) None of the above

**20. (Q20) To earn your last post-secondary certificate did you have to complete...**

Mark  ONE box for EACH ITEM below.

(1) (2)  
No Yes  
▼ ▼

- a. (20\_1) a minimum number of credits?  
.....
- b. (20\_2) a minimum number of instructional hours? .....

21. **(Q21)** Was your last post-secondary certificate part of the training you took for a professional certification or license?

- (1) No
- (2) Yes

22. **(Q22)** Is your current job related to your last post-secondary certificate?

- (1) Not applicable, not currently working
- (2) No
- (3) Yes, somewhat related
- (4) Yes, very related

23. How useful has your last post-secondary certificate been for each of the following?

a. **(Q23\_1)** Getting a job

- (1) Not useful
- (2) Somewhat useful
- (3) Very useful
- (4) Too soon to tell

b. **(Q23\_2)** Increasing your pay

- (1) Not useful
- (2) Somewhat useful
- (3) Very useful
- (4) Too soon to tell

c. **(Q23\_3)** Improving your work skills

- (1) Not useful
- (2) Somewhat useful
- (3) Very useful
- (4) Too soon to tell

## Work Experience Programs

24. **(Q24)** Have you ever completed an internship, co-op, practicum, clerkship, externship, residency, clinical experience, apprenticeship, or similar program?

- (1) No, and I am not in one now
- (2) No, but I am in one now



**GO TO  
question 35**

- (3) Yes, I have completed this type of program



*We will refer to these as “work experience programs.” If you have NOT completed a work experience program, go to question 35. If you HAVE completed a program, continue on the next page, answering for the last work experience program you completed.*

**25. (Q25) If yes, what type of work was your last work experience program for?**

Mark  ONE only.

**Building or construction trades:**

- (1) Carpenter
- (2) Electrician
- (3) Plumber or pipefitter
- (4) Sheet metal worker or structural steel worker
- (5) Other building and construction trades

**Healthcare:**

- (6) Medical doctor
- (7) Nursing or nursing assistant
- (8) Other healthcare

**Other types of work:**

- (9) Accounting, finance, insurance, or real estate
- (10) Chef, cook, or food preparation
- (11) Computer networking or information technology
- (12) Cosmetology
- (13) Driving, piloting, or other transportation
- (14) Engineering or architecture
- (15) Funeral service or mortuary science
- (16) Law enforcement, security, or firefighting
- (17) Legal practice
- (18) Machinist or tool and die maker
- (19) Management or administration
- (20) Mechanic or repair work
- (21) Printing
- (22) Social work, counseling, or religious vocations
- (23) Teaching
- (24) Utility or telecommunications technician
- (25) Other — Specify:

**26. (Q26) How long did your last work experience program last?**

- (1) Less than 3 months
- (2) 3 months to less than 6 months
- (3) 6 months to less than 1 year
- (4) 1 year to less than 2 years
- (5) 2 years to less than 3 years
- (6) 3 years or more

**27. (Q27) What wage did you earn as part of your last work experience program?**

- (1) No wage
- (2) A training wage that was lower than the wage of a fully qualified worker
- (3) The same wage as a fully qualified worker

**28. As a part of your last work experience program did you...**

Mark  ONE box for EACH ITEM below.

- |  | (1)<br>No<br>▼           | (2)<br>Yes<br>▼          |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| a. (Q28_1) have instruction or training from a co-worker or supervisor? .....                        | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| b. (Q28_2) take classes from a college, technical school, or trade school? .....                     | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| c. (Q28_3) take classes or training from a company, association, union, or private instructor? ..... | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

**29. Do the following statements describe your last work experience program?**

Mark  ONE box for EACH ITEM below.

- |   | (1)<br>No<br>▼           | (2)<br>Yes<br>▼          |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| a. (Q29_1) I was evaluated by a co-worker or supervisor .....                 | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| b. (Q29_2) I got college credit .....   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| c. (Q29_3) I received journeyman status at the end of an apprenticeship ..... | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| d. (Q29_4) I got a state or federal apprenticeship number .....               | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

**30. (Q30) Which one of the following best describes your last work experience program?**

Mark  ONE only.

- (1) It was not part of a formal education program
- (2) It was part of a high school program
- (3) It was part of a school program after high school and below an Associate's degree
- (4) It was part of an Associate's degree program
- (5) It was part of a Bachelor's degree program
- (6) It was part of an advanced degree program or other program beyond a Bachelor's degree

**31. (Q31) Did (or will) your last work experience program help you earn a professional certification or license?**

- (1) No
- (2) Yes

**32. (Q32) Is your current job related to your last work experience program?**

- (1) Not applicable, not currently working
- (2) No
- (3) Yes, somewhat related
- (4) Yes, very related

**33. (Q33) In your current job, how often do you use the skills or knowledge that you learned during your last work experience program?**

- (1) Not applicable, not currently working
- (2) Never or almost never
- (3) Sometimes
- (4) All or most of the time

**34. How useful was your last work experience program for each of the following?**

**a. (Q34\_1) Getting a job**

- (1) Not useful
- (2) Somewhat useful
- (3) Very useful
- (4) Too soon to tell

**b. (Q34\_2) Increasing your pay**

- (1) Not useful
- (2) Somewhat useful
- (3) Very useful
- (4) Too soon to tell

**c. (Q34\_3) Improving your work skills**

- (1) Not useful
- (2) Somewhat useful
- (3) Very useful
- (4) Too soon to tell

## Employment

**35. (Q35) Last week, were you employed for pay at a job or business?**

*If you were temporarily absent from a job or business (on vacation, temporarily ill, on maternity leave, etc.), answer "Yes".*

- (1) No → **GO TO question 40**
- (2) Yes

**36. (Q36) Last week, how many jobs did you have?**

number of jobs

**37. (Q37) Last week, did you work at a full-time job (a job where you work 35 hours or more per week)?**

- (1) No
- (2) Yes

38. (Q38) Last week, did you work at a part-time job (a job where you work fewer than 35 hours per week)?

(1) No → **GO TO question 44**

(2) Yes

39. (Q39) If yes, would you have preferred for your part-time job to be a full-time job?

(1) No } **GO TO question 44**

(2) Yes }

40. (Q40) Last week, were you on layoff from a job?

(1) No

(2) Yes

41. (Q41) During the last 4 weeks, have you been actively looking for work?

(1) No

(2) Yes → **GO TO question 43**

42. (Q42) If no, do you intend to look for work within the next 5 years?

(1) No

(2) Yes

(77) Don't know

43. (Q43) When did you last work, even for a few days?

(1) Never worked for pay → **GO TO question 53**

(2) Over 12 months ago → **GO TO question 47**

(3) Within the past 12 months

44. (Q44) During the past 12 months (52 weeks), how many weeks did you work, including paid vacation, paid sick leave, and military service?

(1) 50 to 52 weeks

(2) 48 to 49 weeks

(3) 40 to 47 weeks

(4) 27 to 39 weeks

(5) 14 to 26 weeks

(6) 13 weeks or less

45. (Q45) During the past 12 months, in the weeks you worked, how many hours did you usually work each WEEK?

usual hours worked each WEEK

46. (Q46) Which category best fits your earnings from wages, salary, commissions, bonuses, or tips, from all jobs over the past 12 months?

Report amount before deductions for taxes, bonds, dues, or other items.

(1) \$0 to \$10,000

(2) \$10,001 to \$20,000

(3) \$20,001 to \$30,000

(4) \$30,001 to \$40,000

(5) \$40,001 to \$50,000

(6) \$50,001 to \$60,000

(7) \$60,001 to \$75,000

(8) \$75,001 to \$150,000

(9) \$150,001 or more

47. (Q47) The next few questions ask about your current or last job. If you had more than one job, describe the one at which you worked the most hours. In your current or last job, for whom did you work?

(Q47\_CHECK)(1) If now on active duty in the Armed Forces, mark (X) this box and print the branch of the Armed Forces below.

Name of company, business, or other employer

(00) Please specify:

48. (Q48) What kind of business or industry was this?

(For example: hospital, newspaper publishing, mail order house, auto engine manufacturing, bank)

(1)

49. (Q49) Which one of the following were you?

- (1) An employee of a private company, business, or individual, for wages, salary, or commission
- (2) A local (city, county, etc.), state, or federal government employee
- (3) Self-employed in own business, professional practice, or farm
- (4) Working without pay for family business or farm

50. (Q50) Did you have a license that was required by a federal, state, or local government agency to do this job?

- (1) No
- (2) Yes

51. (Q51) What kind of position did you hold?

- (1) Permanent → **GO TO question 53**
- (2) Temporary

52. (Q52) Would you have preferred to work at a permanent job?

- (1) No
- (2) Yes

## Background

53. (Q53) Have you ever served on active duty in the U.S. Armed Forces, Reserves, or National Guard?

- (1) No, never served in the military
- (2) Yes, but only on active duty for training in the Reserve or National Guard
- (3) Yes, on active duty now or in past

54. (Q54) Are you male or female?

- (1) Male
- (2) Female
- (3) Other Specified

55. (Q55) What is your current marital status?

Mark  ONE only.

- (1) Now Married → **GO TO question 57**
- (2) Widowed
- (3) Divorced
- (4) Separated
- (5) Never married

56. (Q56) Are you currently living with a boyfriend/girlfriend or partner in this household?

- (1) No
- (2) Yes

57. (Q57) Do you speak a language other than English at home?

- (1) No → **GO TO question 59**
- (2) Yes

58. (Q58) How well do you speak English?

- (1) Very well
- (2) Well
- (3) Not well
- (4) Not at all

59. (Q59) How old are you?

years old

60. (Q60) Are you of Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin?

- (1) No
- (2) Yes

61. (Q61) What is your race? You may mark one or more races.

- (1) American Indian or Alaska Native
- (2) Asian
- (3) Black or African American
- (4) Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander
- (5) White

62. (Q62) Do you have Internet access at home on a computer or tablet?

- (1) No
- (2) Yes

## Appendix B. Advance Letter



at the UNIVERSITY of CHICAGO

55 East Monroe Street  
30th Floor  
Chicago IL 60603  
office (312) 759-4000  
fax (312) 759-4004  
[www.norc.org](http://www.norc.org)

<DATE>

Dear <Recipient Name>,

NORC at the University of Chicago is administering the **National Education and Employment Study** (NEES) for the Lumina Foundation to gain more knowledge about adults' work-related education, training, and credentials after high school. Results from the study will be used by researchers to understand and improve education and training for all adults in the United States. You have been randomly selected to participate in this important national study.

Within the next few days, you will receive a phone call from an NORC phone interviewer. The interviewer will ask you to complete a survey over the phone that will last approximately 20 minutes. Your participation in this study is voluntary, but to thank you for your time and effort, we have included \$1 in cash for your efforts, and an additional \$10 in cash upon completion of the survey.

Please keep in mind that NORC maintains strict confidentiality standards and the results from this study will be reported in summary form only.

If you have any questions about the study, you can call our study toll-free line at **1-888-248-6171** or email us at [NEES@norc.org](mailto:NEES@norc.org). Please refer to the enclosed list of **Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)** for more information about the study and your role as a study participant.

Thank you in advance for your cooperation in this very important study!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Bronwyn Nichols Lodato".

Bronwyn Nichols Lodato  
Project Director, National Education and Employment Survey  
Senior Vice President, Education and Child Development Department  
NORC at the University of Chicago [www.norc.org](http://www.norc.org)

<SUID>





at the UNIVERSITY of CHICAGO

55 East Monroe Street  
30th Floor  
Chicago IL 60603  
office (312) 759-4000  
fax (312) 759-4004  
[www.norc.org](http://www.norc.org)

<FECHA>

Estimado/a <Nombre del/ de la Destinatario/a>,

NORC de la Universidad de Chicago está administrando **El Estudio Nacional de la Educación y el Empleo (NEES)** para la Fundación Lumina para obtener más información acerca de la educación relacionada con el trabajo, el entrenamiento de los adultos, y las credenciales después de la escuela secundaria. Los resultados del estudio serán utilizados por los investigadores para comprender y mejorar la educación y el entrenamiento para todos los adultos en los Estados Unidos. Usted ha sido seleccionado/a al azar para participar en este importante estudio nacional.

En los próximos días, usted recibirá una llamada telefónica de un entrevistador de NORC. El entrevistador le pedirá que complete una encuesta por teléfono que durará aproximadamente 20 minutos. Su participación en este estudio es voluntaria, pero para darle las gracias por su tiempo y esfuerzo, hemos incluido \$1 en efectivo por sus esfuerzos, y una cantidad adicional de \$10 en efectivo a la finalización de la encuesta.

Por favor, tenga en cuenta que NORC mantiene normas estrictas de confidencialidad y los resultados de este estudio serán reportados sólo en forma de resumen.

Si usted tiene alguna pregunta sobre el estudio, puede llamar a nuestra línea telefónica gratuita del estudio al **1-888-248-6171** o enviarnos un email a [NEES@norc.org](mailto:NEES@norc.org). Consulte la lista adjunta de **Preguntas Frecuentes (FAQs)** para más información sobre el estudio y su rol como participante en el estudio.

¡Gracias de antemano por su cooperación en este importante estudio!

Atentamente,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Bronwyn Nichols Lodato".

Bronwyn Nichols Lodato  
Directora del Proyecto, Estudio Nacional de la Educación y el Empleo  
Vice Presidente Senior, Departamento de Educación y Desarrollo Infantil  
NORC at the University of Chicago  
[www.norc.org](http://www.norc.org)

<SUID>

## Appendix C. Prompting Postcards



**National Education and Employment Study**  
c/o NORC at the University of Chicago  
1 N. State Street, 16th Floor  
Chicago, IL 60602

FIRST-CLASS MAIL  
U.S. POSTAGE PAID  
CHICAGO, ILLINOIS  
PERMIT NO. 661

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OFFICIAL BUSINESS  
RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

G00701

### The National Education and Employment Study

Conducted by NORC at the University of Chicago on behalf of the LUMINA FOUNDATION

#### *El Estudio Nacional de la Educación y el Empleo*

*Realizado por NORC de la Universidad de Chicago a nombre de la Fundación Lumina*

A letter inviting you to participate in the NEES telephone survey was recently sent to you. If you have already completed the survey, thank you for your participation. If not, please call our toll-free line at 1-888-248-6171.

*Una carta invitándole a participar en la encuesta NEES le fue enviada recientemente a usted. Si usted ya ha completado la encuesta, gracias por su participación. Si no, por favor llame a nuestra línea telefónica gratuita al 1-888-248-6171.*

Thank you for your cooperation in this very important study!

*¡Gracias por su cooperación en este importante estudio!*

Bronwyn Nichols Lodato  
Project Director, National Education and Employment Survey  
Senior Vice President, Education and Child Development Department  
NORC at the University of Chicago [www.norc.org](http://www.norc.org)



FIRST-CLASS MAIL  
U.S. POSTAGE PAID  
CHICAGO, ILLINOIS  
PERMIT NO. 661

**National Education and Employment Study**

c/o NORC at the University of Chicago  
1 N. State Street, 16th Floor  
Chicago, IL 60602

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G007

## The National Employment and Education Study

Conducted by NORC at the University of Chicago on behalf of the LUMINA FOUNDATION

### *El Estudio Nacional de la Educación y el Empleo*

*Realizado por NORC de la Universidad de Chicago a nombre de la Fundación Lumina*

Our records indicate that you have not yet completed the NEES telephone survey. We are writing to remind you about the importance of your participation. Results from the study will be used by researchers to understand education, training, and credentials for all adults in the United States. Please call 1-888-248-6171 to complete your short telephone survey.

*Nuestros registros indican que usted aún no ha completado la encuesta NEES. Le estamos escribiendo para recordarle sobre la importancia de su participación. Los resultados del estudio serán utilizados por los investigadores para comprender la educación, el entrenamiento y las credenciales de todos los adultos en los Estados Unidos. Por favor llame al 1-888-248-6171 para completar esta corta encuesta por teléfono.*

Thank you for your cooperation in this very important study!  
*¡Gracias por su cooperación en este importante estudio!*

Bronwyn Nichols Lodato  
Project Director, National Education and Employment Survey  
Senior Vice President, Education and Child Development Department  
NORC at the University of Chicago [www.norc.org](http://www.norc.org)





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PERMIT NO. 661

**National Education and Employment Study**

c/o NORC at the University of Chicago  
1 N. State Street, 16th Floor  
Chicago, IL 60602

---

OFFICIAL BUSINESS  
RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

G00701

## The National Employment and Education Study

Conducted by NORC at the University of Chicago on behalf of the LUMINA FOUNDATION

### *El Estudio Nacional de la Educación y el Empleo*

*Realizado por NORC de la Universidad de Chicago a nombre de la Fundación Lumina*

#### **Final Reminder**

Our records indicate that you have not yet completed the NEES telephone survey. We are writing to ask you to complete this important survey on education. This postcard is a final reminder. Please call 1-888-248-6171 to complete your short telephone survey today.

#### **Recordatorio Final**

*Nuestros registros indican que usted aún no ha completado la encuesta NEES. Le estamos escribiendo para pedirle que complete esta importante encuesta sobre la educación. Esta tarjeta postal es un recordatorio final. Por favor llame al 1-888-248-6171 para completar esta corta encuesta por teléfono hoy.*

Thank you for your cooperation in this very important study!

*¡Gracias por su cooperación en este importante estudio!*

Bronwyn Nichols Lodato  
Project Director, National Education and Employment Survey  
Senior Vice President, Education and Child Development Department  
NORC at the University of Chicago [www.norc.org](http://www.norc.org)

