



NAAL Data Set Training Seminar Announcement

Using the National Assessment of Adult Literacy Data file and Tools For Research, Secondary Analyses and Policy Development

Wednesday, June 25, 2008 through Friday, June 27, 2008
Washington, DC

The National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), in the U.S Department of Education's Institute of Education Sciences (IES), will sponsor a 2 1/2-day advanced studies seminar on the use of the National Assessment of Adult Literacy (NAAL) data files and tools for research and policy analyses. The 2003 NAAL measured the English literacy of America's adults living in households and prisons. Results are reported in terms of scale score averages on three literacy scales: prose, document, and quantitative, as well as literacy levels that are described as *Below Basic*, *Basic*, *Intermediate*, and *Proficient*.

This seminar is open to institutional researchers and planners, education practitioners, policymakers, and association members, as well as faculty and advanced graduate students from colleges and universities nationwide.

OVERVIEW

NAAL is a nationally representative assessment of the English literacy skills of Americans age 16 and older. The [National Center for Education Statistics](#) (NCES) has conducted assessments of U.S. adult literacy since 1985. The [2003 NAAL](#) was the first assessment of the nation's progress in adult literacy since 1992. It provides information about the status and progress of literacy in the nation as a whole and among key population groups, including the nation's least-literate adults. The 2003 NAAL also provides the results of state-level assessments for six states that chose to participate in separate state assessments—Kentucky, Maryland, Massachusetts, Missouri, New York, and Oklahoma—and an assessment of literacy among the nation's prison population.

NAAL measures how well Americans perform tasks with printed materials similar to those they encounter in their daily lives at work, at home, and in the community. NAAL provides separate prose, document, and quantitative literacy scores. The 2003 NAAL, for the first time, has produced a health literacy score of American adults. It also provides previously unavailable information about the basic literacy skills of the least-literate adults, and the English oral fluency of all respondents.

The 2003 [NAAL background questionnaire](#) has collected extensive information of interest to researchers, policymakers, and other stakeholders that were not collected by the 1992 NALS background questionnaire. The background items include questions about language background; education level; income and employment status; receipt of public assistance; use of technology; health-related conditions and activities; and literacy practices such as parents' reading to their children. By tracking and reporting the literacy performance of adults by a range of demographic and other characteristics, NAAL supports a better understanding of the relationship of these factors to low literacy performance and of the literacy needs of specific audiences.

For more information about NAAL and a list of available publications that can be downloaded or ordered, visit the survey website (<http://nces.ed.gov/NAAL>).

PURPOSE AND EXPECTED OUTCOME

The overall goal of the seminar is to provide participants with an opportunity to use NAAL data in substantive research. The seminar will include both lecture and hands-on instruction. Specifically, the seminar will cover the following topics and activities:

- an overview of NAAL data;
- an overview of methodological and technological issues associated with use of the NAAL, including sample design and coverage;
- instruction on how to analyze NAAL data, with hands-on practice; and
- help in designing and carrying out a research study.

The summer data training will focus on use of the most recent data available, which are from the 2003 collection.

It should be noted that this seminar does not provide formal instruction on advanced statistical methods and analyses.

At the conclusion of the seminar, participants are asked to submit a summary of a preliminary study design that uses NAAL 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 finalized, a copy of the paper or report should be sent to NCES.

QUALIFICATIONS

Participants attending this seminar should have knowledge of statistics, be experienced in using personal computers, and should be proficient in the use of SPSS, SAS, or Stata statistical software packages. Participants will be expected to know how to perform basic SPSS, SAS, or Stata procedures, including recoding data and running descriptive analyses (e.g., frequency distributions, cross-tabulations, means). Applicants will be evaluated on the following criteria:

- interest in conducting research on educational issues;
- familiarity with the topics covered in the NAAL;
- a research agenda that is consistent with the data available in NAAL;
- potential to successfully relate the results of the research in an applied setting, publish the results of the research, or promote the use of the data in research applications;
- experience in the study of educational issues in applied or academic settings; and
- qualifications in the use of statistical software (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 hands-on practice.

LOCATION

The seminar will be held in Washington, DC, on **Wednesday, June 25, 2008 through Friday, June 27, 2008**. 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 enclosed application form.
2. A copy of your current vitae or resume.
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.

The description of your study should include specifications of the issues to be addressed, rationale for the study, why the NAAL data are well-suited for your study, and the study's analytic 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.

DEADLINE: All applications should be received no later than **May 14, 2008**. Applications will be reviewed and selections will be made by **May 21, 2008**. Selected candidates will receive the seminar agenda and information about travel arrangements.

Applications should be returned to: Gordana Vukovic
Synergy Enterprises, Inc.
8757 Georgia Avenue, Suite 450
Silver Spring, MD 20910

Please contact Gordana Vukovic through e-mail at gvukovic@sei2003.com or by telephone at (240) 485-1700 or by fax at (240) 485-1982, 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.



APPLICATION
NAAL Data Set Training Seminar
National Center for Education Statistics (NCES)
U.S. Department of Education
June 25-27, 2008
Washington, DC

Dr. Mr. Ms.

NAME:

(please type or print clearly)

AFFILIATION:

TITLE/POSITION:

MAILING ADDRESS:

CITY:

STATE:

ZIP CODE:

TELEPHONE:

FAX:

E-MAIL:

Computer Statistical Software Experience:

All participants must have at least 1 year of SPSS or SAS experience.

Software	Level of experience			
	Extensive (= proficient in aggregating, merging, recoding, weighting, and analysis)	Some (= familiar with recoding and many analysis procedures)	Very little (= simple descriptive procedures and recoding)	None
SPSS				
SAS				
Stata				
Other (specify)				

Please answer the following:

1. Do you have experience merging files in SPSS, SAS, or Stata? yes no
2. Do you have experience recoding variable values in SPSS, SAS, or Stata? yes no
3. Have you used weights in your analysis using SPSS, SAS, or Stata? yes no
4. Have you run statistical analyses using SPSS, SAS, or Stata? yes no
5. Have you used AM software posted on the NAAL web site? yes no

Area of Research Interest:

Please attach a clearly written description of your research interest and how that can be furthered through the use of NAAL data (1–2 typewritten pages). Be as specific as possible. If you are a graduate student, a letter of recommendation from your faculty advisor must be included with your application.

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