

## Enclosure A

# SUMMARY OF CHANGES TO THE 2002-2003 FREE APPLICATION FOR FEDERAL STUDENT AID (FAFSA)

Enclosure A contains information about changes we have made to the 2002-2003 Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). The following is a list of the specific topics covered in Enclosure A:

- Information about 2002-2003 FAFSA Ordering and Distribution
- Description of Changes to the 2002-2003 FAFSA

## 2002-2003 FAFSA Ordering and Distribution

### *When Can You Order FAFSAs?*

You can order English and Spanish versions of the 2002-2003 FAFSA now by going to our online bulk publication ordering system at <http://edpubs.org/bpos>. Click on "Publications for Students, Bulk Publications." Please note that you will need to provide your 8-digit OPEID number when placing your order.

Due to the increased number of students applying electronically for financial aid, we are printing smaller quantities of paper FAFSAs than in past years and have reduced initial orders. If you determine that you need more FAFSAs than this reduced amount, please feel free to place additional orders from our online Bulk Publication Ordering System. We will fulfill 100% of all second and subsequent orders that are placed.

### *When Will We Distribute FAFSAs?*

The distribution of 2002-2003 FAFSAs began in mid-November 2001. SFA delayed printing and distribution of 2002-2003 FAFSAs because there was a chance that pending legislation might change the 2001 IRS tax form line items. Because the 2002-2003 FAFSA references 2001 tax forms line items, SFA made the difficult decision to delay the printing of the FAFSA until the 2001 IRS tax forms were finalized.

When the Internal Revenue Service finalized the 2001 tax forms, SFA began printing FAFSAs immediately and distribution began the week of November 12, 2001.

We apologize for any inconvenience the delay in FAFSA printing may have caused you or your students. We are doing everything possible to ensure that FAFSAs are shipped to you as quickly as possible.

Please note that we will ship FAFSAs in the order that requests were made. Once shipped, allow 2-6 working days for delivery.

## **2002-2003 Free Application for Federal Student Aid**

The 2002-2003 FAFSA retains the core design of the 2001-2002 FAFSA, with a few changes made to further improve the application so that it is easier for applicants and their families to complete. We did not add or delete any questions on the 2002-2003 FAFSA, and the order of questions is the same as the 2001-2002 FAFSA. To improve clarity and further simplify the form, we reworded several of the questions and instructions on the form. The chart below explains all of the items that have changed on the 2002-2003 FAFSA.

The FAFSA will once again include the one-page insert and return receipt postcard.

Many of the changes made to the 2002-2003 FAFSA were the result of feedback and comments from students, parents, financial aid administrators, and state aid agencies. Some of the best changes to the form came from suggestions from you, the financial aid professional. As always, we appreciate your contributions to improving the FAFSA and encourage you to continue to share your thoughts and suggestions with us. Please direct your comments to:

U.S. Department of Education  
FAFSA Coordinator  
Application Processing  
Union Center Plaza  
830 First Street, NE  
Room 31C2  
Washington, DC 20202

Or send a fax to: 1-(202)-275-0492.

We encourage you to watch IFAP this winter when we will post *Federal Register Notices* requesting public comments for the 2003-2004 FAFSA.

## Data Element Changes -- 2002-2003 FAFSA

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### What we changed

**Colors** – The 2002-2003 colors are blue for student information, and purple for parent information. The blue will be PANTONE 277 CVU and the purple will be PANTONE 263 CVU.

Blue is the next color in our four-year color rotation of green → blue → yellow → pink. Purple has been our stable parent color since the 1999-2000 redesign.

**Service Mark added** – A “Service Mark” has been added to the FAFSA logo.

**Web Banner Modified** – The word “free” was added to the Web Banner. It now reads “Apply free with FAFSA on the Web.”

**“Unusual circumstances”** – In item 1, we have further defined “unusual circumstances.” The statement now reads: “If you or your family has **unusual circumstances not shown on this form** (such as loss of employment) that might affect your need for student financial aid, submit this form and then consult with the financial aid office at the college you plan to attend.”

**Example question** – In item 2, the sample directions for filling in ovals on the FAFSA were changed from “Yes/No” to “Correct/Incorrect.”

**Deadline** – In item 3, the last day for us to receive applications for 2002-2003 is June 30, 2003.

**State Deadlines** – All state deadlines have been updated for 2002-2003.

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**What we changed**

**Notes for Question 30** – The notes for responses of “0” and “1” to question 30 were reworded for clarity. The notes for the other numeric responses had no changes. The reworded phrases read as follows:

Enter **0** for never attended college & 1<sup>st</sup> year undergraduate

Enter **1** for attended college before & 1<sup>st</sup> year undergraduate

**Notes for Questions 47-48, 81-82** – The notes for these questions have been reworded to instruct students to include college savings plans as an investment. The sentence that begins “Investments include...” now includes the phrase “college savings plans.”

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**What we changed**

**Question 13** – Instructions were added directing students to skip to question 15 if they answer “Yes, I am a U.S. citizen” to this question.

**Question 28** – This question was reworded to clarify what happens if a student answers “Yes.” It now reads: “If you are male (age 18-25) and not registered, answer ‘Yes’ and Selective Service will register you.”

**Question 35** – No change has been made to this question.

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**What we changed**

**Step Two Instructions** – The instructions to Step Two were reworded to remind married students to include their spouse’s income and assets. The added text reads “If you are married today, report you and your spouse’s income and assets, even if you were not married in 2001. Ignore references to ‘spouse’ if you are currently single, separated, divorced, or widowed.”

**Step Two** – All IRS line item references have been updated to correspond with 2001 tax returns.

**Question 40** – The instructions direct students who filed, or will file, a 1040 or 1040A to add to their taxes paid amount the amount they reported as a tax reduction credit. 1040 filers should add lines 47 and 52, and 1040A filers should add lines 30 and 34, and enter the sum in FAFSA question 40. Because some tax filers did not get their full tax reduction credit the past summer, capturing the sum of these two tax return line items enables us to treat these applicants the same way as those who received their \$300 or \$600 tax reduction checks in mail this past summer.

**Questions 42-43** – Text was added to instruct students to include income earned from wages, salaries, and tips. It now reads: “How much did you (and spouse) earn from working (wages, salaries, tips, etc.) in 2001?”

<b>Question 49</b> – Instructions were added to inform the student NOT to include student financial aid in the current balance of cash, savings, and checking. The text reads: “Do not include student financial aid.”
<b>Question 53</b> – Text was added to clarify that master’s and doctorate programs include Graduate Certification programs and Ed.D. programs. These two types of programs were added to the list of examples.
<b>Question 57</b> – Text was added to include dependents of the court. The question now reads: “Are you an orphan, or are you or were you (until age 18) a ward/dependent of the court?”
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<b>What we changed</b>
<b>Questions 60-63</b> – These questions were reworded to clarify that the Social Security Number and last name provided should be of the <i>parents</i> reporting income and asset information on the FAFSA. It now reads: “What are the Social Security Numbers and last names of the parents reporting information on this form?”
<b>Question 74</b> – The instructions direct parents who filed, or will file, a 1040 or 1040A to add the amount reported as a tax reduction credit on their tax return to their taxes paid amount (1040 filers should add lines 47 and 52, and 1040A filers should add lines 30 and 34) and enter the sum in FAFSA question 74.
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<b>What we changed</b>
<b>Questions 86-97</b> – At the request of a number of states, a sentence has been added at the end of the school code instructions to suggest that students may want to list their preferred school first. The sentence reads: “For state aid, you may wish to list your preferred school first.”
<b>Certification Statement (Step 7)</b> – The statement has been broken into two separate paragraphs to clarify what students and parents are each certifying by signing the statement. The two paragraphs begin with the phrases “If you are the student...” and “If you are the parent or the student...”
<b>-- Worksheet B --</b>
<b>What we changed</b>
<b>Untaxed portions of IRA distributions and pensions separated into two questions</b> – To make it easier for students and parents to answer questions about untaxed IRA distributions and pensions, we have separated the single question from last year’s Worksheet B into two separate line items. Worksheet B now asks students and parents to indicate separately any Untaxed portions of an IRA distribution on one line and then any untaxed portion of pensions on another line. In addition, instructions were added to set any negative amount to zero.