The University of Texas System and the United States Census Bureau Partnership

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Higher Education Environment

• Value of a degree
• Return on investment (ROI)
• Rising cost of education
  – Student debt


*First-time students who entered in academic years 2002-2015

Existing Barriers / Proposed Solutions
Past and Current Federal Efforts

  - Student-level record ban
- U.S. Department of Education – College Scorecard (2013)
  - Online consumer tool showing cost/value of education
- Promoting Real Opportunity, Success, and Prosperity through Education Reform (PROSPER) Act (2017)
- College Transparency Act (2017)

UT System’s Partnership with the U.S. Census Bureau

The Partnership – U.S. Census Bureau Longitudinal Employer-Household Dynamics Program (LEHD)

- MOA, September 2016, 10-year agreement, New Census Public Data Product
  - Estimated earnings 1, 5, and 10 years out for graduates of UT System (2001 to 2015) academic and health institutions
  - Earnings for programs of study at each institution. Earnings are at the 4-digit CIP level for baccalaureate and professional degrees (e.g., 14.02 - Aerospace Engineering) and 2-digit level for master’s and doctoral degrees (e.g., 14 - Engineering)
  - Earnings estimated at the 25th, median, and 75th percentiles
- See Post-Secondary Employment Outcomes (PSEO) on the LEHD webpage at https://lehd.ces.census.gov/data/pseo_beta.html
The Partnership - A Benefit for Higher Education

- Pathway for higher education institutions to access national program level data on post-graduation earnings
- Serves as a proof of concept
  - Federal unit record data systems
  - Privacy

UT System’s Solution –

What is seekUT?

- seekUT is a free, online consumer tool developed with the input of students for students
  - Shows a 10-year data span of earnings in the context of average loan debt, by program
  - Offers the ability to compare earnings and debt by various programs side-by-side
  - Goes beyond the median to show percentiles
  - Indicates the percent of students who continue their education beyond baccalaureate degree
Important Additional Data Uses

Communicating ROI to Policymakers - National

- At 10 years post exit, UT graduates earn $45,000 more than high school graduates.

Communicating ROI to Policymakers - Texas

- State Appropriations & Cumulative Wages of Former Students 3 Years After Graduation
  - UT System\textregistered students earned $18,316 more than those who earned associate's degrees or less.
Monitoring Program Performance - National
- For UT System baccalaureate programs
  - 92% have debt-to-income ratio of 10% or less – 1 year after graduation
  - 99% have debt-to-income ratio of 10% or less – 5 years after graduation

Communicating ROI of Liberal Arts Degrees, National
- Median first-year earnings for 2/3 of graduates of UT System non-STEM programs are higher than the national individual median income of $35,380
- Notable median incomes include
  - Music, $50,856
  - Rhetoric and composition, $46,790
  - Romance languages and literature, $42,841
  - Philosophy, $39,729

seekUT Demonstration