

UnderStandingAmericaStudy

SLEEPER PROTOCOL



USC Dornsife Center for Economic and Social Research

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SLEEPER PROTOCOL

In the Understanding America Study, a “sleeper” is a person who has not completed a survey for three months or more when during this period there have been at least two surveys offered in addition to the My Household quarterly update.

At the end of each month the following lists of sleepers are determined:

1. 3 month sleepers.
 - a. Have a phone number
 - b. Email but no phone number
 - c. No phone number and no email
2. 4 month sleepers = 3 month sleepers who said they would participate when contacted, but did not do so.
3. 10+ month sleepers.

Different steps are taken for each group of sleepers as described below. Note: prior to any steps within the sleeper protocol respondents will have already received email (when available) or postcard survey reminders for the surveys they have been selected for up until that point.

3 Month Sleepers

People who have not done a survey for 3 months are considered to be 3-month sleepers. These fall into 3 groups: have a phone number, email but no phone number, no phone number and no email.

Have a phone number

For sleepers with known phone numbers, the first Monday of each month members are called to ask them to start participating again. Each phone call takes places following a call script:

“Hello this is ____ calling on behalf of the Understanding America Study at USC where ____ takes surveys. Is ____ available?”

If YES:

“Hi, I am just calling to make sure you knew there were some surveys available for you. We see that you haven’t taken surveys for over three months. Are you still able to participate, or is there anything I can help you with?”

If the member is not there or wants to talk later, the call is rescheduled, and a second call is made on the agreed upon date and time.

Q1. “What is the main reason you have not participated in a while?”

1. Personal issues
2. Health issues
3. Too difficult, boring,
4. Privacy issues
5. Technical issues, other
6. Needs email reminder

(Help is offered for anything the UAS can help with e.g. lost clincard, forgot password, reassure about privacy, etc.)

Q2. “Will you be able to participate again going forward? If you start taking surveys again this month, we will be happy to pay you a bonus of \$10 after completion of the first survey”.

1. Yes, they have already started participating again
2. Yes, they will definitely participate again
3. Yes, but not immediately
 - a. Ask: When can you start again? [enter date]
4. No, they don’t want to continue to participate (see Q2=4 protocol below)

IF Q2 = 1,2, or 3: “Thank you for your participation! We’re happy that you will continue to take surveys with the Understanding America Study. If Q2 = 3 say: “we will make a note in our system and not send you any surveys until after [date respondent mentioned]”

IF Q2 = 4: If the member no longer wants to participate, ask “What is the main reason why you no longer want to take surveys?”

1. Personal issues
2. Health issues
3. Too difficult or boring,
4. Concerned about privacy issues
5. Technical problems
6. Other reasons [enter reason]

If applicable, attempts are made to address privacy concerns or technical issues. If the person just wants to stop participating, that is ok, but if there is a solution, it is offered.

If they just want to stop participating: “We thank you for your participation so far and helping us with our research. We will note this in the system and also send you a letter to confirm. As a reminder, other adult members of your household are welcome to join our study, even if you no longer want to participate. Is there anyone else in your household who might be interested in participating?” If the answer is yes, the name and contact information of that person is noted.

Email but no phone number

For sleepers with no phone number but an email address on file an email is sent with the following text:

“Dear [first name]

Thank you for your membership in the Understanding America Study! We are contacting you because you have not taken a survey in several months. Are you still able to participate, or is there anything we can help you with?” If you would like to start taking surveys again this month, we will be happy to pay you a bonus of \$10 after completion of the first survey”.

Please contact us if you are having any problems we can help you solve such as technical issues logging in or other issues. If you no longer wish to participate, you can tell us that too. You can reach the UAS helpdesk by writing to uashelp@usc.edu or calling 855-872-8672.

Sincerely”

No phone number and no email

For sleepers with no phone number and no email address on file a letter is sent with the exact same text as for people with no phone number, but an email address on file.

4 Month Sleepers

People who have not done a survey for 4 months are considered to be 4-month sleepers. Sleepers who indicated they would start participating again in their 3-month phone call are sent an email or letter at the 4-month mark. This letter reminds them of their intent to take surveys again and offers them a one-time \$10 bonus incentive if they complete a survey by the end of the month. This mail/letter reads:

“Dear [first name]

We are writing to follow up on our contact from a few weeks ago. You mentioned that you were planning to start taking surveys again with the Understanding America Study. We noted that you have not yet completed any surveys since we corresponded. Please let us know if we can be of any help. As a reminder, in addition to the usual payment you receive from filling out the UAS surveys we would like to show our appreciation for your participate by adding an additional \$10 to your ClinCard if you complete at least one survey by the end of the month?

Click on the link below to log in and fill out surveys at:

<https://uas.usc.edu/panel>

Your user ID is: [userid]

Your password is: [password]

If you have any questions or concerns please contact the UAS helpdesk by writing to uashelp@usc.edu or calling 855-872-8672.

Sincerely”

10 Month Sleepers

When someone has been sleeping for 10 months, they are a 10-month sleeper. At this point of time, an email/letter is sent asking the sleeper to start participating again. It gives a deadline of one month, while promising a \$25 incentive for completing a survey by the end of the month. It reads:

“Dear [first name]

Thank you for your past participation in the Understanding America Study. We have noted that you have not completed any surveys in many months. Please let us know if we can be of any help or service to you in taking our surveys.

If you would like to start again, in addition to the usual payment you receive from filling out the UAS surveys, we would like to show our appreciation for your participation by adding an additional \$25 to your ClinCard if you complete at least one survey by the end of this month. If we don't hear from you by then, we will go ahead and close your account.

As a reminder, to take surveys, just click on the link below to log in and fill out surveys at:

<https://uas.usc.edu/panel>

Your user ID is: [userid]

Your password is: [password]

If you have questions or concerns, or if you think we no longer have your correct contact information, please contact the UAS helpdesk by writing to uashelp@usc.edu or calling 855-872-8673.

Sincerely”

TERMINATION

After about six weeks without a response to the 10-month a final letter/email is sent informing them that their UAS membership has been ended. The text is as follows:

“Dear [first name]

We are writing to let you know that we have now terminated your account with the Understanding America Study. We took this action as you are no longer filling out surveys, despite reminders over several months, so we assume you are no longer interested in being a member of our study.

If in the future you want to join again, please feel free to contact us. As a reminder, all adult members of your household (family or others who live at your address) are eligible to take surveys as well.

Thank you for the surveys that you have answered and for your interest in the panel. If you have questions or concerns, please contact the UAS helpdesk by writing to uashelp@usc.edu or calling 855-872-8673.

Sincerely”

FINAL THANK YOU LETTER

If at any time during the sleeper protocol stages the member indicates they no longer wish to participate, a final thank you letter is sent:

“Dear [first name] [last name],

This letter is following up on our recent contact in which you indicated that you are no longer interested in answering surveys with the Understanding America Study. We are writing to let you know that we have terminated your participation as you requested.

Thank you for the surveys that you have answered and for your interest in the panel. If in the future you want to join again, you can of course always contact us. As a reminder, all adult members of your household (family or others who live at your address) are eligible to take surveys. If you have questions or concerns or if a family member would like to join, please contact the UAS helpdesk by writing to uashelp@usc.edu or calling 855-872-8673.

Sincerely,”