J. Michael Collins is faculty director of the Center for Financial Security at the University of Wisconsin, Madison. He is an Associate Professor at the the La Follette School of Public Affairs and the School of Human Ecology. He is also a faculty affiliate of the UW-Extension, Cooperative Extension, the Institute for Research on Poverty.

Collins studies consumer decision-making in the financial marketplace, including the role of public policy in influencing credit, savings and investment choices.

His work includes the study of financial capability with a focus on low-income families. He directed the Social Security Administration Financial Literacy Research Consortium site at Wisconsin (2009-2012). He is currently involved in studies of mortgage foreclosure and family well-being supported by the John D and Catherine T. MacArthur foundation, financial counseling supported by the Annie E. Casey foundation, and emergency savings policies for the C.S. Mott Foundation.

Collins brings nearly a decade of applied experience to his research. He founded PolicyLab Consulting Group, a research consulting firm working with national foundations and government agencies, and co-founded MortgageKeeper Referral Services, an online database for mortgage servicers and counselors. He also worked for NeighborWorks America (Neighborhood Reinvestment Corporation) and the Millennial Housing Commission.

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