



Policy Title:	Survey Policy
Policy Number:	UNIV-139
Revision Date:	October 2022
Policies Superseded:	None
Policy Management Area(s):	Institutional Research, Assessment and Analysis

SUMMARY:

A survey is defined as a gathering of information through questionnaires, interviews, etc. to make inference about a population. The Survey Policy articulates specific expectations intended to ensure that a coordinated approach is taken across the University in surveying campus constituents regardless of where the survey originates, to ensure that the University community is not inundated with surveys with no control over volume, quality or frequency, and to facilitate planning and assessment efforts. This policy ensures the following points:

- (1) The amount of surveys received by any one group is managed.
- (2) Survey fatigue for respondent groups is mitigated, and data quality is preserved.
- (3) Projects are consistent with the mission of the institution.
- (4) Regulatory requirements are satisfied (e.g., The Institutional Review Board (IRB), The Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA), The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), etc.).

POLICY:

I. USE OF SURVEY SOFTWARE AND DATA

Faculty and staff members conducting surveys are responsible for the acceptable and responsible use of survey software in keeping with the University’s policies and procedures. Faculty and staff must use data only for the designated and intended purposes, and are responsible for protecting the confidentiality, integrity and availability of survey data in accordance with the University’s policy on Data Privacy, Classification and Protection (UNIV-483).

Student survey projects must be under the supervision of a faculty/staff member. The supervising faculty/staff member is responsible for oversight of the project, appropriate use of survey software and protection of data as described above. When possible and appropriate, the use of simulated data for student/class projects is strongly encouraged.

II. TYPES OF SURVEYS

Surveys can be broken into the following general categories based on the purpose and surveyed population:

A. Institutional Survey or Assessment

Assessment or research conducted by an administrative unit or academic department; some or all of the surveyed population is part of the University community (students, faculty, staff, board members, etc.).

- Collect data for institutional planning, assessment, program evaluation and accreditation
- IRB review and approval are generally not required for surveys conducted to evaluate or compare programs, practices, curricula, methods or outcomes solely for use by and presentation to the institution (see Section III)
- Administrative approval to administer the survey may be required (see Section IV, Part B)

B. Research Survey, Internal Population

Research projects conducted by faculty, students (under supervision of faculty/staff) or external researchers where some or all of the surveyed population *is part* of the University community (students, faculty, staff, board members, etc.).

- Collect data for research purposes only
- Not intended to inform institutional decision-making or support assessment
- IRB review and approval is required (see Section III)
- Administrative approval to administer the survey may be required (see Section IV, Part B)

C. Research Survey, External Population

Research projects conducted by faculty, staff or students (under supervision of faculty/staff) where the surveyed population *is not* part of the University community (students, faculty, staff, board members, etc.).

- Collect data for research purposes only
- Not intended to inform institutional decision-making or support assessment
- IRB review and approval is required (see Section III)
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III. INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD (IRB)

Not every academic project or activity involving human participants will need IRB review, however, review and approval is required **prior** to conducting *human subject research* with either external or internal populations. An exception to IRB review will be permitted when an investigator is not collecting data or private information about living individuals, such as in cases where aggregated, nonidentifiable demographic data about a specific population is being used; or where data or information is being gathered for purposes of institutional assessment, quality assurance or quality improvement.

IV. REVIEW AND APPROVAL PROCESS

A. Determine if IRB review is needed

An approval to administer a survey is not a substitute for a review by the Institutional Review Board (IRB). If a survey research project is subject to review by the IRB, approval is required before it can be administered. IRB review is generally not required for survey research conducted to evaluate or compare programs, practices, curricula, methods or outcomes for use solely by the institution. Information about the IRB is available at <https://www.coastal.edu/osprs/irb/>

B. Determine if administrative approval is needed

1. If conducting an *institutional survey* of populations *inside the University*, please contact the Office of Institutional Research, Assessment and Analysis (IRAA) to determine if administrative approval is needed.
2. If conducting a *research survey* of populations *inside the University*, please contact the Office of Institutional Research, Assessment and Analysis (IRAA) to determine if administrative approval is needed.
3. If conducting a *research survey* of populations *outside the University*, you do not need to contact IRAA regarding administrative approval; however, review by the University IRB may be required. Please see Section IV, Part A above.

V. SURVEY ADMINISTRATION

No more than six (6) surveys may be administered to the entire student body (all undergraduate students and/or all graduate students), all faculty or all staff per year. The Office of the Provost reserves the right to allow additional surveys if critical to the University mission or operations. In order to prevent over-surveying, surveyors are highly encouraged to contact IRAA for assistance in identifying a random sample of the targeted population that matches the demographics of the desired group. Surveys may be administered electronically or on paper, in person or via the web or social media. Email may be safely used as a vehicle only to contact potential subjects, who may then be given a web link to complete an online survey.

Once any needed IRB and/or administrative approval is obtained:

1. If conducting an *institutional survey or assessment*, submit a survey ticket to IRAA, who will assist with survey creation and administration.
2. If conducting a *research survey* of populations *inside the University*, please notify IRAA at irsurvey@coastal.edu and provide the following:
 - Name of survey
 - Start and end dates
 - Specific population being surveyedIRAA will assist with survey creation and administration upon request; please submit a survey ticket to IRAA to request assistance.
3. If conducting a *research survey* of populations *outside the University*, no further action prior to administration is needed.

Instructions on submitting a survey ticket can be found at <https://www.coastal.edu/iraa/surveys>.