

The College of St. Scholastica

Policy Name: Institutional Survey Policy

Originating/Responsible Department: Academic Affairs, Office of Institutional Research and Assessment

Approval Authority: Academic Affairs, Office of Institutional Research and Assessment, Institutional Review Board, Academic Affairs Advisory Committee

Date of original policy: 11/10/2017

Last updated: 2/21/2019

Review date: Every 3 years after date of original policy

Contact: Director, Office of Institutional Research and Assessment or Vice President of Academic Affairs

Introduction: The Office of Institutional Research and Assessment (IR&A) and the Vice President for Academic Affairs hold delegated authority to review, approve and coordinate **institutional survey** efforts at The College of St. Scholastica.

Institutional surveys include any broad sampling or census of a population at The College of St. Scholastica that involves direct request to the CSS community - applicants, students, staff, faculty, and alumni - for information. Institutional surveys may be addressed to any part of the CSS community and may address topics including academic, research, personnel, management and environmental issues. Institutional surveys may also include surveys managed by outside agencies addressed to campus groups, and surveys that are parts of research projects. The category of institutional surveys, as referred to in this policy, does not include surveys that are of small-scale (fewer than 100 people) or focused intent such as – department or program surveys, surveys that are part of assigned work in a non-thesis course, focus groups, polls taken with in a course, evaluations of an event by participants, and teaching evaluations.

If you are unsure whether your survey falls under the scope of institutional surveys, as referred to in this policy, please contact IR&A for clarification.

Institutional survey oversight does not supersede the policies and procedures of the Institutional Review Board. Regardless of whether an institutional survey is subject to oversight, researchers are still responsible for obtaining required IRB permissions or exemptions before implementing any survey or other research tool.

Authorization to administer an institutional survey establishes an obligation on the part of the researcher to use these data responsibly, including not distributing the data to others in or outside the college, unless the researcher is an authoritative source for an authorized distributor of data and the recipient is authorized to receive data. In addition, a person who receives email or traditional mail must agree to adhere to The College of St. Scholastica's policies for handling data. Review the [Administrative Data Access Policy](#).

Purpose: The objectives of this policy is to:

- Promote good survey methodology and design
- Avoid collecting duplicate information
- Reduce possible survey fatigue by coordinating and limiting the number and timing of surveys administered to anyone group
- Encourage the communication of survey results within the CSS community

An advisory committee work will work with IR&A and the VPAA on complex cases and is made up of: the Director of Institutional Research and Assessment, the Vice President of Student Affairs, the Vice President of Human Resources, the Chief Information Officer or designee, and a designee of the Institutional Review Board.

Sanctions for policy violations: Failure to adhere to the policies relating to institutional surveys will result in a written notification to the data collector and the vice president who is responsible for their unit or department or the Dean of Students, as appropriate. Violators of this policy must receive clearance from their vice president or the Dean of Students to administer any future surveys for a determined period. Consistent violations may result in supervisory or other action. It is up to individuals to understand these policies. Depending on the violation, there may be IRB implications.

Procedure: Any individual or group wishing to conduct a broad survey of the CSS community should consider whether it could be construed as an institutional survey (see scope above). If yes, the applicant should submit answers to the following to ielse@css.edu:

1. Specific population receiving the survey
2. Description of the survey project - including the purpose and intended use of the results
3. Method of survey distribution (e.g., online or hard copy, via email, etc.)
4. Timeframe for administering the survey including beginning and end dates
5. Description of any planned incentive program for respondents
6. How the data will be used and the results communicated, including back to the CSS community
7. How the data will be stored
8. Current draft of the survey and all invitations or cover letters (this should include contact information if respondents have questions, notification that survey participation is voluntary, if data collected will *not* be anonymous).
9. Evidence of IRB approval (if necessary)

Institutional surveys require additional review beyond the IRB. Please plan your submission accordingly by allowing 2-3 weeks beyond the IRB review timeline.

If a recurring survey has been approved in an earlier year, submit only information about the proposed administrative dates. Surveys that have been approved in prior years which have been significantly changed, must be re-approved.

The assessment criteria for institutional surveys will include:

- Alignment with CSS' strategic planning priorities
- Survey design including timing, scope, and mode of delivery
- The extent to which other surveys or datasets supply (or could supply) the required data
- The extent of survey burden on target groups within the CSS community
- Survey impact and any previous surveys of its kind
- Can the proposed survey be combined with other plans surveys?
- Does the survey provide information useful for planning or improving services?
- What actions are taken to ensure the confidentiality of responses?

For questions, contact:

Dr. Iwalani Else, Director of Institutional Research and Assessment at ielse@css.edu or at 218-723-6583.