

Dominican University Survey Policy

Purpose:

The purpose of this policy is to maximize the benefits of administrative surveys on campus by:

- Avoiding the collection of duplicate information;
- Reducing possible survey fatigue by limiting the number and timing of surveys to any one specific group;
- Maximizing the participation rates for critical university administrative surveys;
- Encouraging the communication and sharing of survey results with the campus community.

Scope:

This policy applies to all administrative surveys which involve a broad sampling or census of a population at the university (including students, faculty, staff, applicants and alumni). Faculty-wide administrative surveys are covered by this policy; however, surveys involving small samples (for example, less than 150 students) are not covered by this policy. If there is any uncertainty as to whether or not the survey falls under this policy, the Office of Institutional Research should be contacted for guidance.

Exceptions to Policy:

This policy does not apply to:

- Surveys that involve small, specific sampling;
- individual faculty and student research (as long as it does not involve a broad sampling of one of the aforementioned populations);
- surveys that are part of assigned work of a course or degree requirements;
- survey instruments designed to evaluate specific programs or campus services by contacting program participants or service users at the conclusion of the program or service; and,
- teaching evaluation forms.

Procedure:

An individual or group wishing to conduct a broad administrative survey or having responsibility for managing an external survey, should consider whether or not it falls within this policy. If so, the individual or group should contact the Office of Institutional Research (OIR) prior to administering the survey.

The group/individual will be asked to identify:

- The purpose of the survey and who is managing it;
- data to be collected and from what population;
- sample size;
- method of survey administration;
- planned timelines;
- if it is a one-time survey or if it will be administered on a cycle (frequency); and,
- if IRB approval is required.

The Office of Institutional Research will discuss the survey with the individual/group considering criteria such as:

- Is there other data available that will allow the survey to be avoided?
- Can the data needs be combined with other surveys planned?
- What is the optimal timing to ensure it does not interfere with university surveys?

In addition to contacting OIR, notice must also be given to any other group identified in the table below:

| Audience | Office To Be Notified* |
|----------------------|--|
| All Audiences | Office of Institutional Research |
| Students | Provost |
| Faculty | Provost |
| Staff | Human Resources |
| Alumni | Alumni Relations |
| General Public | Office of Marketing and Communications |
| Prospective Students | Enrollment Management |

*Note: Any research intended to contribute to the body of intellectual knowledge and publication must be approved by the DU Institutional Review Board (IRB).

Guidelines:

For surveys proposed to be administered to more than 10% of the target population, the survey author should meet with the Director of Institutional Research to determine the most optimal timing for the survey within the framework of the university's survey cycle.

- All survey research for purposes of contributing to the body of intellectual knowledge and publication and/or public presentation must conform to Human Subjects guidelines. The researcher(s) should submit the project to the DU Institutional Review Board (IRB) for approval prior to contacting OIR.
- In general, the project must follow procedures to maintain confidentiality of survey respondents and to make clear to survey recipients that participation is voluntary.
- Larger surveys, defined as requiring samples of more than 20% of the target population, should be submitted for consideration at least 2-3 months prior to proposed administration to allow time for survey samples to be coordinated with other surveys. Such coordination will be implemented by selecting prospective respondents who have not yet been included in other surveys' samples, to the extent possible.

Decisions of the Director of Institutional Research may be appealed to the Provost and/or Associate Provost.

Institutional Review Board (IRB) Oversight

The Institutional Review Board (IRB) governs surveys associated with academic research. All research conducted on human subjects must seek Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval with the following exceptions:

- Data collection for internal department or other University administrative purposes (i.e. course evaluations and employee and student satisfaction surveys).
- Surveys issued or conducted by University personnel for the intent of improving services and programs of the University or for developing new services or programs for students, employees or alumni.
- Informational gathering interviews or surveys that focus on University processes, services or policies (i.e. quality improvement and quality assurance surveys) unless clear intent is for generalizable knowledge.
- University evaluations that are conducted under independent contract for an external agency for internal purposes only (i.e. personnel studies, customer satisfaction surveys, cost-benefit analyses, program enrollment, constituent demographics and outcome analyses).

Note: If in doubt, please view the [Institutional Review Board \(IRB's\) website](#).