

**University Survey Policy**

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## 1 Policy Statement

The proliferation of surveys to Pace University constituents raises concerns such as student privacy, protection of human subjects, and questionnaire fatigue from over-surveying the same groups or distributing multiple surveys at the same time, which may conflict with large, institutional surveys.

This policy describes a clear process and protocol for administering surveys to faculty, students, administrators and staff. The Office of Planning, Assessment and Institutional Research (OPAIR) is responsible for the administration of this policy.

## 2 Reason for Policy

The purpose of this policy is threefold: to protect the community members' privacy, to monitor survey frequency to avoid survey fatigue, and to ensure the safety of data collection and usage.

Pace University has adopted the policy and review process to manage the number of surveys that our students, faculty, and staff are asked to participate in result in actionable data used to advance the University's mission and priorities; and ensure that the projects are conducted in a manner that is consistent with survey best practices and regulatory requirements.

## 3 Who Needs to Know This Policy

All Deans, Associate Deans, Vice Presidents, administrative department heads, and staff.  
All academic department chairs.

The policy will apply whenever a department, college or school conducts a survey of students, faculty or staff.

This policy does not apply to questionnaires and similar limited surveys that are used to test the reaction to a course or a training session or for a similar limited purpose.

It does not apply to course assessments or learning outcomes assessments directed by schools/colleges, or surveys administered by students as coursework.

## 4 Definitions

University Surveys include any broad sampling or census of a population (students or employees) that involves direct requests to individuals for information. University Surveys also include any broad sampling of the external community regarding their

potential need for and/or use/assessment of University services. University Surveys may also include surveys managed by outside agencies but addressed to campus groups, and on-campus surveys that are parts of research projects. The category of University Surveys, as referred to in this policy, does not include surveys that are of small scale (less than 50 respondents) and focused intent such as, for example, surveys that are part of assigned work in a non-thesis course, focus groups, polls taken within a course, evaluations of an event by participants, evaluation of a service by a client at the point of service and statutory teaching evaluations.

## 5 Survey Process

### Survey Process

1. Consult with OPAIR
2. Complete Survey Request Form (Exhibit A) by June 30<sup>th</sup> for fall survey administrations and by September 30<sup>th</sup> for spring survey administrations
3. OPAIR Review. If approved, continue with steps 4 to 6 below.
4. Survey design finalized with OPAIR
5. Survey Administration
6. Survey Analysis

### Consult with OPAIR:

OPAIR has expertise in survey design and administration and will work with you to ensure the survey will meet University standards for approval. OPAIR can help determine what assessments meet your need and provide support for survey design, administration and analysis. OPAIR will work with you to understand if the survey is needed. It may be that the data you require is already available through existing institutional surveys such as NSSE or BCSSE; or has been collected recently through some other process or instrument by OPAIR or elsewhere in the University. It may also be that a survey is not the best way to answer your question. Another research method, such as focus groups, may be more useful in certain situations.

We will also consult with you on how the survey fits into the cycle of assessment for your program. You should ensure that your survey cycle allows sufficient time to analyze the results and develop and implement action plans. OPAIR can also advise if there is a nationally benchmarked survey which may be better suited to your purpose.

### Complete Survey Request Form

Submit the Survey Request Form to OPAIR at least two months in advance of the anticipated survey administration date. The Survey Request Form enables OPAIR to review the design, ensure that a survey is the most appropriate data collection tool, and that its administration does not conflict with other assessments.

### **OPAIR Review**

Survey requests will be approved based on the content and quality of the survey instrument, number of requests to survey the same population, and dates of survey administration. Survey approval is not guaranteed. OPAIR will review the request, and consult with you on the following:

1. The purpose of the survey.
2. Linkage of action plan to strategic priorities.
3. Survey design and appropriateness of target population.
4. Consideration of using a nationally benchmarked survey.
5. Timing of the survey administration
6. IRB approval (if required).
7. Similarity to other planned surveys.
8. Collection and storage of survey data.

Surveys will be approved based on relevance to strategic mission, departmental need to collect data and whether or not a survey is the best means of assessing the program, initiative or attitude of the population.

In addition to approval by OPAIR, additional approvals are required as follows:

- Prospective and admitted but not matriculated students must be approved by Enrollment Management
- Alumni and parents must be approved by Development and Alumni Relation
- Faculty must be approved by the Provost's Office
- Staff must be approved by Human Resources
- Human subjects research must be approved by the Pace University Institutional Review board prior to initiation

### **Survey Design**

OPAIR has the expertise to design or plan your survey. A key step is to clearly define the question to be answered by the survey results – what do you hope to learn? A survey is most effective when its purpose and connection to an intended action can be clearly stated. Overly-broad questions can be difficult to analyze and may not provide clear direction. OPAIR will provide an objective analysis of your survey instrument and can refer to an extensive inventory of surveys administered at Pace.

### **Survey Administration**

Several survey instruments are available to the Pace community. Each survey system has its own advantages and drawbacks. OPAIR will assist you in selecting the system best suited to your assessment and data analysis needs. Note that some instruments are better suited for more detailed analysis than others.

Pace has a campus-wide license with Qualtrics, a survey administrative/design system used to conduct survey research, evaluations, and other data collection activities.

Qualtrics is available for use by Pace faculty, staff and students.

The division of Student Affairs has a site license with Campus Labs/Baseline, a web survey product. Departments outside of Students Affairs may be able to use this resource in partnership with the Student Affairs department.

Survey Monkey is an online survey development cloud-based software as a service company that offers free and paid plans for users.

### **Survey Analysis**

After collecting the responses to a survey, it is necessary to analyze the results. Simple analyses can be done using Excel with Pivot Tables, but more advanced statistical analyses will require the use of a statistical software package such as SPSS. Part of the survey approval process is determining who will be doing the analysis. OPAIR has extensive experience in doing advanced statistical analyses for both internal and external surveys and will advise you on the most effective means of interpreting the data collected. If OPAIR will be doing the analysis, the timeline will be determined during the survey approval process.

### **Resources**

OPAIR has developed some [resources to guide the development and use of surveys](#).

### **Data Security**

Survey administrators must store data securely and use data only for the designated and intended purposes. Survey administrators must agree to adhere to Pace University policies for handling data. Data containing participant names, identifying information, email addresses, or other confidential information must be saved and stored on computers or drives that belong to Pace University. This data should be disposed of properly when the survey process is completed (see the “Record Retention and Destruction Policy” for more information). The data must not be stored on computers or servers outside of Pace University.

## **6 Procedures for Implementation**

This policy will be communicated to the Pace community through established channels and posted on the [OPAIR website](#).

## **7 Related Policies**

In addition to the requirements of this policy, any survey questionnaire that constitutes human subject research must be [reviewed and approved by the Institutional Review Board](#).

## 8 Contacts

OPAIR cannot assist in survey design, survey distribution, data collection, data analysis, or provide other survey support services unless the University Survey Policy is followed. Should you have questions or concerns, please email [OPAIR@pace.edu](mailto:OPAIR@pace.edu).

## 9 Exhibit A

Survey Request Form