

University Surveys

Procedures and Guidelines

Towson University's Policy 03-15.00, *Policy on University Surveys* (the "Policy") establishes a framework for administration of University Surveys to promote coordination of efforts and best practices associated with survey research. These Procedures and Guidelines (the "Procedures") designed to implement the Policy and detail the processes of administering a University Survey. These Procedures incorporate the definitions set forth in the Policy, and may be amended from time to time without the need to amend the Policy.

A. Survey Support

1. Proposals for assistance with university survey development, administration, and analysis will be reviewed by the University Survey Committee (the "Committee").
2. The Office of Technology Services ("OTS") will oversee and provide technical support for online survey software.
3. The Office of Institutional Research ("IR"), in collaboration with the OTS, will maintain a repository of recommended language to encourage standardization of survey items related to demographics, identity, academic classifications, inclusive language, and other frequently used items.
4. The Institutional Review Board ("IRB") in collaboration with IR will evaluate the survey proposals for the purposes of establishing if the proposal is considered "human subjects research" necessitating IRB approval.

B. University Survey Committee

Any person/unit wishing to administer a university-wide survey must first submit a University Survey Proposal and obtain Committee approval. The Committee shall be responsible for the following:

1. Reviewing proposals to ensure compliance with university mission and interests and the information is not readily available without conducting a survey; and
2. Coordinating administration of surveys to minimize overlap and duplication in content, sampling, and scheduling; and
3. Disseminating best practices and providing support services and/or training for university survey development, administration, and analysis; and
4. Evaluation and approval of University Survey requests by outside entities; and
5. Maintaining the University Survey calendar.

C. Before You Submit Your Proposal

Potential Survey Sponsors shall initiate discussions about possible University Surveys with IR as early in the process as possible to ensure compliance with applicable University policies and procedures.

Before submitting your University Survey Proposal, potential Survey Sponsors should first:

1. Determine the intended content of the University Survey, any communication strategy, and administration plan.
2. Coordinate with IR to make sure that the University Survey would not duplicate existing data.
3. Check the [University Survey Calendar](#) for proposed dates. University Survey Proposals should be received at least thirty (30) days prior to desired University Survey launch date, and University Survey dates should be selected to minimize overlap with scheduled University Surveys. In the event that the University Survey Proposal is approved, the University Survey will be added to the University Survey Calendar.
4. Refer to the Applicability section of the University Survey Policy to determine whether your survey meets any criteria for exemption.
5. Consult with the IRB to determine if IRB review and approval are warranted.

D. Proposal Process

To obtain approval to administer a University Survey, the Survey Sponsor must provide the Committee with the following information at least thirty (30) days prior to desired University Survey launch date. University Survey Proposals should be submitted using the [University Survey Proposal Form](#). Refer to the [Survey Strategy website](#) for additional information.

E. Committee Review Criteria

The Committee will receive the University Survey Proposal Form and will review considering the information outlined on the form in accordance with the following criteria:

1. Relevance to campus mission and/or strategic plan(s)
2. Minimal burden on campus constituents
3. Usefulness of data to inform university decisions
4. Efficient use of university resources
5. Clarity and functionality of survey and related communications
6. Value to the broader population of campus constituents
7. Inclusive language in alignment with university guidelines (consult the [Office of Inclusion and Institutional Equity](#) as needed)
8. Compliance with requirements of [IRB](#), applicable laws (including those which relate to personally identifiable information), and University policies and procedures, including those relating to data security, confidentiality, and accessibility

If needed, the Committee will offer recommendations for any revisions needed to bring the survey into alignment with these criteria prior to issuing approval.