

POLICY AND PROCEDURES ON SURVEY ADMINISTRATION UNC ESHELMAN SCHOOL OF PHARMACY

THE IMPORTANCE OF SURVEYS

A survey is a systematic method of collecting data from a population of interest. The purpose of a survey is to collect quantitative or qualitative information, usually through the use of a structured and standardized instrument. Surveys, when well designed, can provide meaningful information and insights to inform and guide future directions. At the UNC Eshelman School of Pharmacy, survey instruments are important to gather information from faculty, staff, students, and alumni to inform continuous quality improvement efforts and guide programmatic development.

RATIONALE FOR OVERSIGHT AND COORDINATION

Over the past few years there has been a significant increase in the number of surveys administered within the School. As new technologies, such as web-based survey software, make it easier to conduct surveys, this also increases the potential for duplicative efforts and over-surveying, which can erode response rates and validity and create unnecessary survey burden. As a School we must pay greater attention to a) the rationale for and design of surveys, b) the coordination of surveys throughout the School, and c) meaningful use of results to inform and guide programmatic improvement. Additionally, the School often disseminates surveys to our faculty and student body on behalf of external groups interested in surveying our faculty and students. While these requests are important to those who make them, it is the School's responsibility to minimize over-surveying and give careful thought to the importance of, need for, and timing of the external survey requests. Enhancing the oversight of surveys within the School would serve to improve the quality and timing of surveys and help the School get the most out of survey results.

POLICY AND PROCEDURES

Requests from External Institutions/Individuals to Distribute Surveys to Our Faculty, Staff, or Students

Faculty, staff, or students who receive requests from external institutions or individuals to distribute surveys to the School's faculty, staff, and students via our internal listservs must consult with the Office of Strategic Planning and Assessment (OSPA) prior to committing to the distribution of such requests. This allows the OSPA time to discuss the request with appropriate individuals and offices within the School and determine the relative importance and impact of distributing external surveys to our faculty, staff, and student body. The OSPA will then make a decision regarding whether to distribute the survey to our faculty, staff, or student body.

Faculty, Staff, and Students Interested in Conducting a Survey

Faculty, staff, and students at the UNC Eshelman School of Pharmacy interested in conducting a survey of faculty, staff, students, or alumni within the School are encouraged to consult with the OSPA prior to the development of a survey to determine whether data already exist that will meet your needs or whether similar efforts are ongoing or underway.

Once Ready to Move Forward with a Survey

- To begin the process, you must submit a brief online [Survey Request Form](#) to the OSPA (*the form is available on the OSPA website*). The online Survey Request Form will ask for information regarding purpose of the survey, intended population, timing of administration, and the survey questions.
Note: Surveys involving Educational Research must receive approval from the School's [Educational Research Review Committee \(ERRC\)](#) prior to submitting to the University Institutional Review Board (IRB). ERRC forms may be submitted [here](#). Once ERRC and IRB approval are obtained, please submit the [Survey Request Form](#).
- All surveys developed by faculty, staff, or students for completion by faculty, staff, or students must be submitted to the OSPA via the online Survey Request Form. The only exception is course evaluations, which are already coordinated centrally within the School.

Examples of survey requests include:

1. A Student Affairs survey regarding student or graduate professional and career development
2. A Business Office survey of faculty satisfaction with the Business Clusters
3. A School administered survey to preceptors regarding their needs as preceptors and satisfaction with the overall precepting experience
4. A student-initiated survey of alumni to gather alumni interest in participating in an advising and mentoring program
5. A student-initiated survey to gather information or solicit feedback from fellow students on a particular topic, whether as part of a course, student organization, or project requirement.
6. A faculty-initiated survey of graduate students to assess programmatic needs and satisfaction
7. A survey to assess feedback on a recently delivered program in the School (e.g., recruitment event, orientation, Family Day).

Once a Survey Request Form Has Been Submitted to the OSPA

- All survey requests will be reviewed and acted upon by the OSPA within 1 week of date of receipt.
- The OSPA will work closely with the individuals or offices directly associated with the particular survey request to gather more information, ensure a team-based approach to decision-making, and ensure that efforts are well thought out and coordinated. For surveys pertaining to professional or graduate students, the OSPA will consult with the Office of Curricular and Student Affairs when reviewing all survey request forms.
- The OSPA will take into consideration certain criteria and questions when reviewing survey requests and making recommendations. Following are examples of the criteria and questions that will be considered:
 - *Purpose of survey* (Why is the survey being conducted?)
 - *Importance and impact* (Does the survey provide useful information for academic or institutional planning? Does the survey overburden respondents?)
 - *Overlap with other surveys* (Do data already exist that will meet the needs of those interested in surveying a group? Are there ongoing efforts to collect similar data?)

- *Intended use of the data* (Who will have access to the information? Are plans in place to review the data and use it for programmatic improvement? Do you plan to disseminate findings publicly and/or publish findings?)
 - *Content and design of the survey questionnaire* (Is the survey well-designed? Is it of reasonable and appropriate length? Are the questions easily understood and interpreted?)
 - *Population of interest* (Who is the target population? Will the entire population be surveyed, or a sample? If the former, is a sample an option that should be considered to lessen the burden on faculty, staff, or students? Does the survey overburden the target population?)
 - *Timing* (When will the survey be administered? Does it overlap with other surveys of the same population? Is it conducted at a time during the academic year when survey recipients are likely to respond?)
 - *Resources* (What resources will be needed to conduct the survey? Will data other than contact information be required?)
 - *ERRC and IRB Approval or Exemption* (Is ERRC and/or IRB approval or exemption necessary?)
- After seeking input into the process from others, the OSPA will reach a decision regarding the survey request and will recommend that a survey:
 - Be administered as is (i.e., no revisions necessary)
 - Be reconsidered or revised accordingly to ensure it meets the above criteria
 - Have its timeline changed to prevent conflicts with other surveys that may be underway
 - Not be administered (with good reason provided)

Note: Where applicable, the OSPA will provide the survey requester with existing School data if it is felt that this data is necessary to meet the needs of the individual and is approved by the OSPA and the appropriate offices responsible for the data.

- All surveys will be developed and administered using Qualtrics Survey Software (<http://software.unc.edu/qualtrics/>), with survey results maintained in the School's OSPA Qualtrics account. Exceptions include:
 1. *Office of Curricular and Student Affairs*: Due to the number of surveys conducted in Student Affairs, this office will maintain its own Qualtrics account.
 2. *Educational Research*: The principal investigator for the educational research study is responsible for administration of the survey and maintenance of the data in accordance with the regulatory requirements of the IRB.
- In the event that the survey requestor is not satisfied with the decision made by the OSPA regarding the survey, the survey requestor can appeal the recommendation in writing to the Vice Dean of the School who will evaluate the merits of the process and respond accordingly.

Does the Administration of my Survey Require IRB approval or exemption?

- Faculty, staff, or students are required to submit an IRB application seeking approval or exemption if **any** of the following are true regarding the survey:
 - You will be collecting identifiable student data, such as student PID
 - You will be accessing student records outside normal practices

- You have an intent to analyze new or existing data for purposes of answering a question or disseminating findings
- You have an intent to disseminate results or findings from the survey, whether presenting at a meeting, publishing an abstract, or publishing a manuscript
- The UNC IRB does not allow researchers to decide for themselves whether or not their research meets the standards for exemption.

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Roles and Responsibilities Related to Survey Administration and Reporting

The following table outlines the roles and responsibilities of the OSPA and the survey requester(s) related to 1) survey set-up and administration and 2) data review, interpretation, and planning.

Table 1. Survey Set-up and Administration	
Office of Strategic Planning and Assessment (OSPA)	Survey Requester
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluate all survey requests and respond in a timely manner • Work closely with survey requester during survey development process • Serve as a reviewer of the survey instrument • Create surveys in Qualtrics • Populate the Qualtrics survey with the names and email addresses for all individuals to whom the survey is to be sent • Facilitate a test run of the survey prior to its launch • Distribute/launch all surveys and generate regular reminders for non-responders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consult with the OSPA to inquire about existing data • Develop the survey instrument • Submit online Survey Request Form • Work closely with the OSPA during the survey development process • Submit to the OSPA a list of names and email addresses for all individuals to whom the survey is to be sent • Review and test survey created in OSPA Qualtrics account prior to its launch
Table 2. Review of Survey Results, Interpretation of Data, and Planning	
Office of Strategic Planning and Assessment (OSPA)	Survey Requester
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain confidentiality of the data • Compile survey results (raw data, automated analyses, and reports) • Distribute survey results to survey requester 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interpret survey results and identify areas warranting further discussion and action • Propose and implement a plan to address areas warranting further discussion and action • Document the actions taken in response to survey data