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Policy Title: Survey Policy and Procedures

Policy Type: Academic Policy

Responsible Office: Office of Institutional Effectiveness and Research

Governing Body: Senior Leadership Team

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Effective Date: January 12, 2015

Survey Policy and Procedures*

Overview

For the purpose of this policy, a survey is defined as a gathering of information through questionnaires, interviews, etc., either through internet communication or paper, to make inferences about a population. The Office of Institutional Effectiveness and Research (IER) will serve as Antioch College's survey clearinghouse. All surveys intended for distribution to any members or prospective members of the Antioch College community (e.g. applicants, students, faculty, staff, board members, and alumni) must be approved by IER using the procedures described herein.

IER approval is **not** required for:

- a) evaluation of an event by participants
- b) teaching evaluation forms, or
- c) forms used to collect information for administrative purposes (e.g. scheduling). Surveys of campus opinion on administrative process or procedures **DO** require IER approval.

Approval by IER to administer a survey is not a substitute for a review by the Institutional Review Board (IRB). If a survey research project is subject to review by the IRB, approval is required before it can be administered within the college.

Surveys may be administered using paper and pencil, phone, or electronic format. Regardless of the method used, all surveys must be approved by IER before the survey can be administered except those specifically exempted by this policy.

Acceptance of authorization to administer a 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 recipient is authorized to receive the data. In addition, a person who receives email or traditional mail addresses of individuals in schools or offices will be responsible for that information and must agree to adhere to Antioch College policies for handling data.

*This policy was adapted from:

Puget Sound Survey Policy and Procedures. (2010, February). Retrieved from

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Procedures

THE SUBMISSION PROCESS

Individuals and offices wishing to conduct a survey that is covered by the survey policy must complete and submit the survey application, **which can be found on the IER website--** <http://www.antiochcollege.org/about/office-institutional-effectiveness-and-research>. Information required for the application includes but is not limited to:

- Description of the survey project, including the purpose and intended use of results;
- Specific population receiving the survey;
- Method of survey distribution (e.g. online or hard copy, via email, in class, at event, etc.);
- Time frame for administering the survey, including beginning and end dates;
- Evidence of IRB approval (if necessary);
- Description of any planned incentive program for respondents; and
- Current draft of the survey and all invitation and cover letters.

If a recurring survey has been approved in an earlier year, it will be necessary only to submit information about the proposed administration dates. Surveys that had been approved in prior years, but which have been significantly changed, must be re-approved. If a survey is approved by the IRB, IER will accept the IRB protocol in lieu of the survey application. These guidelines apply to all data collectors on campus, including students, faculty, and staff.

The Office of Institutional Effectiveness and Research will review the survey application and provide a response to the applicant within five business days of the date the proposal was received. The Office of Institutional Research will review the application based on the following questions:

- Is the purpose of the survey clear and is it explained to the perspective participants?
- Is the survey well-designed and of an appropriate length? Does it follow sound survey methods and practices? Are the questions easily understood and interpreted?
- What is the target population? Will the entire population or a sample be surveyed?
- Are the rights of perspective participants clearly explained?
- What actions are being taken to ensure the confidentiality of the responses (if appropriate)?
- When will the survey be conducted? What is the optimal timing to ensure it does not compete with other college surveys and activities?
- How will the results be used?
- Has the Institutional Review Board approved the project (if necessary)?

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- Can the proposed survey be combined with other planned surveys?
- Are there other data available that will allow the survey to be avoided?

Staff in IER will provide feedback to the applicant, either approval of the survey project as is or feedback for revision of the survey to meet approval criteria. If you have any questions about the survey policy, please contact the Director of IER, Hannah Spurrison (email: hspurrison@antiochcollege.org ; Phone: 937-319-0128).

Sanctions for Policy Violations

Failure to adhere to the policies and guidelines relating to gaining approval for surveys and the use of data will result in a written notification from IER to the data collector and their supervisor. Additional violations will be processed by the Office of Academic Affairs (OAA). If the data collector is a student, they will receive notification from IER. Additional violations will be processed by OAA. Consistent violations may result in supervisory action. Violations of this policy and/or the Data Integrity Policy could result in a warning letter in your file and have personnel implications depending on the level of offense and prior personnel concerns. It is up to individuals to understand these policies. If you have doubts or questions, you are advised to contact the office of IER. The office of IER also regularly provides basic demographic data through the Common Data Set on the office's website.

Guidelines for Conducting a Survey at Antioch College

All surveys conducted at Antioch College should adhere to the following guidelines.

The Rights of Respondents

- The survey consent form must include "contact information" (name, email address, telephone number) should the respondents have any questions about the content of the form or about the use and/or publication of survey results. This information should also be clearly presented on the survey.
- All participants must be notified that their participation is voluntary.
- Respondents must be notified in advance if data collected will not be anonymous.
- Respondents must be protected from risk of unreasonable harm, including any risks regarding confidentiality or privacy. Any questions about confidentiality and/or anonymity should be directed to IER.
- If your survey or data analysis will include academic or contact information for Antioch College students, you may be subject to Federal Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) regulations. Non-public student data can be used without the student's consent by college employees for "legitimate educational" purposes provided the data are not reported in such a way that individual students can be identified. All other users must receive written consent from the students to access non-public student data. To learn more about FERPA, contact the Registrar's Office (Phone: 937.319.6139 ext. 3210).

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- Surveys that request individual health information may be subject to HIPAA (Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act). For more information, contact Human Resources (Phone: 937-319-6234).
- A summary should be made available on request to persons who completed the survey.
- Respondents should be informed if the data or survey results will be published or distributed, including whether individual responses will appear in the published results.
- In some circumstances, data may be confidential and may not be made available publicly or to the respondents. Any such limitation should be made clear to respondents at the time the survey is conducted, as well as within the report itself. When restrictions apply, publication and/or presentation of survey results must honor the stated restrictions.
- If subjects are promised anonymity and a login is required to access the survey the researcher must ensure that login information will not be collected and stored in a way that it can be connected to survey results.

Sponsorship

- All surveys should clearly identify the group or person who is conducting the survey.
- Information from surveys conducted by administrative offices, faculty committees, and other college committees are the property of Antioch College. The researcher, department, unit, or committee responsible for conducting the survey must be consulted prior to the release and distribution of the survey's findings.

Confidentiality

- Personally identifiable information should be collected only as required in relation to the expressly stated purpose of research or a project.
- The use of prizes or other incentives to encourage participation typically requires the collection of personal information from the respondents (i.e., name or email address). If the respondents have been promised anonymity, collection of this information may appear to be a violation of the promise. Two methods are typically used to circumvent this apparent conflict:
 - Respondents can be assured that their participation and responses will be confidential, but not anonymous. In this sense, 'confidentiality' means that none of the information collected can be associated with a specific individual.
 - A double-blind procedure is developed in which a second party ensures that the analyst does not see any personally-identifiable information.
 - *See Incentives section of this policy for additional important information regarding the use of prizes or other incentives.*

Data Security

The person conducting a survey is responsible for managing and releasing the data collected. Raw data from surveys are typically not shared with people outside of Antioch College except under special circumstances (e.g. a data sharing consortium). If survey data are shared, (a) its'

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use should conform to Antioch College's Data Integrity Policy, (b) the data should not contain any information that will identify a respondent, and (c) its' release must be approved by IER.

- To ensure the security and privacy of collected data, all surveys must be administered through the College's official survey account (currently SurveyMonkey). IER will share raw survey data with the investigator from the survey account.
- Antioch College does not permit external, third-party, researchers to conduct survey research on the campus population unless the research serves the educational goals of the College and/or the College initiates research through a third-party researcher (e.g., national, institutional surveys).

Institutional Review Board Review

You and the college may incur legal liability if the treatment of survey recipients is unethical, if data resulting from your survey are misused, or if any part of the survey violates certain protected rights of individuals. Survey researchers should be aware of their responsibilities and make every effort to protect the rights of survey recipients.

IRB approval is required if the findings from the survey are to be used for any purposes other than data collection about campus programs, practices, curricula, or outcomes for use solely by the college. Students and faculty using surveys to conduct academic research should contact the IRB. The review processes conducted by the Institutional Review Board (IRB) and the review processes conducted by the Office of Institutional Effectiveness and Research (IER) are independent and are summarized below.

Antioch College's Survey Review Process

The results of academic research are often reported through outside publications or presented in forums that include individuals outside of the college. If you intend to publically present or publish your results (including via the web), you must submit an application to IRB and receive IRB approval prior to collecting your data.

If a survey research project does not qualify as exempt under IRB standards, the proposal must proceed through the formal IRB approval process and will require additional time for review. If you are unsure whether or not your survey requires an IRB review, contact the IRB (Email: irb@antiochcollege.org) IER may also request that a researcher submit a survey for review by the IRB before it is administered. Once the IRB approves the administration of a campus survey, IER will accept the IRB protocol in lieu of the college's survey application.

Use of Email for Administering Surveys

Email is a convenient and effective way to contact and communicate with potential research subjects; however, email is a fundamentally insecure medium. Email messages are typically

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transmitted to a number of different computers before reaching their final destination. At each intermediary computer, backups can create additional copies of the original message. Thus, messages may reside on one or more servers for extended periods, during which time they may be read, subpoenaed, etc. Theoretically, it is possible for subjects to return surveys through anonymous re-mailers, but interception and duplication remain possible during the initial transmission. It is possible to conduct secure email surveys with encryption technology, but this is rarely used in actual practice. In short, subjects cannot be assured of the confidentiality of their data in email surveys. Email may be safely used as a vehicle only to contact potential subjects, who may then be given the option to (a) print and return an anonymous survey via campus or surface mail, or (b) go to a Web link to complete an online survey. **The use of mass e-mailing lists to promote or distribute a survey to Antioch College faculty, staff, or students is limited to official surveys approved by IER. .**

Survey Publicity

The survey requestor is responsible for initiating all publicity for their survey. Surveys can be publicized through media such as email, message boards, and posters. Notices and reminders by members of the staff (*e.g.*, residence advisors) and faculty (*e.g.*, department chairs) can also be effective.

Incentives

Incentives to participate in surveys may be used, as long as the following guidelines are followed. If the cost or fair value of a survey incentive is greater than \$25, the value of a survey incentive may be taxable to the recipient. The survey requestor needs to provide the tax reporting information to the College Finance office within one week of issuing the survey incentive so that Antioch College can comply with tax reporting requirements.

The policy also states that incentives may be offered or given only to student survey participants and not to faculty or staff members. If there is a compelling reason to offer a survey incentive to faculty and/or staff survey participants, it is imperative that the survey requestor first consult with the Director of Human Resources before the survey incentive is offered. This will help ensure that the survey incentive does not create additional compensation and/or tax reporting requirements for the College. If you have questions about the use of incentives, contact the director of IER, Hannah Spurrison (email: hspurrison@antiochcollege.org ; Phone: 937-319-0128).

Assistance with Survey Development, Administration and Reporting

IER will consider requests for assistance with the development, deployment and analysis of surveys conducted by academic departments, committees and task forces, and administrative units as time permits. Assistance with external projects (*e.g.*, grant-related projects) conducted by

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Antioch College faculty and staff may also be considered, but these will have a lower priority. IER will deny a request for assistance if office resources are not available.

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