

Policy Name:	Survey Policy
Originating/Responsible Department:	Office of Institutional Research and Planning
Approval Authority:	Vice-Presidents' Academic and Research Committee
Date of Original Policy:	October 2005
Last Updated:	April 2017
Mandatory Revision Date:	April 2022
Contact:	Senior Analyst, Office of Institutional Research and Planning

Introduction:

Apart from the academic research conducted by Carleton University's faculty, Carleton participates in a number of surveys used to gather data from and about Carleton's applicants, students, alumni, faculty, staff, and community. The increasing requirement – internally and externally – for understanding stakeholder experiences, and for measuring outcomes, means a continuing need for such surveys. Given the high profile that a number of consortium surveys have, it is essential that their results be reliable and meaningful. Survey proliferation raises the concern that their effectiveness will be seriously reduced if the target populations are faced with too many requests. This policy is intended to coordinate University Surveys (see Scope below for definition), in order to maximize their benefits.

Policy:

The coordination of University Surveys is the responsibility of the University Survey Committee.

The Committee includes the following individuals (or their designates):

- Assistant Vice-President, Institutional Research and Planning (Chair)
- Associate Vice-President (Academic)
- Vice-President (Students and Enrolment) and University Registrar
- Director of University Communications
- A representative of the Vice-President (Research and International)
- A member of the Office of Institutional Research and Planning (Secretary)

The mandate of this Committee is to:

1. Recommend policy and process improvements in the area of University Surveys
2. Receive and consider applications for permission to conduct such Surveys
3. Refer University Survey applications as required to the Research Ethics Committee (www.carleton.ca/researchethics) and/or the University Secretariat
4. Maintain an account of the level of surveying imposed on the different constituencies on campus
5. Assess the effectiveness of approved Surveys once completed
6. Report annually to the Academic and Research Committee on Survey activity

Prior to conducting a survey, members of the university community must consider whether their survey falls within the definition of a University Survey, in which case, prior approval of the University Survey Committee must be received.

Purpose:

The objective of this policy is to maximize the benefits from surveys on campus or about Carleton. This will be done by:

- Promoting good survey methodology and design
- Encouraging the communication of survey results with the Carleton community
- Avoiding the collection of duplicate information
- Reducing possible survey fatigue by limiting the number and timing of surveys administered to any one specific group

Scope:

University Surveys include any broad sampling or census of a population at Carleton University (plus applicants or alumni) that involves direct [\[1\]](#) 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 Carleton services. University Surveys may be addressed to any part of the university community and may address topics including academic, research, personnel, management and environmental issues. Surveys related to academic research are subject to this policy. However, they are generally not disseminated through direct requests via administrative channels by the university (e.g. newsletters and direct mailings from the university). The University Survey Committee may provide advice on alternate methods of distribution. 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 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, statutory teaching evaluations, and surveys by a labour union of its own members.

Grand-Parented Surveys:

The following University Surveys are considered to be approved:

- Canadian University Survey Consortium (CUSC)
- National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE)
- Canadian Graduate and Professional Student Survey (CGPSS)
- Ministry Graduate Placement Surveys
- Statistics Canada's National Graduate Survey
- Carleton Customer Satisfaction Survey (Student and Employee versions)
- Undergraduate Program Review Surveys
- Carleton University's Employment Equity Census
- LibQUAL (library survey)

If you are unsure whether your survey falls under the scope of University Surveys, as referred to in this policy, please contact the Office of Institutional Research and Planning for clarification (contact info below).

Procedure:

An individual or group wishing to conduct a broad survey, or having responsibility for managing all or part of an external survey, should consider whether it could be construed as a University Survey (see Scope above). If yes, an application should be made to the Survey Committee for permission to proceed. The application (see form below) will identify:

1. The source and strategic or research context of the survey
2. The issues to be addressed or data to be collected
3. The population to be addressed
4. The approach to be used
5. How the data will be used and results communicated
6. How the data will be stored

The following application form needs to be completed for University Surveys. To do so, click on the following link, and then save the MS word document to your computer. It can be filled out and returned electronically. Further instructions are on the application form.

<http://oirp.carleton.ca/surveys/application.doc>

To avoid duplication of effort by those also submitting a research survey to the Research Ethics Committee, the application form may simply refer where necessary to the documentation prepared for Research Ethics.

The assessment criteria for University Surveys will include:

1. Alignment with Carleton's strategic plan and priorities
2. Design of the survey including timing, scope, and mode of delivery
3. Extent to which other surveys supply (or could supply) the required data
4. Extent of survey burden on target groups within the university
5. Government requirements, including FIPPA
6. Impact of survey and any previous surveys of this kind

Contact:

Senior Analyst, Office of Institutional Research and Planning. 520-2600 ext 2206, or email tyler_hall@carleton.ca

[1] Mail, phone, E-mail, person-to-person, University Social Media Accounts, and/or Newsletters