

**The Higher Education Research Institute at UCLA  
and the Cooperative Institutional Research Program**



*Invite you to participate in the*

# **College Senior Survey (CSS) 2008–2009**

*The CSS has been selected by the National Association of State Universities and Land-Grant Colleges (NASULGC) and the American Association of State Colleges and Universities (AASCU) as a component of their Voluntary System of Accountability (VSA).*

## Program Overview

Developed by the Higher Education Research Institute (HERI), the College Senior Survey (CSS) is administered through the Cooperative Institutional Research Program (CIRP), which has conducted national surveys of college students and faculty since 1966. Although the CSS can be used as a stand-alone instrument, when used in conjunction with the CIRP Freshman Survey or the Your First College Year (YFCY) Survey, the CSS generates valuable longitudinal data on students' cognitive and affective growth during college. The CSS is used by researchers and practitioners to study the impact of service-learning, leadership development, and student-faculty interactions, as well as to assess a wide variety of instructional practices.

## The Survey Instrument

Administered to seniors as an “exit” survey, the CSS focuses on a broad range of college outcomes and post-college goals and plans including:

- academic achievement and engagement
- cognitive and affective development
- student values, attitudes, and goals
- satisfaction with the college experience
- degree aspirations and career plans
- post-college plans

The CSS follows up many items on the CIRP Freshman Survey and the YFCY Survey. The CSS also includes space for up to 20 institution-specific questions.

## Administration Options

The CSS is conducted from November–June to facilitate surveying both December and June graduates, and is offered as both a paper and a web survey. Our new web portal ([www.cirpsurveys.org](http://www.cirpsurveys.org)) provides greater flexibility and ease of use when managing your survey administration.

**The Paper Survey**—can be administered in the classroom, a group setting, or as a mail-out survey. The most successful administration of the CSS is in large group settings, such as a graduation rehearsal. You select the delivery date and the number of questionnaires needed. Your paper survey data is available in just **3 weeks** after your paper questionnaires arrive for scanning.

**The Web Survey**—can be administered either with your campus managing the email notification process, or for ease of use, you can elect to have HERI manage the email notifications to students. A web survey can be more convenient for both you and your students. Our new web portal allows you maximum flexibility in setting email notification and reminder dates, customized “welcome” and “thank you” pages, customized email notifications, and input of additional questions. Throughout the administration, you can obtain updates on your response rate. Your survey data is available **the day after** a student completes the questionnaire.

**The Paper & Web Survey Combination**—enables your institution to enhance your response rate by using both methodologies for maximum exposure. Students may complete either version.

## How Colleges Use the CSS

- ✔ To collect information on student involvement
- ✔ To assess students' academic engagement
- ✔ To measure retention
- ✔ To evaluate student satisfaction
- ✔ To understand student values, attitudes, and goals
- ✔ To assess post-college plans and aspirations
- ✔ To study specific campus issues with local questions

## Participation Fees

Basic costs include an institutional participation fee of \$675, plus processing charges of:

- \$2.50 per returned questionnaire (first 500)
- \$2.00 per returned questionnaire (501–1,000)
- \$1.50 per returned questionnaire (1,001 or more)

## CSS Features

### *Online Registration via the CIRP Web Portal*

- ✔ Fast, convenient, and secure

### *Data and Deliverables*

- ✔ Receive a final data file of your processed questionnaires
- ✔ Receive a campus profile and a longitudinal report in MS Excel format

### *Web Survey Features*

- ✔ HERI can send your email notifications to your students
- ✔ Customizable Email notifications
- ✔ Customizable “Welcome” and “Thank You” Screen
- ✔ Upload your own CSS “Local” Questions (up to 20)

## Data and Reports

Improved data delivery! Your paper survey data will be available **3 weeks** after your completed questionnaires are returned for processing.

Web survey data is available on an ongoing basis, processed overnight for next-day use.

You can download the data directly from the CIRP Web Portal, or use our optional online data analysis package. The online data analysis package allows you to run frequencies, means, crosstabs, and correlations by just pointing and clicking!

HERI can prepare an executive summary of your institutional results in PowerPoint, for a low additional fee of \$25.

HERI's traditional CSS reports and longitudinal data files are distributed in late summer. Institutions will receive:

**CSS Campus Profile**—The results for all students are presented broken out by gender. Also, institutions will receive comparative data for schools of similar type.

**CSS Follow-up Report**—Students' CSS responses are compared to their earlier responses on the CIRP Freshman Survey (and YFCY, if applicable).

## Special Data Services

**Data Merges**—HERI can merge CSS data with other institutional data (e.g., registrar's data or student health data).

**Special “Group Code” Reports**—Compare up to 190 subsets of students.

**Peer Group Reports**—Compare your institution's data to those of five or more institutions.

**For more information and CSS Registration, please visit:**  
[www.heri.ucla.edu/css](http://www.heri.ucla.edu/css)

**The CSS offers valuable feedback on your students' academic and campus life experiences—information that can be used for student assessment activities, accreditation and self-study reports, campus planning, and policy analysis.**

HERI maintains extensive databases of all surveys: the CIRP Freshman Survey, Your First College Year (YFCY), the College Senior Survey (CSS), and the Faculty Survey. HERI provides a number of reports and special services to permit you to view your survey results in different ways, or to develop special analyses.

## **The Higher Education Research Institute (HERI)**

*Director: Sylvia Hurtado, Ph.D.*

The Institute serves as an interdisciplinary center for research, evaluation, information, policy studies, and research training in postsecondary education, leadership development, faculty performance, federal and state policy, and educational equity. HERI is housed in the Graduate School of Education & Information Studies at the University of California, Los Angeles. Visiting scholars, faculty, and graduate students have made use of HERI and the research resources since its affiliation with UCLA in 1973.

## **The Cooperative Institutional Research Program (CIRP)**

*Director: John H. Pryor, M.A.*

*Assistant Director: Laura C. Romero, Ph.D.*

*Assistant Director for Research: Linda DeAngelo, Ph.D.*

CIRP is a national longitudinal study of the American higher education system. Established in 1966, the CIRP is now the nation's largest and oldest empirical study of higher education, involving data on some 1,900 institutions and over 13 million students. It is regarded as the most comprehensive source of information on college students.



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