



COOPERATIVE INSTITUTIONAL RESEARCH PROGRAM
at the HIGHER EDUCATION RESEARCH INSTITUTE AT UCLA

Using Additional Questions with the DLE Survey

Adding Additional Questions to the Survey

Campuses have the option of adding up to 20 additional multiple choice questions and up to 5 open-ended questions of specific local interest at the end of their questionnaires. Information relevant to both types of additional questions is presented first, followed by specific information for each type of question. You may NOT add Additional Questions that ask for personally identifying information (such as name, address, student ID). Responses to any such questions will be stripped from your final data file in compliance with our Confidentiality and Privacy guidelines.

We urge you to “pilot test” your additional questions with current students. Many campuses find that students often interpret questions differently than the institution intended.

Although your campus is responsible for developing the local additional questions, CIRP staff is available to review and comment on any of these materials. We would also appreciate receiving a courtesy copy of your additional questions. Please send them directly to heri@ucla.edu.

In addition to drafting, pilot testing, and incorporating your additional questions into the administration of the DLE Survey, it is also important to consult with your local Institutional Review Board (IRB). Your campus may require you to submit any additional items for their review and approval. If your campus believes an additional question to be of a sensitive nature, your local IRB should determine if any additional steps, such as obtaining an NIH Certificate of Confidentiality (<http://grants.nih.gov/grants/policy/coc/>) are necessary. You must also submit that question to CIRP for our consideration one month before the DLE Survey administration opens.

“Sensitive information,” according to the National Institutes of Health, includes (but is not limited to):

information related to sexual attitudes/preferences/practices; information relating to the use of alcohol, drugs or other addictive products; information pertaining to illegal conduct; information that, if released, might be damaging to an individual's financial standing, employability, or reputation within the community or might lead to social stigmatization or discrimination; information pertaining to an individual's psychological well-being or mental health.

Obligation to Provide Referrals

If your additional questions ask respondents to provide “sensitive information” such as drug use, binge drinking, eating disorders, sexual behavior, and/or gambling, you must also provide information about referrals to mental health care programs and counselors. For example, if you were to ask about binge drinking, you should also include information about who to contact on or near your campus to address a substance abuse problem, providing an address and phone number. You will need to provide an addendum to the Survey Information Sheet to include this information on the “Welcome” page. This addendum to describe the provision of referrals to mental health care programs and counselors must be reviewed and approved by the UCLA IRB.

Again, CIRP strongly encourages that you consider the appropriateness of such additional questions and recommends against asking about these issues with this survey instrument. CIRP also suggests that you confer with your campus health officials before including sensitive questions and for any necessary referral information.



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If you have questions about potentially “sensitive” items that you may be intending to ask as part of your set of additional questions, or would like more information about the process for obtaining approval to include these items, please contact Dr. Kevin Eagan, CIRP Director, at 310.825.1925 or heri@ucla.edu.

Closed-Ended Questions

Closed-ended questions will display on a separate page after the last questions on the DLE Survey. Each question permits a maximum of five response options (A through E). *Students may mark only one response option.* Fewer than five response options may be used for any of the questions.

Responses to closed-ended questions will be included in your data file. Because the text of your additional questions and response options cannot be included in your data file or institutional profile report, we strongly suggest retaining a copy of the questions with your DLE Survey information.

Open-Ended Questions

Open-ended questions will display on a separate page, after any additional closed-ended questions you may offer. They cannot be mixed in with the closed-ended questions. You have the option of using a text box (for one word answers) or a text area for longer answers.

Because the text of your additional questions cannot be included in your response file, we strongly suggest retaining a copy of the questions with your DLE Survey information.