



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

## **CIRP FRESHMAN SURVEY 2013 Administration Guidelines**

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**Please contact the Higher Education Research Institute at UCLA at  
310.825.7079 or [heri@ucla.edu](mailto:heri@ucla.edu) with any questions**

## 2013 Freshman Survey Administration Guidelines

The Cooperative Institutional Research Program (CIRP) Freshman Survey involves active participation from both CIRP staff and you, our campus partners, throughout the administration cycle. This document provides important information necessary to participate in the 2013 CIRP Freshman Survey, including registering and placing your order, customizing your survey, survey administration procedures and data and reporting information. Procedures and relevant processes are detailed in the general order in which decisions or actions are made. If you have questions about your specific survey administration, please contact us at [heri@ucla.edu](mailto:heri@ucla.edu) or 310.825.7079.

### Who Should Participate in the CIRP Freshman Survey?

The CIRP Freshman Survey is designed to be administered to all entering students regardless of their enrollment status during the orientation or registration period. Transfer and part-time students will be separated during survey processing. The questionnaire should be completed by your entering students before the start of the academic year. If this is not possible, they should be completed before the end of the first full week of classes.

### Important Dates to Remember

- Register to participate in the CIRP Freshman Survey starting **February 1, 2013**
- The first day the survey can be administered is **March 15, 2013**
- Survey administration must be completed and surveys received at processing center by **October 8, 2013**
- Preliminary data is updated nightly beginning 24 hours after the first survey response (web surveys), and 3 weeks after your surveys arrive at our processing center (paper surveys)
- Administrative Report Form (ARF) emailed to institutions, (**ongoing**)
- Comparison group selection, **November, 2013**
- Institutional Profile and final data file available for download from [www.cirpsurveys.org](http://www.cirpsurveys.org), **December, 2013**
- *The American Freshman* delivered, **January 2014**

For a more detailed timeline approximating the general activities in the CIRP Freshman Survey cycle, please see [Administering the CIRP Freshman Survey](#).

## Registering and Placing Your Order

### Registering for the Survey

The first step in participating in the CIRP Freshman Survey is to register. Registering for the survey indicates your intent to participate in the survey. Once you have registered, the next step is to place your order for the survey. You will register and place your order through our secure website at [www.cirpsurveys.org](http://www.cirpsurveys.org). You will use this secure site to:

- Register for surveys
- Place, customize, and monitor your survey order
- Receive your data and reports

The Higher Education Research Institute (HERI) and Data Recognition Corporation (DRC), HERI's outside survey vendor, will provide all of the necessary resources for the 2013 administration of the CIRP Freshman Survey. Copies of materials, including these administration guidelines, are available on the CIRP Web Portal, under "Guides and Forms."

In order to complete your registration, you will be asked to supply some basic information about the primary contact for the surveys (name, address, phone, email, etc.) and a billing contact. The primary contact serves as the liaison between your campus and CIRP and receives all information and communication from us regarding the survey administration, data, and results. Once you have registered, the primary contact will receive a confirmation email from us; you may then proceed to placing your order.

### Placing Your Order

Once you have registered to participate, the next step is providing some basic information about your order. In order to place your order, you will log into the web portal, and after supplying your password, you will be asked to provide the following information: what type of administration (paper survey, web survey, combination of both web and paper); whether or not you would like to ask additional supplemental questions and if so, if you would like HERI to administer the questions or if you will administer them yourself; whether or not you will customize the welcome and thank you pages (web surveys only); whether or not you intend to use group codes, the number of surveys you wish to order and the date of the surveys, and an optional survey close date.

More detailed information about customization options for the survey appears below:

### *Customizing Your Survey Administration*

The CIRP Freshman Survey administration is designed to be flexible and allows institutions to design an administration that maximizes value for their individual campuses. Though many of the customization options are not mandatory, institutions find that taking advantage of some or all of these options greatly increases the utility of the results. Actions and decisions about

customizing the survey are best made well in advance in order to allow for a smooth administration of your survey.

### 1. Invitation and Reminders

One of the most important ways the CIRP Freshman Survey can be customized for all participating institutions is in the correspondence the students receive inviting (or reminding) them to participate. Although CIRP can manage various aspects of this process (see below), the intent is for students to understand that their college or university is soliciting their feedback. CIRP provides [templates for invitation and reminder communications](#). Campuses should customize the invitation and reminder messages sent to students in order to maintain a tone that is consistent with campus culture. Campuses can also customize all messages so that they come from institution-designated signatories. Using an institutional logo for the web survey also reinforces the idea that individual colleges and universities administer the CIRP Freshman Survey.

### 2. Group Codes

Group codes are breakout groups that permit you to compare specific subgroups of your first-year student sample. These breakout groups could be used to identify students in different colleges, majors, residence halls, or academic programs on your campus. Group codes allow you to identify up to 190 unique subgroups of students. For more information on adding group codes to the survey, please see [Using Group Codes](#).

### 3. Adding Additional Questions to the Survey

At the end of the questionnaire, campuses have the option of adding up to 20 additional multiple-choice questions of specific local interest. If you choose to utilize this option, you will want to set aside sufficient time to draft, pilot test, and incorporate your additional questions into the administration of the CIRP Freshman Survey. Additionally, it is important to consult with your local IRB. Your campus may require you to submit these additional items for their review and approval. Additionally, if your campus believes an additional question to be of a sensitive nature, you must submit that question to HERI for our consideration one month before administration. For more information, please see [Information for Campuses Using Additional Questions](#).

### ***Additional Web Survey Customization***

#### 4. Anti-Spam Procedures

To ensure delivery of your emails to your students, you will want to instruct your institution's Information Technology department to add the email address provided below to their approved senders list. This should allow emails coming from HERI's email distribution service to pass through the bulk or junk mail screening processes. Failure to do this may result in email being routed directly to bulk or junk email folders without ever reaching the

intended survey respondents, and consequently affecting your survey response rate. For the CIRP Freshman Survey, email will come from:

[CIRPFreshmanSurvey@DataRecognitionCorp.com](mailto:CIRPFreshmanSurvey@DataRecognitionCorp.com)

DNS Name: outgoing.datarecognitioncorp.com

IP Address: 207.109.22.134

#### 5. Email “Spoofing”

Email notifications will come from [CIRPFreshmanSurvey@DataRecognitionCorp.com](mailto:CIRPFreshmanSurvey@DataRecognitionCorp.com) unless you elect to provide an alternative “from” email address and email display name. This allows you to customize the invitation email to your participants, making the notification emails seem to come from an email address at your own institution (e.g., President, Dean, Director of Institutional Research). Emails can also be personalized with the recipient’s name.

#### 6. Customizing the “Welcome” and “Thank You” Pages

Material of your own, including additional text and your school logo, can be added to the screens at the beginning and end of the survey.

#### 7. Displaying Your School Name

Your school name will appear at the top of the screen for the web questionnaire as a joint sponsor of the survey. It will look like this (your name will obviously replace “Sample University”):

Sponsored by the Higher Education Research Institute and Sample University

The institution name will, by default, be the name that shows in our registration system. If you would like to alter this name (e.g., “Sample U”) then please check “Change Your School’s Display Name for the Web Survey” on the “Place an Order” page in the CIRP Web Portal.

#### 8. Pre-Populate Student ID

Those institutions opting to have HERI manage email communications provide HERI with the email addresses and names (first name, last name) of all students to be surveyed through the web portal. Institutions may elect to include student IDs as well. If student ID is included, it becomes a permanent part of the data file. The specifications for this file are available on the CIRP web portal. If you have more than one email address for a student, you may send an identical email identification notification to the second email address, potentially increasing your response rate (note that a student responding to both email notifications will still only be responding once as the login codes will be identical).

Please note that provision of student IDs is compliant with FERPA regulations regarding how educational institutions may share student data ([FERPA 34CFR99.31\(a\)6\(i\)](#)). If an institution shares student records with HERI, HERI will:

- 1) Limit access to personally identifiable information to HERI staff who are responsible for the maintenance of HERI's research database.
- 2) Limit its use of personally identifiable information to the purpose of studies that improve higher education.
- 3) Only use student contact information for the purpose of inviting students to participate in CIRP surveys.

## **Additional Issues to Consider Prior to Administration**

### **Linking the CIRP Freshman Survey with Other Data**

In addition to studying a wide variety of issues based solely on data from the CIRP Freshman Survey, it is also possible to use these data to build a comprehensive database using other institutional data (e.g., registrar, admissions, or financial aid data) or by conducting longitudinal follow-up surveys, such as the Your First College Year (YFCY) survey, the Diverse Learning Environments (DLE) survey, or the College Student Survey (CSS). In order to conduct studies based on data other than those found on the CIRP Freshman Survey, it is necessary to have some way to link these different sorts of data together. Thus, to maximize the utility of these data for institutional research purposes, we suggest that for paper administrations, you encourage students to provide their student ID in the grid on the first page of the survey. For web administrations, we suggest you consider pre-populating the email file that you send to HERI with student IDs. Note that if a student fails to provide a student ID when he or she completes the survey instrument, you will not be able to merge his/her CIRP Freshman Survey data with data from other campus files.

### **Incentives**

Incentives can prove to be an effective means of increasing survey response rates. Gift certificates to the campus bookstore, food, money, or an automatic entry into some type of raffle or lottery are all possibilities. If you are considering using incentives in your survey administration, please refer to [Encouraging Participation in CIRP Surveys](#) for important information on structuring your incentive strategy.

### **Research Approval**

Many campuses have found that the documentation we receive from UCLA's North General Institutional Review Board (NGIRB) is very useful in applications to their own IRB. Our approval documentation is available at <http://www.heri.ucla.edu>.

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Additionally, CIRP and the NGIRB require that an appropriate college official certify compliance through our **Research Approval Form** with the following:

1. You will abide by and comply with the CIRP administration procedures as approved by UCLA's IRB.
2. Your campus has determined if local IRB approval is required, and
3. If local IRB approval of this research is required on your campus, you will administer the survey only after you have received local IRB approval.

You further agree to the following statement:

The Higher Education Research Institute provides data files to assist institutional research activities. By receiving this data file, we agree that these data will be used only for statistical analyses and reporting of aggregated information, and not for the investigation of specific individuals. In affirming this agreement, we give assurance that use of these data will conform to widely accepted standards of practice and legal restrictions that are intended to protect the confidentiality of research subjects. We also give assurance that no survey respondent will be sanctioned based on any answer provided in the 2013 CIRP Freshman Survey.

Compliance with the above statements is submitted through the CIRP Web Portal. The first time you click on "Download Reports & Data/Data Analysis" from the Main Menu, you will be prompted to complete the Research Approval Form. You will not be able to receive any data or reports until the Research Approval Form is completed.

### **Confidentiality**

The CIRP Freshman Survey collects personal identifiers and potentially sensitive demographic data. Student responses to these survey items make it possible to link CIRP Freshman Survey data with data from several sources such as other CIRP surveys (e.g., the YFCY, DLE and CSS), your campus registrar's office, other nationwide assessment instruments, and local assessment efforts.

**Students' right to confidentiality as human research subjects must remain a priority throughout the administration of the CIRP Freshman Survey.** Please inform your students that the questionnaires are handled in a confidential and professional manner. Following are some specific points to consider with respect to the confidentiality of CIRP Freshman Survey data:

- Your survey collection procedures and data storage systems must be secured (e.g., locked storage, official representatives as proctors, etc.).
- Viewing student responses to questions on the CIRP Freshman Survey (other than the names of respondents for tracking purposes) prior to data processing is considered a

breach of confidentiality. Assure students that no one at your institution will examine individual responses to survey questions.

- Your data file will not include personal identifiers such as name, address, and telephone number, but will include student ID.
- HERI does not release identifiable data to other researchers or to other agencies.
- The Research Approval Form states that the data will be used solely for statistical analyses and reporting of aggregated information, and not for the investigation of specific individuals.

## Administering the CIRP Freshman Survey

### Inviting Your Students to Participate

It is important to note that CIRP Freshman Survey participation is voluntary. **All students who receive the CIRP Freshman Survey instrument must be informed that this is a voluntary survey.**

Please note that *compulsory participation in research is a violation of federal regulations*. Also, some campuses may consider people under 18 to be minors. If this is the case on your campus, and if your CIRP Freshman Survey sample includes students under 18, you may need to seek permission from these students' parents prior to survey administration.

### INFORMATION FOR INSTITUTIONS USING PAPER ADMINISTRATIONS

Those institutions administering the CIRP Freshman Survey as a **paper survey** will receive:

1. As many copies of the paper instrument as you order, double boxed to facilitate returning the surveys to our processing center.
2. An Administration Packet. This packet contains the Administration Checklist, Administration Guidelines, Survey Information Sheet, and the Shipping Form.

As you prepare to administer the survey, make certain you have sufficient quantity of

1. The survey instrument
2. Pens
3. Additional questions (if using)
4. Survey Information Sheet

We ask that students use a **blue or black pen** to complete the paper survey. Asking students to use a blue or black pen ensures we can continue to provide you with accurate and timely survey



results. Please test your pens prior to survey administration to ensure they do not bleed through the questionnaires. If ink bleeds through, there may be additional charges associated with scanning your questionnaires.

**The “Survey Information Sheet” must accompany all survey forms.** It describes the purpose of the survey, estimated time to complete the survey, the potential risks and benefits, and students’ rights as research subjects.

### **Inviting Your Students to Participate**

If your campus administers the survey in a proctored on-campus setting, the following text should be read aloud to students prior to distributing the instruments. While you are free to personalize or edit this text, the points in bold **must** be included:

“We ask that you complete this survey as part of a national study of college students conducted by the Higher Education Research Institute at UCLA. One major goal of this research is to determine what happens to students when they attend college. This study is designed to help improve the quality of the college experience and thus may benefit future generations of students. Results of your participation also will be directly beneficial to students at [*name of your campus*], since we will receive complete tabulations of your responses to compare with the responses of students at other institutions. We ask for your name and address so that the researchers at UCLA can contact you at some later date for a follow-up study. We would also like your Student ID Number so we can merge your responses with other campus data to support our institutional research program. {IF PROVIDING WEB SURVEY OPTION, INCLUDE: You also may complete this survey on the Internet—please refer to the attached instructions if you wish to do so.} **Your responses will be used only for research purposes and will be strictly confidential. Please read the ‘CIRP Freshman Survey Information Sheet’ for more information about your rights as a participant in this research. Your participation is voluntary and will not affect your standing at [*name of your campus*].”**

## Returning Surveys for Processing

Your institution is responsible for correctly returning the paper forms to our data processing center. Surveys must arrive at Data Recognition Corporation (DRC) no later than October 8, 2013. Please allow sufficient time for delivery by the deadline. **If your surveys do not arrive by October 8, 2013 you will be charged a late fee to cover the costs incurred by HERI of extending survey administration beyond the close date. That fee can range from \$500 to \$1,000.**

The steps for returning the forms to our Processing Center are:

### 1) Prepare your questionnaires.

- Beginning in 2012, a response flap delineating potential majors was added to the CIRP Freshman Survey. This flap must be removed once students have completed the questionnaire. Please recycle and do not return the response flaps to DRC.
- Remove any blank questionnaires. Blank questionnaires are not separated out during the processing of questionnaires and you will be charged for the processing of all questionnaires returned to the processing center.
- Questionnaires must not be folded when shipped to our processing center.
- Remove any staples, paperclips, papers or other extra items attached before shipping your surveys to our processing center.
- Questionnaires must be packed flat, smooth, with Page 1 facing up and oriented in the same direction.

**If extra handling is needed to ready the questionnaires for processing, including extra processing time as a result of light or incomplete pencil marks, undetached flaps, extra paper or staples, etc., we will pass the extra charges on to you.**

### 2) Complete and fax the Shipping Form.

- Found at the top of the stack of forms in Box 1 of your shipment, this form allows us to quickly address any discrepancies between the number of forms you believe you have sent and what actually arrives at our processing center.
- Once you have completed the Shipping Form, fax it to our processing center at 763-509-3795 and then place it at the top the stack in Box 1 of your shipment to our Data Processing Center.

**3) Return the questionnaires.**

- Pack all completed questionnaires and the Shipping Form in the provided self-addressed box(es) and return them to our Data Processing Center:  
TFS Survey Returns  
HERI Processing Center  
c/o Data Recognition Corporation (DRC)  
Attn: Survey Operations  
7303 Boone Ave., North  
Brooklyn Park, MN 55428
- We ask that you use a traceable form of parcel delivery such as United Parcel Service (UPS), FedEx, Airborne, or Emery to ship the surveys to the processing center. We strongly recommend that you do not use the U.S. Postal Service. If you ship the surveys in more than one box, please indicate this on the shipping label (for example, “Box 1 of 3”).
- If possible, return the questionnaires in a batch, rather than singly. If your campus plans to administer the CIRP Freshman Survey by mail or in a proctored setting, students must return the individual surveys **to you** (where they can be collected and bundled for shipment to our processing center).

**INFORMATION FOR INSTITUTIONS USING WEB ADMINISTRATIONS**

There are two ways to notify your students of the opportunity to complete the CIRP Freshman Survey on the web:

1. An **institutional administration** is the default setting for web survey administration. In an institutional administration, your institution has the responsibility to contact students with the request to participate and the necessary information to participate. Campuses indicating that they are conducting an institutional administration will receive:
  - A list of unique log-in codes for students to access the web-based CIRP Freshman Survey instrument you will merge into your e-mail invitations to participate in The CIRP Freshman Survey
  - The web address (URL link) to the survey instrument
  - An electronic version of the information sheet outlining students’ rights as research subjects (“Survey Information Sheet”)
  - Templates for the email invitation and reminder correspondence
2. If you select **email distribution**, HERI (and our vendor, Data Recognition Corporation) uses email addresses and names provided by your institution and will

manage the email contact process for you.<sup>1</sup> When you place your order on the CIRP Web Portal, you will be able to specify dates and times at which you would like HERI to send an invitation and up to three reminder emails to those students who have not yet responded to the survey request, **but not including those students who have opted out of the survey.** You can alter the dates and times emails are sent up to 24 hours before they are due to be sent out.

Whether you elect HERI to manage the survey administration process or do it yourself, there are several important issues to take into consideration to maximize the delivery of your web survey, including opportunities to customize the web administration for your institution. Please see above section titled “Customizing Your Survey Administration.”

### **Inviting Your Students to Participate**

See [Templates for Invitations and Reminders](#) for suggested text for invitation and reminder emails to accompany initial and follow-up waves.

**We strongly recommend that you use the invitation and reminder templates since they include appropriate language to meet guidelines for research involving human subjects and such language is a required element of the research protocol approved by the UCLA North General IRB, but again remind you to edit them to insert information about your school in the appropriate places.**

### **Monitoring Your Survey Responses**

Students following the link given in the email request to participate will be sent to a welcome screen that again explains the survey project and offers a way to opt out of the survey. If students click on the opt-out button, they will not receive any further communications about the survey.

You will be able to access, through the CIRP Web Portal, a Detailed Web Response Report. This file will detail, with unique identifiers, 1) those students who have completed the survey; 2) those who have not yet responded to the web survey; 3) those students who have accessed the survey, but may or may not have entered any data; 4) those students who have accessed the survey and hit the “save and return button”; and 5) those students who have opted out. This will enable you to follow-up with non-respondents **who have not exercised their right to be removed from further contact.**

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<sup>1</sup> Both HERI and DRC abide by FERPA guidelines in the use of student information and all personnel involved with the data collection have successfully completed a training course in human subjects research that meets NIH requirements.

**Returning Surveys for Processing**

Web surveys are automatically submitted directly to our data processing center.

**After Administration****Administration Report Form (ARF) Online Survey**

Upon completion of your administration of the CIRP Freshman Survey, it is critical that you complete an Administration Report Form (ARF). The ARF is a short web-based survey that inquires about specific institutional information needed to process your completed CIRP Freshman Surveys and to prepare your institutional reports.

We will send the primary contact an email with a link to the 2013 ARF Survey at the end of your campus' survey administration. The ARF is due by the final processing cut-off date (October 8, 2013). Please note: We may be unable to process your institution's data until we receive the completed ARF. If we do not receive it by the processing cut-off date, your data may not be included in the comparison groups for the national data and we cannot guarantee that you will receive your deliverables in a timely fashion.

**Reports and Data Files**

HERI provides participating institutions with several reports that allow comparison of student responses. For more information, please refer to [Data and Reporting](#).