



Using Additional Questions with the CIRP Freshman Survey

Adding Additional Questions to the Survey

Campuses have the option of adding up to 20 additional multiple choice questions of specific local interest at the end of their questionnaires. For specific information about adding your questions to your paper or web-based survey, please refer to last section of this document, “Closed-Ended Questions.”

We urge you to “pilot test” your additional questions with current students. Many campuses find that entering first years 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 and supplemental instructions. Please send them directly to heri@ucla.edu.

In addition to drafting, pilot testing, and incorporating your additional questions into the administration of the CIRP Freshman Survey, it is also important to consult with your local Institutional Review Board (IRB). Your campus may require you to submit these 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 administration.

“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” regarding topics 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, and provide an address and phone number. You will need to provide an addendum to include this information on the “Survey Information Sheet” (SIS) (for paper administrations) or on the “Welcome” page (for web administrations).



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

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, or Dr. Ellen Stolzenberg, CIRP Assistant Director, at (310) 825-1925 or heri@ucla.edu.

Closed-Ended Questions

The closed-ended questions may be added at the end of the paper and/or web versions of the survey. At the end of the paper questionnaire (lower portion of page 4) there is a section for the responses to the additional questions. You will need to distribute to your students a sheet containing the additional questions. Closed-ended questions will display on a separate page after the last questions on the web-based TFS. You will have the opportunity to add your additional questions to your web-based survey in the CIRP Web Portal. 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, and the statistics for these questions will be included in your institutional profile report. 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 with your CIRP Freshman Survey information.

Each question that requires the student to select a response is considered a question. The numbers in **red text** below show how the questions labeled 1-3 are actually 15 items.

1. Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statements:

(Response Categories: Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree, Strongly Disagree)

- (1) It will take me longer to graduate than I had planned
- (2) Faculty empower me to learn here
- (3) At least one staff member has taken an interest in my development
- (4) Faculty believe in my potential to succeed academically
- (5) Staff encourage me to get involved in campus activities
- (6) I may have to choose between financially supporting my family and going to college



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- (7) If asked, I would recommend this college to others
- (8) Staff recognize my achievements
- (9) At least one faculty member has taken an interest in my development

2. How would you currently rate yourself in the following areas: Mark one for each item.
(Response Categories: A Major Strength, Somewhat Strong, Average, Somewhat Weak, A Major Weakness)

- (10) Ability to see the world from someone else's perspective
- (11) Tolerance of others with different beliefs
- (12) Openness to having my own views challenged
- (13) Ability to discuss and negotiate controversial issues
- (14) Ability to work cooperatively with diverse people

(15) 3. How would you characterize your political views?

Far left

Liberal

Middle of the road

Conservative

Far right