



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

CIRP FRESHMAN SURVEY 2012 Administration Guidelines

Protocol ID:IRB#10-001293 UCLA IRB Approved Approval Date: 11/3/2011 Through: 11/2/2012 Committee: North General IRB

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

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2012 Freshman Survey Administration Guidelines

Overview and Purpose

This document is a reference for important information necessary to make the most of your participation in the CIRP Freshman Survey. It details procedures and processes relevant to all survey administrations in the general order in which decisions or actions are made. Issues relevant to specific types of administration can be found under the appropriate section. If you have questions about your specific survey administration, please contact us at heri@ucla.edu or 310.825.7079.

The Cooperative Institutional Research Program (CIRP) Freshman Survey is designed to be administered to all first-time full-time first years during the orientation or registration period. 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.

You may survey all entering first-year students, regardless of their enrollment status (transfer and part-time students will be separated during survey processing, see the *Reports and Data Files* section for more information).

Administration Period

The survey is open for administration from March 15, 2012 to October 8, 2012.

CIRP Freshman Survey as a Pre-Test to the YFCY, DLE and CSS

While the CIRP Freshman Survey may be used effectively as a stand-alone instrument, it was designed as a pre-test instrument to the Your First College Year (YFCY) survey (administered at the end of the first year of college), the Diverse Learning Environments (DLE) survey (administered to sophomores and juniors), and the College Senior Survey (CSS) (administered to graduating seniors). CIRP Freshman Survey data are of the most utility when linked to relevant post-test data from the YFCY, DLE, CSS or other local data. Having baseline data collected at the time of college entry allows you to assess how and why your students change over time, and to evaluate the impact and effectiveness of programs and policies at your campus.

Registering and Placing Your Order

The CIRP Web Portal

HERI has developed a website that will make administration of your CIRP surveys easier, faster and offers greater flexibility. The CIRP Web Portal can be found at www.cirpsurveys.org. You will use this secure site to:

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

Survey Administration Materials

The Higher Education Research Institute (HERI) and Data Recognition Corporation, HERI's outside survey vendor, will provide all of the necessary resources for the 2012 administration of the CIRP Freshman Survey. Copies of materials, including these administration guidelines, are available on the CIRP Web Portal, under "Guides and Forms."

Survey Administration Methods

The CIRP Freshman Survey can be administered several different ways:

1. Proctored setting with paper questionnaires. This administration method will result in the highest response rate, and is highly recommended. Many schools use this method, in which all first-year students are physically present in one place to complete the questionnaire.
2. Email notification of the web-survey option. This administration method allows you to use our system to deliver the email requests to complete a web-based questionnaire to students or contact students on your own. This method usually results in a response rate as high, or higher than option #4, but not as high as option #1
3. A combination of paper and web-based questionnaires. This administration method will likely lead to the next highest response rate, as it will be lower, usually, than administering the survey in a proctored setting (option #1).
4. Mail-out survey with paper questionnaire. This administration method can also be effective if multiple reminder mailings are used, but will typically result in lower response rates than option #1 and typically used when a proctored setting is not logistically possible.

Research Approval

Although there are common federal guidelines for the use of human subjects in research, procedures may vary from campus to campus. Therefore, it is critical for you to familiarize yourself with your institution's human subjects guidelines.

Many campuses have found that the documentation HERI receives from the UCLA IRB is very useful in discussions with their own local IRBs. For your convenience, the approval documentation is available on our website at: <http://www.heri.ucla.edu>.

If local IRB approval of this research is necessary at your campus, obtaining IRB approval can be quick, but it can also be a more lengthy process. We suggest that you begin this process as soon as possible.

HERI and the UCLA North General Institutional Review Board (NGIRB) require that an appropriate college official certify compliance through our **Research Approval Form** with the following:¹

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 2012 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.

¹ An appropriate college official is one who has the authority to determine the appropriate level of human subjects research review on your campus and who also has the authority to sign on behalf of your institution.

Survey Information and Options

Special Breakout Groups (or “Group Codes”)

Special coded breakout groups 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.

A Group Code can be used in two ways:

- 1) First, it becomes a permanent part of the survey data for your institution. Should you utilize the electronic data file of your students’ responses, the group code can be used as a variable to disaggregate the data for comparative analyses.
- 2) Second, HERI can produce a special report using these codes. This report comes in a format similar to the standard CIRP Freshman Survey Institutional Profile. However, it provides a separate profile of each coded subgroup, as well as a total survey population profile.

If you wish to use the group codes and are using a paper survey, please instruct your students to mark one or both of the “Group Code” grids on the questionnaire (located next to the Marking Directions) with the appropriate value (from 01-95; values 00 and 96-99 are used by CIRP for processing purposes) at the time they complete the questionnaire. Please be sure to provide instructions regarding the appropriate codes to enter in the grid. If you are administering a web survey, you can include special instructions for the “Group Codes” that will show up on the web survey (at no additional charge).

HERI does not release results for individual group codes that are based on fewer than 15 respondents. We do this both to preserve the privacy of individual respondents, and because results based on fewer than 15 cases have no statistical significance. If a subset of a Group Code Profile is based on fewer than 15 respondents, the results for that subset will not be reported. For more information on the CIRP Freshman Survey data files and group code reports, please see the “*Reports and Data Files*” section below and the “Custom Reports and Data Files” page at <http://www.heri.ucla.edu/dsdownloads.php>

Institutionally Matched Data

Prior to administration of the survey, those institutions administering a web-based administration and opting to have HERI manage email communications have the option of providing a student ID number for students in the survey population. CIRP will then match Student ID’s to survey responses and integrate Student ID’s into the institutional data files returned to the institution, all without asking students to provide this information on the survey. This should facilitate longitudinal matching with CIRP Surveys as well as pairing CIRP Freshman Survey results with institutional databases.

Please note that provision of student ID's 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.

Adding Additional Questions to the Survey

At the end of the questionnaire space is provided to ask additional questions of local importance. You may use this space to ask up to **20** additional questions of specific interest to your college. Asking such questions is optional. If you choose to utilize this space, do not forget to include instructions to students concerning how to answer the additional questions.

Each question permits a maximum of five alternatives (A through E). *Students should mark only **one** alternative.* Fewer than five response alternatives may be used for any of the questions, in which case students should be instructed to choose only among those circles that apply, starting from the left.

Student responses to these optional questions will be included in your data file, and the statistics for these questions will be included in your institutional profile report. Because your additional questions and response options are NOT included in your data file or institutional profile report, we strongly suggest retaining a copy with your CIRP Freshman Survey information.

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, you must submit that question to HERI for our consideration one month before administration.

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

Although your campus is responsible for developing the local additional questions, we would be happy 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.

Asking Additional Questions of a Sensitive Nature

When designing additional questions, there are special circumstances to consider if you ask students to provide what would be considered “sensitive information” by the federal government. If this is the case, there additional steps you will need to take. HERI strongly urges you to consider very carefully if asking for “sensitive information” is appropriate in the context of a general freshman survey.

“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.*²

It is up to local officials at your institution, not HERI, to determine if your questions ask for “sensitive information.” If you have decided to ask such questions, you must 1) submit your additional sensitive questions to the UCLA IRB for review and approval before administering the CIRP Freshman Survey, 2) obtain a NIH Certificate of Confidentiality,³ and 3) modify the consent documents for students to reflect that there are sensitive additional questions being asked, explain what “sensitive information” being asked in the additional questions is required to be reported (as explained in the next section), and describe the protections afforded by the Certificate of Confidentiality that your institution will obtain.⁴ The UCLA IRB must also review your modified consent document(s).

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, and provide an address and phone number. You will need to provide an addendum to the “Survey Information Sheet” (SIS) to include this information. If you are administering a web survey, this information can be included on the “Welcome” page. These types of information would be covered by a Certificate of Confidentiality that your campus would apply for separately. They are not issues that would be reportable to a third party as detailed below. Modifications to the consent document(s) to

² <http://grants1.nih.gov/grants/policy/coc/faqs.htm>

³ <http://grants.nih.gov/grants/policy/coc/>

⁴ The NIH Certificates of Confidentiality Kiosk identifies the nature of the information that must be provided to subjects to describe the protections afforded by the Certificate of Confidentiality, and also provides an example of appropriate language. [http://grants.nih.gov/grants/policy/coc/appl_extramural.htm]

describe the provision of referrals to mental health care programs and counselors must also be reviewed and approved by the UCLA IRB.

Obligation to Report and Break Participant Confidentiality to a Third Party

In some states, the law requires researchers to disclose information they have concerning suicidal ideation, child abuse and elder abuse to appropriate third parties. Thus, questions surrounding these areas are not just sensitive but require institutions to break subject confidentiality in order to protect the participant, or others, from harm. If you ask such additional questions, you must provide an addendum to the consent document that you provide to students (SIS) to inform students of the researcher's obligation to disclose respondent's intent to harm his or herself (suicide ideation) or others (elder or child abuse). These modifications to the consent document(s) must be reviewed and approved by the UCLA IRB.

Again, HERI strongly encourages that you consider the appropriateness of such additional questions in a general freshman survey and recommends against asking about these issues with this survey instrument. HERI 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 John Pryor, CIRP Director at (310) 825-1925 or heri@ucla.edu.

Incentives

Incentives can prove to be an effective means of increasing survey response rates. Gift certificates for the campus bookstore, food, money, or an automatic entry into some type of raffle or lottery are all possibilities, but you may select any incentive that you feel would inspire your student body to respond to the instrument.

Incentives and Confidentiality

The names of paper survey respondents can be tracked by campus personnel and the names of web respondents can be acquired during the administration cycle (see respective *Targeted Follow-Up of Non-Respondents* section). A complete list of the names and identifying information of survey respondents can be accessed through the CIRP Web Portal.

Reviewing students' responses to survey questions (other than their names for tracking purposes) on the completed paper questionnaires prior to data processing is considered a breach of confidentiality. As such, CIRP Freshman Survey incentives may be structured in a few different ways:

- You may elect to offer a small incentive to participate before or as the survey is administered (e.g., including a gift card with a copy of the survey)

- In a proctored setting, you may choose to give a small token of appreciation to each student who turns in a completed survey. Please note that a student should not be penalized if they opt not to answer certain questions or leave a portion of the survey blank.
- You may establish a “ticket system” for students to be considered for the incentive. Under this system, raffle/lottery tickets or a blank entry form would be distributed with the paper surveys. Students taking the survey via the web should be instructed to print the CIRP Freshman Survey “Thank You” page, which they will receive only upon submitting the survey, and fill out identifying information to serve as a “ticket” in a drawing. In both instances, survey instructions should inform students to fill out and submit their “ticket” upon completion of the CIRP Freshman Survey questionnaire to a designated location as well as the date of the drawing.
- You are able to request that a unique incentive passcode be added to the “Thank You” page of your web administration. This can be used to ensure that a student who has completed the survey before requesting an incentive at your institution. Each student who completes the survey receives a unique passcode, and a list of passcodes is simultaneously available to campus representatives in the Detailed Web Response Report available on the CIRP Web Portal.

In the case that you create an incentive plan that differs from the above options, we **strongly** encourage you to check with your local IRB or other appropriate campus personnel to review the structure of your incentive program.

If you decide to adopt an incentive program for your administration of the CIRP Freshman Survey, please be sure that it conforms to the following guidelines:

- The “Survey Information Sheet” (please see above) covers the rights of human subjects with respects to all aspects of survey administration **except** incentives. Therefore, if you plan to utilize an incentive for the CIRP Freshman Survey, you **must** add an addendum to the “Survey Information Sheet.” This section should be titled “Payment for Participation” and would describe, in detail, the incentive program including, the amount that could be won, an estimate of the odds (if you are utilizing a drawing), and how any drawing, or other incentive program, would be conducted. If you are conducting a web administration, this information can be included on the “Welcome” page.
- The amount or value of the incentive should not be so large as to appear coercive.
- Each institution that decides to conduct a drawing (i.e., raffle or lottery) should first consult applicable state law to determine whether lotteries are legal.
- Please remember that any incentive program may require local IRB approval. We recommend that you check with your institution’s Office for the Protection of Research Subjects as soon as you have made a decision regarding your incentive program.
- Incentives for survey participation must be designed in a manner that maintains the voluntary nature of the survey.

Survey promotion for these incentives should not emphasize the incentives to a degree that minimizes the requirement of survey participation.

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 be sending you an email with a link to the 2012 ARF Survey in early October. The ARF is due by the final processing cut-off date (October 8, 2012). **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.**

Administering the CIRP Freshman Survey

Inviting Your Students to Participate

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

Please note that *compulsory participation in research is a violation of the 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.

Additional considerations for inviting students to participate specific to web and paper administrations can be found in either the *Information for Paper Administration* or *Information for Web Administration* sections.

A Note About Response Rates

In the past decade, we have noted declining response rates to surveys received via mail and email. Therefore, when possible, you may want to consider administering the CIRP Freshman Survey in a **proctored setting** to maximize student participation. However, should you wish to distribute the surveys through campus, U.S., or electronic mail, we recommend the following strategies to boost your response rate:

- **Check the accuracy of your postal and email addresses.** Please note that many students utilize email accounts other than their campus address.
- **Send out a pre-notification announcement.** If you tell them it's coming, they may be on the look-out. Some schools have had luck sending a hard copy letter to students with a small incentive, and following up with an email link.
- **Conduct a two-wave administration.** Sending a second survey can increase the response rate—and there is no extra charge for ordering additional surveys.
- **Remind students about the survey during the administration period.** Examples include advertisements in the student newspaper, announcements posted on campus websites/Facebook, and e-mails/texts to students.
- **When possible, personalize correspondence related to the survey administration.** We all know that people aren't as receptive to "Dear occupant," "Dear resident" or "Dear student" letters. Address students personally (i.e., "Dear Sally") rather than generically.
- **Correspondence should be signed by a recognized and respected campus official.** Some examples include the college president, the student body president, or the dean of students.
- **Make participation personally meaningful and relevant to students.** If students know how their responses will directly affect the campus experience for the student population at

large, it may encourage them to respond. Students really want to know that their time responding to the survey is well spent.

- **Provide assurances of confidentiality.** The CIRP Freshman Survey collects identifying and demographic information. For paper administrations, please make sure that your survey collection and temporary storage system is secure and protects students' confidentiality. Also, make sure students are aware of these procedures. For web-based administrations, inform students that their responses will be sent directly to an outside data processing center and that no one at your institution will examine individual web-based questionnaires. (For additional points about these issues, see the section on *Confidentiality*)
- **Use incentives.** Money, pizza, gift certificates to the campus bookstore, college sweatshirts, or an automatic entry into some type of raffle or lottery may be the extra boosts students need to complete the instrument. Please review the *Incentives* section for specific guidelines with respect to the use of incentives with The CIRP Freshman Survey.

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
2. An electronic link to the Administration Packet. This packet contains the Administration Checklist, Administration Guidelines, Survey Information Sheet, and the Shipping Form.

For those campuses using the paper or paper/web administrations of the CIRP Freshman Survey, we ask that students use **blue or black pen** to complete the paper survey. *This change from previous years is necessary to reduce additional processing time resulting from light or incomplete pencil marks. Asking students to use 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.*

Paper Survey with Web-based Option

Those institutions administering the CIRP Freshman Survey as a paper survey may also provide a link to the survey website for students to complete the survey on the web. For more information, please see *Information for Web Administrations*.

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. The “Survey Information Sheet” must be included with the paper invitations. For paper/web administrations, it is the web page after the “Welcome” screen.

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. 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*].”**

If you administer the CIRP Freshman Survey via U.S. mail or offer a paper survey with a web option administration, we have included suggested text for an invitation letter to accompany initial and follow up waves. We have included several versions of these letters in Appendix A. The first set assumes a **paper only** administration, the second set **assumes a paper survey with a web option** administration. You must edit these letters to insert relevant information for your campus. We encourage you to further personalize these invitation letters where possible in order to maximize response rates, however the text in bold **must** be included. Finally, please remember to send all other necessary materials for the CIRP Freshman Survey administration (e.g., copy of the questionnaire or URL link to the web-based survey instrument, instructions for additional questions, the “Survey Information Sheet”) with the invitation to participate.

We strongly recommend that you use the invitation letters as a template 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.

Targeted Follow-Up of Non-Respondents

You may keep track of the names of respondents to the paper survey. With this information, representatives at your institution can then send a personalized second wave of surveys only to those students who did not respond to your first invitation to participate.

Confidentiality **MUST** remain a priority throughout the survey administration. As such, only authorized personnel should review the paper instruments to determine the identity of first-wave respondents. Please remember that the examination of any individual responses to the survey other than the respondent's name is considered a breach of confidentiality.

Please word your reminder correspondence in a way that does not appear coercive. Most students have not responded to the initial inquiry because they were pressed for time when it arrived and will be amenable to completing the survey. HERI has provided suggested and required text for the reminder that you should edit to customize for the institution. Please remember that the text **in bold must** be included in your communication with the students.

Administering Additional Questions

At the end of the questionnaire (lower portion of page 4) is a set of circles for additional questions of local importance (#47 through #66). We recommend that you distribute to your students a sheet containing the supplemental instructions, your additional questions (beginning with Question #47), and the response alternatives (indicated by A through E). If you choose to utilize this space, do not forget to include instructions to students concerning how to answer the additional questions (for instance, to answer the questions in the bubbles on the survey form, not the paper containing the additional questions).

If you choose to utilize additional questions, the text for these items will need to be included in the CIRP Freshman Survey administration plan at your institution. You will need to include a sheet with the additional questions with the CIRP Freshman Survey. Many institutions choose to put additional questions on the reverse of the informed consent, to ensure all students receive them. Please remember to add instructions that explain the additional questions.

Returning Surveys for Processing

Your institution is responsible for correctly sending the paper forms to our data processing center. This year, a response flap delineating potential majors has been added to the CIRP Freshman Survey. This flap must be removed once students have completed the questionnaire.

Please ensure that all flaps are removed from the surveys before submitting them for processing or you will be charged for each flap that has to be removed. To avoid additional processing charges:

1. Do not return blank questionnaires to the processing center. 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.

2. Questionnaires **must not be folded** when shipped to our processing center. If you have folded the questionnaires in order to mail them to respondents, please unfold and flatten them.
3. **Remove** any staples, paperclips, papers or other extra items attached before shipping your surveys to our processing center.
4. **Remove the response code flap appended to Page 1.**
5. Completed questionnaires must be packed flat, smooth, with Page 1 facing up and oriented in the same direction.
6. Please complete and return the “Shipping Form” 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.

If extra handling is needed to ready the surveys for processing, including extra processing time as a result of light or incomplete pencil marks or undetached flaps, we will pass the extra charge on to you.

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).

HERI no longer supports the physical separation of completed surveys into breakout groups for analysis. The “group code” on the questionnaire should be used if you have groups that you would like to designate for analysis purposes (see the section on *Group Codes* for more information).

Surveys must arrive at DRC no later than October 8, 2012—please allow sufficient time for delivery by the deadline. If your surveys do not arrive by October 8, 2012 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 \$1000.

Return all completed questionnaires and the “Shipping Form” in the provided self-addressed box(es) 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

**REMEMBER: PLEASE DO NOT RETURN THE QUESTIONNAIRES DIRECTLY TO UCLA!!!
IF YOU DO, THEY WILL NOT BE FORWARDED FOR PROCESSING UNTIL A SHIPPING ACCOUNT
NUMBER (E.G., FEDEX OR UPS) IS PROVIDED BY YOUR INSTITUTION**

We ask that you use some 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”).

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 the students with the request to participate and the necessary information to participate. Campuses indicating that they are conducting an institutional administration will receive:
 1. A list of unique log-in codes for students to access the web-based CIRP Freshman Survey instrument to merge into e-mail invitations to participate in The CIRP Freshman Survey,
 2. The web address (URL link) to the survey instrument
 3. An electronic version of the information sheet outlining students’ rights as research subjects (“Survey Information Sheet”).
 4. Both required and suggested text for the email request to students.
2. If you select **email distribution**, HERI (and our vendor, Data Recognition Corporation) uses email addresses and names that are provided by your institution and will manage the email contact process for you.⁵

⁵ 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.

Campuses indicating that they are conducting a HERI administration 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).

Whether you elect HERI to manage the survey administration process or if you 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.

Issues to Consider

Anti-Spam Procedures

To ensure a smooth delivery process, you will want to instruct your institution's Information Technology department to add the following email address provided below to their Approved Senders List. This should then allow emails coming from HERI's email distribution service to come 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

DNS Name: outgoing.datarecognitioncorp.com

IP Address: 207.109.22.134

Email "Spoofing"

Email notifications will come from "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). If you do use this option, it is usually wise to notify your IT department that you are doing so. Please be aware that although every precaution has been taken to ensure that any bounced emails will continue to be returned to the default email address there are some email providers who may send a bounced email back to your customized "from" email address. Under no circumstances will the emails be used for any other purpose than the approved contact for notification of the survey. Emails will be personalized with the recipient's name.

Email Bounceback Report

If you use our email notification system, you will be able to use the Detailed Web Response Report to check if any of the emails you sent were not able to be delivered to the intended address. The report will detail the type of error, and a detailed list of the possible reasons for a bounceback. A few of the reasons might be the mailbox was full, the message was rejected as spam, or the user was unknown. This allows you to take action in pursuing a more valid email address as well as to modify your response rate to the survey in case you cannot correct the error.

Customizing the “Welcome” and “Thank You” Pages

At the beginning and the end of the survey you can add material of your own to these screens, including additional text and your school logo.

If you are using incentives, you are able to request that a unique incentive passcode be added to the “Thank You” page of your web administration. For more information, see the *Incentives* section.

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.

Inviting Your Students to Participate

We have included suggested text for an invitation letter to accompany initial and follow-up waves. We have included several versions of these letters in Appendix A. The third set assumes a **web-only** administration, the second set assumes a **paper survey with a web option** administration. You should edit these letters to include relevant information for your campus. We further encourage you to personalize these invitation letters where possible in order to maximize response rates, however the text in bold **must** be included. Finally, please remember to send all other necessary materials for the CIRP Freshman Survey administration (e.g., copy of the questionnaire or URL link to the web-based survey instrument, instructions for additional questions, the “Survey Information Sheet”) with the invitation to participate.

We strongly recommend that you use the invitation letters as a template 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.

Targeted Follow-Up of Non-Respondents

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.

Institutional Administration

You will be able to access, through the CIRP Web Portal, a Detailed Web Response Report. This file will detail, with the 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, and 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.**

Please word your reminder correspondence in a way that does not appear coercive. Most students have not responded to the initial inquiry because they were pressed for time when it arrived and will be amenable to completing the survey. HERI has provided suggested and required text for the reminder that you will want to edit to customize for the institution. Please remember that the text in bold **must** be included in your communication with the students.

Email Distribution by HERI

When you place your order on the CIRP Web Portal, you will be able to specify a date at which you would like HERI to send 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.** The text of these reminder emails will include necessary language to protect human subjects, but should also be customized by you. You can alter the dates emails are sent up to 24 hours before they are due to be sent out.

Administering Additional Questions

If you choose to utilize additional questions, the text for these items will need to be included in the CIRP Freshman Survey administration plan at your institution.

If you have opted to include integrated additional questions, you will be able to submit the additional questions via the CIRP Web Portal so that they can be incorporated into the existing survey.

If you have *not* opted for the additional questions to be integrated into your web survey, you may list the additional questions in the email invitation that you send to students or include them in a Word document that you attach to the invitation email. Alternatively, you may wish to create a web site that contains the text for your additional questions and include a link to the URL in the invitation email.

Whichever method you choose to administer your additional questions, please remember to add instructions that explain the additional questions.

Returning Surveys for Processing

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

Reports and Data Files

Your preliminary data files will be posted on the CIRP Web Portal as soon as they are available. You cannot have access to these files until you have completed the Research Approval Form on the CIRP Web Portal.

For paper surveys: your preliminary data file (in CSV format) will be available **three weeks** after your completed questionnaires are received at our processing facility. If you elected to use group codes, they are a permanent part of the student data and will be available starting here. There are instructions on the CIRP Web Portal as to how to convert this file into an SPSS file for analysis.

For web surveys: your preliminary data is processed **each night** the survey is live, and you can access it on an ongoing basis. If you elected to use group codes, they are a permanent part of the student data and will be available starting here.

We now include the responses from students who have started, but not completed, the web survey in the data returned to you in your data file and reports. In order to be considered a “partial”, the respondent must have read and accepted the informed consent and completed at least one question on the survey. Having the “partial” web responses increases the utility of the data on campus by allowing you to conduct more robust and meaningful analysis at your institution.

In December 2012, the Institutional Profile Report (in Excel) will be uploaded to the CIRP web Portal for all institutions. The Institutional Profile summarizes your survey data for first-time male, female and all respondents. Comparative national normative responses from all institutions participating in the CIRP Freshman Survey will also be included in the report. ***You will also receive separate summary reports profiling part-time students, transfer students, and all survey respondents at your institution.*** You will receive an email from us when it is posted on the CIRP Web Portal for download.

In January 2013, all institutions will receive a copy of “The American Freshman: National Norms Fall 2012” (PDF) for download. We will post this PDF to coincide with the release of the National Norms. A hard copy of our monograph will follow via U.S. mail to both the primary contact and President of your institution. You will receive an email from us when it is posted on the CIRP Web Portal for download.

New Data and Reporting Tools

Two reports are included in your Institutional Profile:

- 1) *CIRP Constructs* are global measures of academic and educational outcomes of interest to institutions: Habits of Mind, Academic Self-Concept, Social Self-Concept, Pluralistic Orientation, Social Agency, College Reputation Orientation, and Likelihood of College Involvement. Included in the CIRP Construct reports are: means, standard deviation, statistical significance, effect size and percentiles for your institution and comparison groups. Additionally, scores on each construct have been calculated for each respondent and are included in your dataset.
- 2) *CIRP Themes* are collections of related items grouped together for easy access (e.g. Health and Wellness). Included in the Theme reports are: summarized frequencies, means, standard deviation, statistical significance, and effect size for your institution and comparison groups.

Two new reporting packages are available for additional fees:

- 1) The Standard Reporting Package includes the following:
 - PowerPoint Executive Summary of your data with two comparison groups
 - Extended Comparison Group Report
 - On-line data analysis system
- 2) The Reporting Plus Package includes all of the above, plus an individual consultation on your institutional results with CIRP Staff (2 hours).

An online data analysis tool is available for an additional fee. This allows you to examine the responses to the survey questions by running frequencies, crosstabs, means, and correlations. You do not need to be familiar with a statistical package, just point and click!

An executive summary of your school's CIRP Freshman Survey results is available in a PowerPoint presentation for a low additional fee. This is presentation-ready for your use.

Obtaining Student Data for Local Research

You will be provided with a data file containing the coded responses of each student at your institution. For those who employ web surveys, we will now be including the responses from students who have started, but not completed, the web survey in the data returned to you ("partial responses"). Up until now we have had a very conservative criterion for returning web survey data and for its use in our reports: requiring the student to complete the survey and hit the "submit" button. Institutions participating in web surveys will now receive responses from those who partially complete the instrument in their dataset and reports. In order to be considered a "partial", the respondent must have read and accepted the informed consent, and completed at least one question on the survey.

Campuses use the data file for a variety of analyses—admissions, retention, academic performance, departmental profiles, etc. In fact, any item contained on the survey could be used to define interesting subsets for study—students interested in the humanities vs. those interested in professional fields, residential vs. commuting students, in-state versus out-of-state students (the locally defined additional questions can be used to identify subsets that are institutionally specific, such as students indicating an interest in online or web-based courses versus those who do not). Even if you do not now plan to use a data file, your institution might find it useful in the future. This data file (and your Institutional Profile) will be available on the CIRP Web Portal until September 2013.

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 Diverse Learning Environments (DLE) survey, the College Student Survey (CSS) or the Your First College Year (YFCY) survey. In order to do 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, and for web administrations you consider pre-populating your 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.

Please note the following considerations with respect to students' confidentiality when using the data file:

- HERI never releases student names in association with survey responses.
- In order to receive an electronic data file, you must certify your compliance with a confidentiality agreement. 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. You must complete this form on the CIRP Web Portal, and it must be completed before you can have access to your data file.

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.

Appendix

Samples of Communications

For **Paper Only** survey:

Initial letter

Subject Line (can be edited)	Freshman Survey Invitation
Greeting (cannot be edited)	Dear <name of student>
Introduction (can be edited)	<p>Please tell us about you! [<i>Insert your institution name here</i>] is participating in a national survey about incoming college students. Conducted by the Higher Education Research Institute (HERI) at UCLA, this survey asks your opinion on many items relevant to examining the impact of college. Every fall, students from hundreds of colleges and universities across the country are asked to participate in this same survey. It asks about your expectations for college, your academic habits and experiences, what influenced your college choice, your goals and values, and how you spend your time.</p> <p>Results from this survey are used by faculty and administrators at [<i>insert your institution name here</i>] and by higher education researchers to understand and improve the undergraduate college experience.</p> <p>The enclosed questionnaire should be completed in pen (blue or black ink only) and returned to [<i>insert institutional contact information</i>] as soon as possible [<i>insert return instructions (i.e., in the enclosed envelope)</i>].</p>
Mandatory Language (cannot be edited)	Your participation in this survey is completely voluntary. Your responses to the questionnaire indicate your consent to participate. For more information please read the enclosed "Survey Information Sheet."
Message Close (can be edited)	<p>Thank you for participating in this important survey of college students.</p> <p>Sincerely,</p> <p>John H. Pryor Director, The CIRP Freshman Survey Higher Education Research Institute</p>

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

Reminder letter

Subject Line (can be edited)	Freshman Survey reminder
Greeting (cannot be edited)	Dear <name of student>
Introduction (can be edited)	Recently, we sent you a request to participate in an important survey about incoming college students conducted for <i>[insert your institution name here]</i> by The Higher Education Research Institute (HERI) at UCLA. Please consider adding your opinions and experiences to this important project. The enclosed questionnaire should be completed in pen (blue or black ink only) and returned to <i>[insert institutional contact information]</i> as soon as possible <i>[insert return instructions (i.e., in the enclosed envelope)]</i> .
Mandatory Language (cannot be edited)	Your participation in this survey is completely voluntary. Your responses to the questionnaire indicate your consent to participate. For more information please read the enclosed "Survey Information Sheet."
Message Close (can be edited)	Thank you for participating in this important survey of college students. Sincerely, John H. Pryor Director, The CIRP Freshman Survey Higher Education Research Institute

For Paper Survey with a Web Option:Initial letter

Subject Line (can be edited)	Freshman Survey Invitation
Greeting (cannot be edited)	Dear <name of student>
Introduction (can be edited)	<p>Please tell us about you! [<i>Insert your institution name here</i>] is participating in a national survey about incoming college students. Conducted by the Higher Education Research Institute (HERI) at UCLA, this survey asks your opinion on many items relevant to the impact of college. Every fall, students from hundreds of colleges and universities across the country are asked to participate in the same survey. It asks about your expectations for college, your academic habits and experiences, what influenced your college choice, your goals and values, and how you spend your time.</p> <p>Results from this survey are used by faculty and administrators at [<i>insert your institution name here</i>] and by higher education researchers to understand and improve the undergraduate college experience</p> <p>The enclosed questionnaire should be completed in pen (blue or black ink only) and returned to [<i>insert institutional contact information</i>] as soon as possible [<i>insert return instructions (i.e., in the enclosed envelope)</i>].</p>
Mandatory Language (cannot be edited)	<p>You may also complete this survey on the Internet. The website for the survey is: https://www.dracsurveys.com/CIRPFreshmanSurvey2012/et.aspx?Logon=XXX XXXX</p> <p>Your participation in this survey is completely voluntary. Your responses to the questionnaire indicate your consent to participate. For more information please read the enclosed “Survey Information Sheet” (or via the survey website).</p>
Message Close (can be edited)	<p>Thank you for participating in this important survey of college students.</p> <p>Sincerely,</p> <p>John H. Pryor Director, The CIRP Freshman Survey Higher Education Research Institute</p>

Reminder letter

Subject Line (can be edited)	Freshman Survey reminder
Greeting (cannot be edited)	Dear <name of student>
Introduction (can be edited)	Recently we sent you a request to participate in an important survey about incoming college students conducted for [<i>insert your institution name here</i>] by The Higher Education Research Institute (HERI) at UCLA. Please consider adding your opinions and experiences to this important project. The enclosed questionnaire should be completed in pen (blue or black ink only) and returned to [<i>insert institutional contact information</i>] as soon as possible [<i>insert return instructions (i.e., in the enclosed envelope)</i>].
Mandatory Language (cannot be edited)	You may also complete this survey online. The website for the survey is: https://www.drctsurveys.com/CIRPFreshmanSurvey2012/et.aspx?Logon=XXXXXX Your participation in this survey is completely voluntary. Your responses to the questionnaire indicate your consent to participate. For more information please read the enclosed "Survey Information Sheet" (or via the survey website).
Message Close (can be edited)	Thank you for participating in this important survey of college students. Sincerely, John H. Pryor Director, The CIRP Freshman Survey Higher Education Research Institute

For the **Web Survey**Initial invitation

Subject Line (can be edited)	Freshman Survey Invitation
Greeting (cannot be edited)	Dear <name of student>
Introduction (can be edited)	<p>Please tell us about you! [<i>Insert your institution name here</i>] is participating in a national survey about incoming college students. Conducted by the Higher Education Research Institute (HERI) at UCLA, this survey asks your opinion on many items relevant to the impact of college. Every fall, students from hundreds of colleges and universities across the country are asked to participate in this same survey. It asks about your expectations for college, your academic habits and experiences, what influenced your college choice, your goals and values, and how you spend your time.</p> <p>Results from this survey are used by faculty and administrators at [<i>insert your institution name here</i>] and by higher education researchers to understand and improve the undergraduate college experience.</p>
Mandatory Language (cannot be edited)	<p>The website for the survey is: https://www.dracsurveys.com/CIRPFreshmanSurvey2012/et.aspx?Logon=XXXXXX Simply click on this address to go directly to the survey. If this does not work, "copy and paste" this address into the address bar of your Internet Browser.</p> <p>Your participation in this survey is completely voluntary. Your responses to the questionnaire indicate your consent to participate (please read the "Survey Information Sheet" on the survey website for more information</p>
Message Close (can be edited)	<p>Thank you for participating in this important survey of college students. Sincerely,</p> <p>John H. Pryor Director, The CIRP Freshman Survey Higher Education Research Institute</p>

Reminder email 1

Subject Line (can be edited)	Freshman Survey reminder
Greeting (cannot be edited)	Dear <name of student>
Introduction (can be edited)	Recently we sent you a request to participate in an important survey about incoming college students conducted for <i>[insert your institution name here]</i> by The Higher Education Research Institute (HERI) at UCLA. Please consider adding your opinions and experiences to this important project.
Mandatory Language (cannot be edited)	The website for the survey is: https://www.drcsurveys.com/CIRPFreshmanSurvey2012/et.aspx?Logon=XXXXXX Simply click on this address to go directly to the survey. If this does not work, "copy and paste" this address into the address bar of your Internet Browser. Your participation in this survey is completely voluntary. Your responses to the questionnaire indicate your consent to participate (please read the "Survey Information Sheet" on the survey website for more information).
Message Close (can be edited)	Thank you for participating in this important study of college students. Sincerely, John H. Pryor Director, The CIRP Freshman Survey Higher Education Research Institute

Reminder email 2

Subject Line (can be edited)	Freshman Survey Reminder
Greeting (cannot be edited)	Dear <name of student>
Introduction (can be edited)	This is a reminder that we are conducting an important survey about incoming college students.
Mandatory Language (cannot be edited)	The website for the survey is: https://www.drmsurveys.com/CIRPFreshmanSurvey2012/et.aspx?Logon=X XXXXXXXX Simply click on this address to go directly to the survey. If this does not work, "copy and paste" this address into the address bar of your Internet Browser. Your participation in this survey is completely voluntary. Your responses to the questionnaire indicate your consent to participate (please read the "Survey Information Sheet" on the survey website for more information).
Message Close (can be edited)	Thank you for participating in this important survey of college students. Sincerely, John H. Pryor Director, The CIRP Freshman Survey Higher Education Research Institute

Reminder email 3

Subject Line (can be edited)	Final Freshman Survey Reminder
Greeting (cannot be edited)	Dear <name of student>
Introduction (can be edited)	This is a final reminder that we are conducting an important survey about incoming college students.
Mandatory Language (cannot be edited)	<p>The website for the survey is: https://www.drmsurveys.com/CIRPFreshmanSurvey2012/et.aspx?Logon=X XXXXXXXX</p> <p>Simply click on this address to go directly to the survey. If this does not work, "copy and paste" this address into the address bar of your Internet Browser.</p> <p>Your participation in this survey is completely voluntary. Your responses to the questionnaire indicate your consent to participate (please read the "Survey Information Sheet" on the survey website for more information).</p>
Message Close (can be edited)	<p>Thank you for participating in this important survey of college students. Sincerely,</p> <p>John H. Pryor Director, The CIRP Freshman Survey Higher Education Research Institute</p>