

Note: Data files more than 10 years old may be downloaded from the [CIRP Data Archives](#). Institutions that have participated in our surveys may order [Custom Reports and Data Files](#) of their institutional data without submitting a research proposal. Researchers from non-participating institutions may also order Custom Reports without submitting a research proposal. To gain access to HERI survey data, all researchers must submit a written proposal and have the proposal approved by following the steps below.

Data Access

Obtaining Approval for Use of HERI Data

The Higher Education Research Institute (HERI) encourages research and scholarly inquiry using the hundreds of data files for research on post-secondary education that HERI maintains. Individuals interested in using HERI data must submit a proposal for data access and should demonstrate a clear idea of the specific project they wish to pursue. When reviewing proposals, HERI staff evaluate whether:

1. HERI data adequately matches the proposed research project;
2. The study design is adequate to answer the questions being asked, theoretical grounding is evident, and the proposal provides sufficient detail about dependent and independent variables;
3. The proposal details the process by which the investigator will acquire appropriate institutional review board approval;
4. The intended plan specified by the investigator involves advancing scholarship; and
5. The research is conducted in a manner that minimizes conflicts with other research conducted by HERI staff or other investigators under previously approved projects.

Fees

There are fees associated with access to HERI datasets. Please contact HERI to discuss study related costs.

Institutional Review Board Approval

Researchers from outside of UCLA must also obtain approval from their own institutional review boards as appropriate. Any necessary local IRB approval can be obtained after HERI approves the project. It is the responsibility of the investigator to determine if local IRB approval is necessary.

HERI Involvement

Approval by HERI does not carry with it any commitment to facilitate the execution of the project beyond access to and descriptions of the data.

Dataset Limitations

HERI will only provide investigators with data files that do not contain individual or institutional identifiers. Datasets that are available for use by scholars outside HERI are those that are three years and older. Currently this means that datasets from 2008 and later are not yet available.

Terms of Approval

Data access is granted for a period of one year from when the data is received. If access to the data is needed for more than one year, a written request for access to the data for a second year is required and must be made prior to the original data access expiration date. After two years, data access expires. If access to the data is still needed, a written status update is required and a formal request for an extension of an approved project. Extension requests must be made prior to the end of the second year expiration date and require approval from the full data access committee. If approved, extensions grant access to the data for a third and final year.

Dissemination

The investigator(s) must submit an electronic copy to HERI of any and all reports, presentations, and publications based on the data at the time of publication/presentation. HERI reserves the right to disseminate your findings on its website in a form compatible with any copyright agreement, if any.

Proposal Narrative

YOUR 3-4 PAGE PROPOSAL MUST INCLUDE THE FOLLOWING SECTIONS

1. Title.
2. Purpose. Explain the study's theoretical framework. Make reference to the literature as appropriate.
3. Research questions and/or hypotheses. Explicitly state your research questions.
4. Datasets: Please specify (1) instrument and year - e.g., The Freshman Survey 2000, College Senior Survey 2004, (2) if you require a particular subset (e.g., only women), and (3) please describe dependent variable (s) and independent variable(s). In addition, you need to submit a data access [variable list](#). Requests for entire datasets or for entire question blocks are not typically granted. The [variable list](#) must be limited to the variables that are required in order to execute your planned study.
5. Method of Analysis. Explain the analyses that will be performed.
6. Location of study. Explain if you will be accessing the data in-house at HERI or will need to arrange for off-site access. If you plan on-site access, estimate when and how long you would need to be on-site.
7. Dissemination. Describe the proposed dissemination of the results, including: to whom results will be released, how the results will be released, and a timetable for release.
8. References.

Submitting your proposal

Please submit the following documents via email (preferred), fax or mail:

1. A copy of the full proposal (refer to "Proposal Narrative" above).
2. A copy of the data access [variable list](#).
3. A copy of a signed [cover page](#).

Additional requirements for student projects

* A letter of support for the research project from a faculty sponsor or department chairperson must accompany the proposal.

* The faculty sponsor or department chairperson must sign the [cover page](#).

Faculty Sponsors or Department Chairperson

A signed letter of support on department/college stationary is a required part of the proposal submission process for students. This letter needs to address the merit of the proposed research project, including the study design and how the study advances scholarship.

When submitting your proposal, please allow sufficient time for HERI to review your project and ask for clarifications. Proposals are reviewed monthly on the third Wednesday of the month. Proposals must be received a week before (the second Wednesday of the month) in order to be considered in that monthly cycle. You will be notified shortly after that meeting about the status of your proposal.