



**THE GEORGE
WASHINGTON
UNIVERSITY**
WASHINGTON, DC

Responsible University Official:
Associate Provost, Academic Planning and
Assessment
Responsible Office: Academic Planning
and Assessment
Last Revised Date: January 27, 2009

INTERNAL QUESTIONNAIRE ADMINISTRATION

Policy Statement

It is the policy of the university for any person or office, including an auxiliary service office, proposing to administer a questionnaire to GW students, faculty, or staff who are not under his or her purview or who do not work within the person's office or department to first obtain approval from the Office of Academic Planning and Assessment. Those who utilize faculty, staff, or student contact information for the purposes of a questionnaire are responsible for safeguarding all information and questionnaire results in accordance with applicable information security policies, and must provide a signed statement agreeing to adhere to those policies.

Reason for Policy

The proliferation of questionnaires to university constituents raises important ethical, legal, and practical concerns such as student privacy, protection of human subjects, and questionnaire fatigue from over-surveying the same groups or distributing multiple questionnaires at the same time. The purpose of this policy is to provide central internal survey administration in order to promote privacy, improve questionnaire quality, and increase the reliability and validity of the data collected.

Who is Governed by this Policy

Faculty, staff, students and those not affiliated with the university who are proposing to survey GW faculty, staff or students.

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Policy

Scope and Applicability

Any person or office, including an auxiliary service office, proposing to administer a questionnaire to GW students, faculty, or staff first must obtain written approval from the Office of Academic Planning and Assessment. This policy does not apply to an administrative or departmental office that is surveying those faculty, staff, or students under its purview (e.g., an academic department surveying all its majors or a university service department surveying those who they can identify as using its services).

This policy does apply to questionnaires in which the initiator:

- A. Requests names, mailing addresses, email addresses, or phone numbers for a sample population that is not under his or her purview or work as set forth above;
- B. Proposes to sample the entire faculty, staff, or student body, or a large group of faculty, staff, or students;
- C. Requests sample populations that cross school, college, or administrative areas; or
- D. Requests sample populations for a class, research project, or thesis in which the student requests information from university directories about the targeted population.

In addition to the requirements of this policy, any questionnaire that constitutes human subject research must be reviewed and approved by the Institutional Review Board in accordance with the [Policy Regarding Treatment of Human Research Subjects](#).

Signed Statement and Information Security Requirements

Prior to engaging in activity covered by this policy, the individual requesting questionnaire participant contact information must provide to the Office of Academic Planning and Assessment a signed statement agreeing to adhere to all applicable information security policies (see [survey request form](#) for template).

Questionnaire respondent contact information must not be shared with or provided to other offices or to other individuals (either internal or external to the university) beyond the scope of the questionnaire and must not be reused to administer other questionnaires without written permission from the Office of Academic Planning and Assessment. When questionnaire data to be stored on computers, servers or other devices is confidential per the [Information Security Policy](#), the device must be password protected and encrypted in accordance with the [Information Security Policy](#).

Requests for Questionnaire Recipient Contact Information and Questionnaire Scheduling

All requests for contact information for faculty, staff or students for potential questionnaire use must be submitted in writing to the Office of Academic Planning and Assessment via the [survey request form](#).

- A. All requests must include the following:
- B. General scope or purpose of the project;
- C. A copy of the questionnaire instrument;
- D. Population being studied, sampling method, and number of people to be surveyed;
- E. A statement of how the confidentiality or anonymity of the people being surveyed will be assured;
- F. Dates and timing of data collection or surveying;
- G. A description of any planned incentive program for respondents;
- H. Information required (e.g., mailing addresses, email addresses, phone numbers);
- I. A statement about how the questionnaire results will be analyzed;
- J. A statement about how the questionnaire data will be used; and
- K. If the questionnaire is part of a research project, a copy of the approval granted by the Institutional Review Board.

Requests will be approved based on the content and quality of the questionnaire; number of requests to survey the same population; and dates of questionnaire collection. Requests will be reviewed monthly.

Definitions

Auxiliary Service Office: Programs, operations and functions that support the institution's educational mission by providing goods and services for the overall satisfaction of students, faculty and staff as it relates to campus life and learning experiences. Auxiliary services include, but are not limited to dining services, vending services, campus bookstore, campus mail, parking services, student travel services, copy centers, convenience stores, campus child care centers, ATM services, trademark licensing for collegiate apparel, etc.

Questionnaire: A set of questions that are asked with the intention of obtaining statistically useful information from an individual. For the purposes of this policy, the term questionnaire includes surveys, scales or tests, but does not include operational forms, such as those that seek information from a group for payroll or benefits open enrollment purposes.

Forms

[Request for Survey Recipient Contact Information Form](#)

Related Information

[Information Security Policy](#)

[Office of Survey Research and Analysis – Surveys](#) *(includes a survey calendar)*

[Policy Regarding Treatment of Human Research Subjects](#)

[Privacy of Student Records](#)

[Social Security Number and GWid Usage Policy](#)

[The George Washington University Privacy Policy Statement](#)

Contacts

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Document History

- **Last Reviewed Date:** March 29, 2018
- **Last Revised Date:** January 27, 2009
- **Policy Origination Date:** November 19, 2008

Who Approved This Policy

Louis H. Katz, Executive Vice President and Treasurer

Steven R. Lerman, Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs

Beth Nolan, Senior Vice President and General Counsel

This policy, as well as all [university policies](#), are located on the [Office of Compliance and Privacy's](#) home page.