



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

CIRP FRESHMAN SURVEY 2015 Administration Guidelines

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

2015 CIRP 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, and the supporting materials referred to within, provides important information necessary to participate in the 2015 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 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 **January 15, 2015**
- The first day the survey can be administered is **March 13, 2015**
- Survey administration must be completed and surveys received at processing center by **October 12, 2015**
- 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, (**after October 12, 2015**)
- Comparison group selection (**November 2015**)
- Institutional Profile and final data file available for download from www.cirpsurveys.org, (**December 2015**)
- *The American Freshman* delivered (**January 2016**)

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

Billing and Payment Information

A complete description of the costs for participating in the CIRP Freshman Survey may be found on the overview page at <http://www.heri.ucla.edu/cirpoverview.php>.

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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.

The Higher Education Research Institute (HERI) will provide all of the necessary resources for the 2015 administration of the CIRP Freshman Survey. Copies of materials, including these administration guidelines, are available on the HERI website <http://heri.ucla.edu/cirpoverview.php#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.

Survey Administration Methods

The CIRP Freshman Survey can be administered via paper questionnaire, as a web-based survey, or as a combination of paper and web-based questionnaires. You can use our system to deliver the email invitations to complete the web-based questionnaire to students or elect to contact students on your own. Paper questionnaires can be used in a proctored setting or mailed out to students.

Placing Your Order

Once you have registered to participate, the next step is providing some basic information about your order. To do this, you will log into the web portal; 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)
- If you would like to ask additional questions and if so, if you would like HERI to administer the questions or if you will administer them yourself;
- Whether or not you intend to use group codes
- Whether you would like CIRP to email your students the invitations and reminders or if you would like to do that from your institution
- The dates you would like to send the invitation and at least one of three reminders (if you elect to have CIRP manage your email invitation and reminders)

- Whether or not you will customize the Welcome and Thank You pages (web surveys only);
- If you would like to add your logo to the survey
- A 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 these customization options are not mandatory, institutions find that taking advantage of some or all of these options greatly increases response to the survey, garnering more useful 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.

ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS (additional charge)

Institutions have the option of adding up to 20 multiple choice questions of specific local interest at the end of the questionnaire. These are institution-specific questions that you will create, or adopt as part of a consortium.

If you choose to ask additional questions, you will want to set aside sufficient time to draft, pilot test, and incorporate your additional questions into the administration of your CIRP Freshman Survey. Additionally, it is important to consult with your local IRB. Your campus may require you to submit these questions for their review and approval. If your campus believes an additional question to be of a sensitive nature, you must submit that question to CIRP for our consideration at least one month in advance of your survey administration. For more information, please see [Using Additional Questions](#).

GROUP CODES (free)

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](#).

EDITING THE WELCOME AND THANK YOU PAGES (free)

You can customize the Welcome and Thank You pages with a message and/or the logo from your institution. Using an institutional logo reinforces the idea that individual colleges and universities administer the CIRP Freshman Survey. If you do not customize the Welcome/Thank You page, a generic version of the webpages will be used. You can preview these pages when you place your order.

EMAILING INVITATIONS AND REMINDERS

Your students will be invited to participate in the survey via an email that includes the following:

1) a short description of the survey project, 2) required information concerning human subjects, 3) information on how to opt out of the survey, and 4) a personal access code with which to access the web-based questionnaire. CIRP provides templates for invitations and reminder emails, but campuses will need to customize all their messages.

CIRP ADMINISTERED EMAILS (additional charge)

During the registration process, campuses choose the date that CIRP will send the invitation email to students as well as reminders to non-respondents who have not opted out of future mailings. Generic text for these emails is supplied, but should be edited to best suit your institution. Sections of the emails that cannot be edited are those required for human subjects approval at UCLA.

One of the advantages of this email option is that your institution does not need to send and monitor emails. More importantly, having CIRP administer the emails takes your institution “out of the loop.” By having CIRP administer the survey your institution is further removed from any perceived intervention.

If you elect to have CIRP manage your email distribution, you will need to provide us with the email address for each student in your sample. The specifications for this file will be sent to you. CIRP does not use the email addresses you provide for any other purposes.

INSTITUTIONALLY ADMINISTERED EMAILS

Schools may elect to send the notification emails on their own, in which case CIRP will supply a set of logon codes specific to each school. The appropriate campus representative then merges these logon codes within their own system to create invitation and reminder emails and to monitor survey responses.

Pre-Populate Student ID

Those institutions opting to have CIRP manage email communications will provide CIRP with the email addresses and names (first name, last name) of all students to be surveyed. Institutions may elect to include student IDs as well. For more information, please see Student Identifiers.

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 (with your institution name in place of "Sample University"):

Sponsored by the Higher Education Research Institute and Sample University

The institution name will, by default, be the name that appears in our registration system. If you would like to alter this name (e.g. "Sample U.") then please check "Display Name and Logo" on the "Survey Customization" page in the Web Portal.

Preparing to Administer the Survey

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 field 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.

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 survey email address 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 specific information to provide to your IT department, see [Anti-Spam Guidelines](#).

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). Emails can also be personalized with the recipient's name.

Pre-Contact

In order to maximize your response rate, we suggest that you communicate with your students a week before the first email is to be sent out, introducing the survey and asking them to watch

their email for the invitation. Survey methodology research indicates that pre-notifications can substantially increase your response rate.

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.

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

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.

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. **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*].”**

Confidentiality

The CIRP Freshman Survey collects personal identifiers and potentially sensitive demographic data. Student responses to these survey items make it possible to link TFS data with data from several sources such as other CIRP surveys (e.g., 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 TFS. Please inform your students that the questionnaires are handled in a confidential and professional manner. For more information regarding confidentiality and privacy, please see [Confidentiality and Privacy](#).

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 12, 2015. Please allow sufficient time for delivery by the deadline. **If your surveys do not arrive by October 12, 2015 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.** For more information, please see [Survey Shipping Form](#).

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

Institutional Review Board 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. HERI receives its human subjects approval from the UCLA North General Institutional Review Board (NGIRB), which requires that an appropriate college certify that:

1. Your institution 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 2015 CIRP Freshman Survey.

Compliance with the above statements is obtained by completing the Research Approval Form. **You will not be able to receive any data or reports until the Research Approval Form is completed.**

Many campuses have found that the application that CIRP submits to the UCLA IRB is very useful in discussions with their own local IRBs. If you would like to view a copy of our approved application, please contact us.

After Administration

Administration Report Form (ARF) Online Survey

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 2015 ARF Survey shortly after the final processing cut-off date (October 12, 2015). Please note: We may be unable to process your institution's data until we receive the completed ARF. If we do not receive it, 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](#).

Questions and Further Information

If you have questions, please contact the CIRP office at heri@ucla.edu or by phone at 310-825-7079.