Harford Community College Survey Protocol
Institutional Research Office
Effective September 1, 2018

Harford Community College creates and participates in a number of surveys that are intended to collect data involving prospective students, current students, alumni, faculty, and staff for administrative, planning, assessment, and reporting purposes. In response to the College's ongoing commitment to accountability and to serving the needs of its campus and wider community, there continues to be a strong need for these types of surveys. In addition to internal demands for data collected via surveys, there has also been demand for survey data by external groups.

A survey is defined as: a series of questions distributed to a group of people for the purpose of research or analysis.
In an effort to best meet the internal and external demands for survey data, a coordinated approach to the administration of surveys to members of the Harford Community College community is needed.

Purpose of the Protocol
1. To ensure that the same individuals aren't being surveyed too many times during the same term, which could result in "survey fatigue" and, therefore, less meaningful survey data and fewer responses
2. To keep IR "in the loop" about surveys being conducted at the College
3. To ensure that the data collected are valid, reliable, and used to inform decision-making
4. To categorize, study, and archive survey projects and results to provide relevant information to individuals who may be considering and designing future surveys
5. To eliminate the collection of duplicate data

Procedure
The following are the steps you should take when planning to administer a survey. Note that the first step must be completed by early each fall and spring semester. The next two steps must be done **at least one month** before you plan to administer the survey.

1. Respond with general information to a call for surveys that IR will send out via News and Whooos as well as directly to all VP divisions each fall and spring semester. Survey information does not at this point need to be detailed, but the survey population should be identified.
2. Contact the IR director by email to determine whether your survey needs to undergo review by the Institutional Review Board (IRB).
3. If no IRB review is necessary or if directed to do so by the IR director, complete a work order in the KACE system, Institutional Research Survey Request queue.
4. Based on your responses to questions in the work order, the IR Office will contact you to indicate whether your proposed survey was approved and, if so, to set up the research protocol (survey design, sampling, logistics, analyses, etc.)

4.a. Survey approval process is as follows:

1. All survey proposals gathered during the call for surveys described in step 1, above, will be reviewed by a subcommittee appointed by the AA and SAIE Leadership Team.

2. Surveys that involve populations of students or employees may need to be approved by the appropriate Vice President. A determination of this approval level will be made by the subcommittee. In most cases, this will only occur when large populations of either group are to be surveyed.

5. Administer your survey (or have your survey administered by the IR office), analyze the results, and write up your report. (IR can help with all steps of this process provided we are involved in Steps 1-3.)

6. Send IR a final copy of report, and include a description of how the survey data were used.

IR will post on its website and portal channel a schedule of mandated, routine, and other current surveys that are scheduled and will include this information when the call for proposed surveys is sent prior to the start of each term.

Exemptions:

The following types of surveys are exempt from the protocol:

- Surveys conducted by individual academic faculty/staff with students enrolled in their courses as part of the internal process to assess the quality of learning and teaching (e.g., course evaluation questionnaires);
- Surveys conducted by administrative units to obtain immediate feedback on service provisions;
- Feedback or evaluation surveys of an event or service gathered at the point of service;

Note 1: If your survey falls under any of the above exemptions—

(a) Please notify IR of the population you are surveying, time period, and purpose of your survey.

(b) The IR Office is willing to help with your survey design.

Note 2: IR will not analyze data from any survey that was performed under the above exemptions unless the IR office participated in the design and implementation.

Please note that, unless you meet the exemptions:

- All surveys require IR approval before they are administered, even if they do not require IRB approval.
- If you plan to administer your survey electronically, plan to work with IR to have your survey designed, administered, and analyzed using the IR professional version of SurveyMonkey.
- IR will not assist with data analyses if the survey has not been approved.
- Students who wish to conduct surveys must be sponsored by a faculty or staff member.

- Any member of the proposed survey population with a "Confidential" indicator in Banner must not be included in the final survey population.
- Once a survey is approved, annual approval is not required unless the survey instrument, the survey cycle, or administration of the survey is altered.
- Failure to adhere to the survey protocol presented here will result in a written notification to the survey requester and the relevant Chair or Vice President.

Guidelines for Surveying

The IR Office recommends that you consider, review, and follow the principles and guidelines listed below in designing your survey project. We will review the survey application using these guidelines and provide feedback to you **within approximately one week** of the date your work order was received.

Importance
➤ Will the survey provide useful information for planning, assessment or other purposes?
➤ Will it provide useful feedback to those providing services to students, faculty, staff, or alumni?
➤ Will it provide the College with useful information on the experience of students?

Overall Impact
➤ What is the intended impact of the study?
➤ What questions are you attempting to answer?

Sample/Population
➤ What is the target population?
➤ Will the entire population or a sample be surveyed?
➤ Is the sampling methodology appropriate?

Content and Design of Survey
➤ Is the survey well designed?
➤ Are the questions easily understood?
➤ Is the survey too short or long?

Format/Process
➤ Has a strategy been adopted to attain an acceptable response rate or margin of error?
➤ Has the survey data collection process been well considered?
➤ Does the survey follow an appropriate format?
➤ Have you followed the procedures for protecting subject confidentiality?

Timing
➤ Will the survey overlap with other surveys? (Review the published schedule of surveys prior to finalizing plans.)

➢ When will the survey be conducted? For example: Will the survey be conducted during a time when your population is available?

Resources
➢ What resources will you need in order to administer the survey? For example: mailing information, web application, data entry, etc.