

### Survey Review Process

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#### ***Purpose of Review Process***

Surveys at Tufts collect valuable information from students, faculty, staff, and alumni and are used to understand the perspectives and experiences of members of the university community, contribute to general knowledge about Tufts, and evaluate and support institutional priorities. However, over-surveying the university community can have negative implications for response rates, data quality, and the respondent experience. In order to ensure that surveys at Tufts are able to fulfill their objectives, the Office of Institutional Research (OIR) has adopted this survey review process.

Through this process, OIR aims to:

- Encourage a coordinated approach to surveying the university community,
- Ensure surveys administered at Tufts collect useful, high-quality data,
- Promote best practices in survey research, and
- Manage the number and timing of surveys that members of the community are asked to complete each year.

In order to achieve these objectives, OIR will review proposed survey projects at Tufts that are submitted in accordance with the guidelines below and will provide varying levels of assistance.

#### ***Scope of Review Process***

If you are planning to administer a survey to Tufts students, faculty, staff, or alumni, please submit a Survey Proposal Form for OIR to review your project (see exceptions below). This review process applies to anyone associated with Tufts, whether you are planning to conduct a survey yourself or contract with a third party.

OIR does not typically assist with or expect to review the following types of surveys:

- Student & Faculty class/research projects
- Course evaluations
- Point-of-service surveys
- Forms used for scheduling/administrative purposes
- Surveys to solicit feedback from participants following specific events
- Departments, offices, or organizations surveying only their membership.

If you are conducting a survey that falls into one of the above categories but need guidance, you are encouraged to use the survey resources available on the OIR website. You may also submit a Survey Proposal Form to OIR to request a consultation.

#### ***OIR Services***

##### *Core Survey Work*

OIR is responsible for a core suite of internal surveys administered to various university populations. These surveys are of broad institutional scope and support the educational mission and strategic priorities of the Offices of the President and Provost. A majority of OIR's surveys are administered to students (prospective, enrolled, exiting, alumni). Various other surveys are administered to faculty and staff. OIR may also complete ad hoc surveys in support of university-wide strategic initiatives. For OIR's core internal surveys, analysts complete all project components, which include instrument design, distribution and communication, data processing, analysis, and reporting. OIR regularly consults with key stakeholders on each survey to ensure the office's survey research meets the needs of school and university leadership.

## Survey Support

In addition to OIR's core survey work, the office's survey research experts provide services in support of department and unit-level surveys. These services include:

- Survey consultations
- Online resources for survey guidance and best practices
- Collaboration with external survey consultants
- Survey distribution lists

## ***Submit a Proposal***

For assistance with any of the services described in the previous section, please submit a Survey Proposal Form. An OIR staff member will follow up to discuss your proposal. We encourage you to submit a proposal to OIR early in your project's planning and development. The capacity to support department/unit-level survey work is determined in consultation with the client.

## **Submit a Survey Proposal Form**

Additional guidelines for submitting a proposal:

- Before submitting a proposal, you may use the [PDF version](#) of the Survey Proposal Form to plan for your submission.
- Proposals for surveys that are planned for populations of 500 or more people should be submitted to OIR at least three months prior to the proposed administration date. This is to ensure that there is sufficient time for survey samples and schedules to be coordinated across larger projects.
- Proposals for surveys that are planned for populations of less than 500 people should be submitted to OIR at least one month prior to the proposed administration date.
- If you plan to contract with a third party to administer a survey, we recommend you submit a proposal before signing an agreement with this third party.
- Tufts students submitting a proposal must do so in collaboration with a sponsoring faculty or staff member.

## ***Proposal Review***

OIR will review the survey proposal to ensure adherence to survey research best practices, including instrument design, administration methods and timelines, population identification and sampling, data confidentiality and security, and plans for use and distribution of survey results. During the review, OIR staff will follow up to discuss project details or request additional information about the proposal. In the review process, OIR may share the proposal with others at Tufts to seek higher level review, request subject matter expertise, or identify potential collaboration opportunities. After the review is complete, OIR will communicate appropriate next steps. This may include:

- Recommendation to administer the survey as proposed,
- Opportunities to coordinate or combine the proposal with other related surveys,
- Suggestions for existing data that can take the place of the survey,
- Recommendations for other data collection methods that are more suitable,
- Edits or changes to any part of the survey project, in accordance with survey research best practices, university priorities, and the calendar of planned surveys.