



# Monroe Community College Survey Protocol

Effective Since April 12, 2021

Monroe Community College participates in a number of surveys that are intended to collect data involving prospective students, current students, alumni, faculty, and staff for administrative, planning 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 more than fifty (50) 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 Monroe Community College community is needed.

## Purpose

1. To ensure that the same individuals aren't being surveyed multiple times during the same term, which could result in "survey fatigue" and, therefore, less meaningful survey data
2. To keep IR "in the loop" about surveys being conducted at the College
3. To ensure that the data collected is valid, reliable, and used to inform decision-making
4. To categorize, study, and archive survey projects and results, in part, 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 two steps must be done ***at least one month*** before you plan to administer the survey.

1. Contact your Dean or Department Head for approval to conduct your survey.
2. Complete the Survey Proposal Form and submit it to IR.
3. Wait to hear whether your survey proposal has been approved. It will take up to 5 business days.
4. Work with the IR Office to set up the research protocol (survey design, sampling, logistics, analyses, etc.).
5. Administer your survey, analyze the results, and write up your report. (IR can help with all steps of this process if we were involved in Step 4)
6. Send IR a final copy of report, and include a description of how the survey data was used.

IR will post on its website a schedule of routine and other current surveys that are scheduled.

## Exemptions

The following types of surveys are exempt from the protocol:

- Surveys conducted by individual academic staff with students enrolled in their courses as part of the internal process to assess or assure 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;
- Surveys conducted by labor unions of their members.

### *Note 1*

If your survey fails under any of the above exemptions...

1. Please notify IR of the population you are surveying, time period, and purpose of your survey. The IR Office would welcome a copy of your survey to add to our survey database.
2. 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 we were part of 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, an IR staff member<sup>1</sup> can help get you set up with our web-based survey software, [Qualtrics](https://www.qualtrics.com)<sup>2</sup>.
- IR will not assist with data analyses if the survey has not been approved.
- Students who wish to conduct survey research must be sponsored by a faculty or staff member.
- Any “do not contact” designations must be respected when creating the survey sample.
- 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

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 a response to you ***within five business days*** of the date your proposal was received.

---

<sup>1</sup> In particular: William Dixon, Mary Ann DeMario, or Elina Belyablya

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.qualtrics.com/>

### ***Importance***

- Will the survey provide useful information for planning 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 research 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?
- Is the content appropriate?
- 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?
- 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.

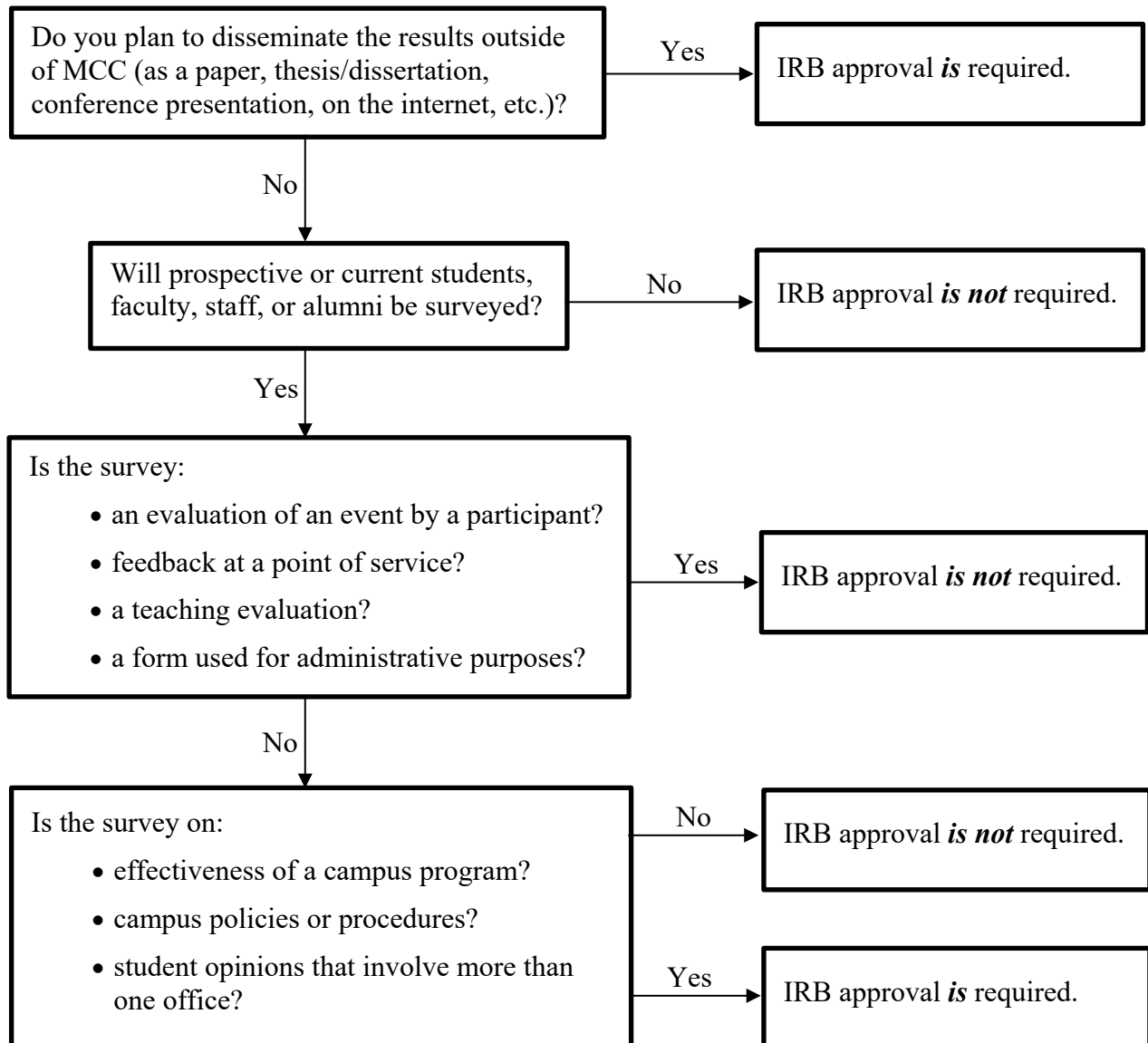
## **Use of Survey Results**

It is possible to obtain survey results that do not meet the threshold of usefulness. In order to be useful, the survey results must be representative of the population being surveyed. IR recommends that a survey receive a response rate of at least 20%. This response rate is deemed as a “good” rate by researchers across the country. A response rate of 10% is the threshold IR uses for a quantitative survey to have meaning. Surveys with less than a 10% response rate should not be used for decision-making purposes, as they are likely not representative of the population being surveyed.

The purpose of IRB (Institutional Review Board) approval is to protect the rights of survey recipients and to protect you and the College from legal liability if the treatment of survey recipients is unethical, if data resulting from your survey are misused, or any part of the survey violates certain protected rights of individuals.

IRB approval is required if the findings from the survey are to be used for any purposes other than data collection about campus programs, practices, curricula, or outcomes for use solely by the College. IRB will be housed in the IR office starting Summer 2021 and will be incorporated into the survey approval process.

The following flow chart can serve as a guideline.



The following is a text outline of the previous flow chart.

1. Do you plan to disseminate the results outside of MCC (as a paper, thesis/dissertation, conference presentation, on the internet, etc.)?
  - **Yes:** IRB Approval *is* required.
2. Will prospective or current students, faculty, staff, or alumni be surveyed?
  - **No:** IRB Approval *is not* required.
3. Is the survey:
  - a. an evaluation of an event by a participant?
  - b. feedback at a point of service?
  - c. a teaching evaluation?
  - d. a form used for administrative purposes?
  - **Yes:** IRB Approval *is not* required.
4. Is the survey:
  - a. effectiveness of a campus program?
  - b. campus policies or procedures?
  - c. student opinions that involve more than one office?
  - **No:** IRB Approval *is not* required.
  - **Yes:** IRB Approval *is* required.