



Institutional Preference Survey

Prepared for [REDACTED]

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INTRODUCTION

The following survey aims to collect perspectives from applicants and current students. When reviewing the survey instrument, please note the following structural aspects of the draft:

- Question numbers (e.g., Q3) pertain to the online survey programming numbers and may be non-linear.
- *Dark red text* is survey programming notes that are not seen by respondents.
- Questions are formatted into “Blocks” or core survey sections.
- “○” denotes radio buttons where the respondent can only select one answer.
- “□” denotes a check box where the respondent can select more than one answer option.
- “*” denotes questions that are mandatory for survey completion.

BEST PRACTICES IN SURVEY DESIGN

Hanover designs surveys that align with best practices in survey design. While we are sensitive to your needs and will make modifications as necessary, we strongly encourage you to maintain the following survey design standards moving forward.

- Present matrix questions (e.g., Likert scales going from strongly disagree to strongly agree) from **negative to positive**.
- **Randomize questions** when multiple options are present to decrease “order-effects,” which is common for questions of a similar structure.
- **Balance Likert scales**, for this survey, we primarily utilized three, four, and five-point scales.
- **Use “N/A” or “Don’t know”** options when the question is either not relevant or the respondent is unsure. These are often consolidated because there is not an analytical reason to separate these results. Moreover, extending the scale (i.e., separating “N/A” and “Don’t know” as two different options) may encourage respondents to select more “positive” responses due to the relative physical position of the extended scale.
- **Keep open-ended comments to a minimum.** Respondents start providing redundant answers when faced with more than two or three open-ended responses.
- **Use skip logic** to ensure that respondents only answer questions pertinent to them.
- **Avoid too many or too few questions in a single page.** You may view these aesthetic aspects of the survey once the survey has been programmed into the online platform.
- Avoid questions with the following characteristics:
 - **Avoid double-barreled questions** (e.g., asking two question at once).
 - **Avoid leading questions.** For example, asking “Many staff members indicate that district buildings are clean. Is your building clean?” may lead a

respondent to indicate that their building is clean regardless of their objective opinion. Asking leading questions makes respondents susceptible to social desirability. That is, respondents might then answer questions based on the question wording and not their objective opinion.

- o **Avoid subjective language** for survey questions to ensure that all respondents will interpret the survey item the same way.

SURVEY INSTRUMENT

INTRODUCTION

Welcome to [REDACTED]'s Institutional Preference Survey

[REDACTED] ([REDACTED]), in partnership with Hanover Research, is conducting a survey to understand the factors that influence students' decisions to enroll or not enroll at [REDACTED]. Your feedback will help [REDACTED] in its recruitment efforts over the coming years.

The first [XXX] participants who qualify and complete this survey will be rewarded with a [INCENTIVE] as a thank you. If you qualify for the [INCENTIVE], you will be asked to provide your contact information at the end of the survey.

This study is for research purposes only: all information you provide will be maintained on a confidential basis by Hanover Research and will only be reported to [REDACTED] in an anonymized form (i.e., your name and identifying information such as race and gender will not be shared with [REDACTED] or tied to your responses), so please be candid in your responses. Please note that you should not use your name or other identifying information in your open-ended responses.

This survey should take about 10 to 15 minutes to complete. Thank you for your participation!

Please click the arrow button to begin.

CONSENT TO DATA COLLECTION

1. Hanover Research takes protecting your personal information seriously. We use your data for research and analysis purposes only. Please see our [Privacy Policy](#) to learn how we collect and process your data.*
☐ I consent to having my personal data collected for this survey.
☐ I do not consent to having my personal data collected and wish to exit the survey. *[Exit survey and delete data]*

INCENTIVE OPT-OUT

Display this question to respondents who are not among the first [XXX]

2. Unfortunately, you are not one of the first [XXX] participants to take this survey and are not eligible for the [INCENTIVE]; however, we would still greatly appreciate your feedback. Would you like to take the survey?*
☐ Yes, I understand I will not receive the [INCENTIVE], but I would like to participate in the survey.
☐ No, I would like to exit the survey now. *[Exit survey]*

SCREENERS

3. Which of the following best describes your relationship to [REDACTED] ([REDACTED])?*

- ☐ I am currently enrolled as a student at [REDACTED] *[Code as current student]*
- ☐ I was accepted at [REDACTED], but I enrolled at a different college/university *[Code as student enrolled elsewhere]*
- ☐ I was accepted at [REDACTED], but I chose not to attend college at this time *[Code as unenrolled]*
- ☐ None of the above *[Disqualify]*

4. For which term did you apply to [REDACTED]?*

- ☐ Fall 2021
- ☐ Spring 2021
- ☐ Fall 2020
- ☐ Spring 2020
- ☐ Fall 2019 *[Disqualify]*
- ☐ Spring 2019 *[Disqualify]*
- ☐ Fall 2018 *[Disqualify]*
- ☐ Spring 2018 *[Disqualify]*
- ☐ Fall 2017 *[Disqualify]*
- ☐ Before Fall 2017 *[Disqualify]*

IMPORTANT FACTORS

5. Which of the following factors were most important to you when deciding where to apply for an undergraduate program? *Please select up to five options.**

- ☐ Proximity to family/home
- ☐ Overall value for the cost
- ☐ Financial aid package
- ☐ Academic quality
- ☐ Institutional reputation
- ☐ Campus atmosphere
- ☐ Cultural diversity
- ☐ Varsity athletic opportunities
- ☐ Student organizations, societies, and clubs
- ☐ Recommendation of a friend
- ☐ Availability of student services (e.g., tutoring, advising)
- ☐ Parents' opinions
- ☐ Offering of specific academic programs
- ☐ Employment prospects after graduation
- ☐ Off-campus opportunities (e.g., internships, study abroad programs)
- ☐ Flexible program format (e.g., online courses, part-time study)
- ☐ Outreach received from staff, faculty, or students of the institution
- ☐ Religious affiliation
- ☐ Transfer credit policies
- ☐ Other (please specify): _____*

Note: Answer options are randomized to reduce order effects

6. How would you rate [REDACTED] in the following area[s]¹?

| | VERY POOR | POOR | FAIR | GOOD | EXCELLENT | DON'T KNOW/NO OPINION |
|--|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| For quality control, please select "Poor" | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| <i>Selected factors from Q5 appear in rows</i> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |

Note: Answer options are randomized to reduce order effects

NPS

7. On a scale from 0-10, how likely are you to recommend [REDACTED] to a friend, family member, or colleague?*

- ☐ 0-Not at All Likely
- ☐ 1
- ☐ 2
- ☐ 3
- ☐ 4
- ☐ 5-Moderately Likely
- ☐ 6
- ☐ 7
- ☐ 8
- ☐ 9
- ☐ 10-Extremely Likely

COMPETITION

8. If you applied to somewhere other than [REDACTED], how did [REDACTED] rank among all the schools to which you applied?*

- ☐ [REDACTED] was my first choice
- ☐ [REDACTED] was among my top choices
- ☐ [REDACTED] was "in the middle of the pack"
- ☐ [REDACTED] was among my bottom choices
- ☐ [REDACTED] was my last choice or "safety school"
- ☐ I did not apply to any schools other than [REDACTED] *Display to current students and unenrolled respondents*

¹ The singular or plural tense will be shown depending on the number of factors respondents select in Q5.

Display this question to respondents who did not only apply to [REDACTED] in Q8

9. Did you apply to any of the following universities? Please select all that apply.*

- ☐ Competitor 1
- ☐ Competitor 2
- ☐ Competitor 3
- ☐ Competitor 4
- ☐ Competitor 5
- ☐ Competitor 6
- ☐ Competitor 7
- ☐ Competitor 8
- ☐ Competitor 9
- ☐ Competitor 10
- ☐ Fake School [For quality control]²
- ☐ None of the above

Note: Answer options are randomized to reduce order effects

10. How would you rate the overall quality of the following

[university/universities]^{3?}*

| | VERY POOR | POOR | FAIR | GOOD | EXCELLENT | DON'T KNOW/NO OPINION |
|--|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| [REDACTED] | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Selected competitor schools from Q9 appear in rows | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |

Note: Answer options are randomized to reduce order effects

ENROLLMENT DECISIONS

Display this question to students enrolled elsewhere who applied to at least one competitor school in Q9

11. Where did you end up enrolling?*

- ☐ Selected competitor schools from Q9 appear as answer options
- ☐ Other
- ☐ None of the above

Note: Answer options are randomized to reduce order effects

Display this question to students enrolled elsewhere who either did not apply to any competitor school in Q9 or who said they enrolled at "Other" in Q11

12. Please enter the name of the university in which you enrolled:.

² We recommend including a fake school for quality control purposes. If respondents select it, their response will be flagged for further review. The fake school will be hidden in Q10-12.

³ The plural tense is shown if the respondent applied to the listed competitor schools in Q9; the singular tense is shown if they did not.

Display this question to current students and students enrolled elsewhere

13. Why did you decide to enroll at **[[REDACTED]]/school from Q11 or 12**⁴? Please select all that apply.*

- ☐ Affordability
- ☐ Provides good value for the money
- ☐ Offered a good financial aid package
- ☐ Positive experience with the application process
- ☐ Highest-ranked school to which I was accepted
- ☐ Good fit for what I want to study
- ☐ Availability or diversity of extracurricular activities
- ☐ Campus social life
- ☐ A friend or relative was attending
- ☐ Close to where I want to live
- ☐ Offered a spot on an athletics team
- ☐ Flexible transfer credit policies
- ☐ Other (please specify): _____*

Note: Answer options are randomized to reduce order effects

Display this question to students enrolled elsewhere and unenrolled respondents

14. Why did you decide to not enroll at **[REDACTED]**? Please select all that apply.*

Display these answer options to students enrolled elsewhere

- ☐ I received a better financial aid package elsewhere
- ☐ I was accepted to a higher-ranked school
- ☐ Another school is a better fit for what I want to study
- ☐ A friend or relative was attending elsewhere
- ☐ Another school is closer to where I want to live
- ☐ I was accepted to my first-choice school
- ☐ Another school offered me a spot on an athletic team
- ☐ I had trouble transferring prior academic credit to **[REDACTED]**

Display these answer options to all

- ☐ I cannot afford to attend
- ☐ **[REDACTED]** does not provide good value for the money
- ☐ I had a negative experience with the application process
- ☐ **[REDACTED]** does not have the extracurricular activities I want to participate in
- ☐ **[REDACTED]** does not have the campus social life I want
- ☐ Other (please specify): _____*

Note: Answer options are randomized to reduce order effects

COVID-19 IMPACT

15. Did the current state of the COVID-19 pandemic impact your higher education plans for Fall 2021?

⁴ Current students at **[PARTNER NAME]** will see "**[PARTNER NAME]**." If students who said they enrolled elsewhere in Q3 applied to and enrolled at a competitor school, they will see the school's name they chose in Q11. If students enrolled elsewhere did either not apply to listed competitor schools in Q9 or said they enrolled at "Other" in Q11, they'll see the text they entered in Q12. If they entered no text, they'll see "your current university."

- ☐ No, my plans remained the same
- ☐ Yes, my plans changed

Display this question to respondents whose plans did not change as a result of COVID-19

16. Did the current state of the COVID-19 pandemic lead you to consider doing any of the following? Please select all that apply.

- ☐ Enrolling at a college or university that is less expensive than the institution I originally planned to attend
- ☐ Enrolling at a college or university that is closer to home than the institution I originally planned to attend
- ☐ Enrolling in a program that is entirely online/distance learning instead of one that is in-person or only partially online
- ☐ Enrolling in a program that is part-time instead of full-time
- ☐ Enrolling in a different degree program (e.g., an associate degree instead of a bachelor's degree)
- ☐ Postponing enrollment in Fall 2021 with plans to enroll in the future
- ☐ Postponing enrollment in Fall 2021 with no plans to enroll in the future
- ☐ Work full-time
- ☐ Other (please specify): _____ *
- ☐ None of the above

Display this question to respondents whose plans did change as a result of COVID-19

17. Which of the following did you do based on the current state of the COVID-19 pandemic? Please select all that apply.

- ☐ Enrolled at a college or university that is less expensive than the institution I originally planned to attend
- ☐ Enrolled at a college or university that is closer to home than the institution I originally planned to attend
- ☐ Enrolled in a program that is entirely online/distance learning instead of one that is in-person or only partially online
- ☐ Enrolled in a program that is part-time instead of full-time
- ☐ Enrolled in a different degree program (e.g., an associate degree instead of a bachelor's degree)
- ☐ Postponed enrollment in Fall 2021 with plans to enroll in the future
- ☐ Postponed enrollment in Fall 2021 with no plans to enroll in the future
- ☐ Worked full-time
- ☐ Other (please specify): _____ *

Display this question to respondents whose plans did change as a result of COVID-19

18. Which of the following factors related to the COVID-19 pandemic impacted your plans for the current academic year? Please select all that apply.

- ☐ I did not have the ability to pay for my education due to changing financial circumstances (e.g., loss of job, parents unable to provide financial support)
- ☐ I did not have access to the tools and technology needed to take classes online or as distance learning
- ☐ I did not feel prepared or comfortable enough with the tools and technology needed to take classes online or as distance learning
- ☐ I did not feel my preferred college/university is technologically ready to conduct online/distance learning courses
- ☐ My family circumstances have changed (e.g., caring for sick family members, caring for my child/children) as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic
- ☐ Campus closures caused me to re-evaluate my educational plans
- ☐ I am not able to concentrate on my studies at this time
- ☐ I/My family does not see value in me enrolling in a degree program at this time
- ☐ I did not know whether classes will be offered in an online or on-campus format in the fall
- ☐ I did not know whether I would be able to live in a dorm/on campus
- ☐ I did not know whether sports or other extracurricular activities would begin as planned
- ☐ Other (please specify): _____*

Display this question to unenrolled respondents

19. Given what has happened with COVID-19, do you think you are less or more likely to enroll in college?

- ☐ Much less likely
- ☐ Somewhat less likely
- ☐ About the same
- ☐ Somewhat more likely
- ☐ Much more likely
- ☐ Not sure

FINANCIAL FACTORS

Display this question to respondents who did not only apply to [REDACTED] in Q8

20. Did you receive a financial aid package from any of the universities that you applied to other than [REDACTED]?*

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

Display this question to respondents who did not only apply to [REDACTED] in Q8

21. How influential were your [lack of]⁵ financial aid offers in your enrollment decision?*

- ☐ Not at All Influential
- ☐ Slightly Influential
- ☐ Moderately Influential
- ☐ Very Influential
- ☐ Extremely Influential

⁵ This text is shown to respondents who did not receive a financial aid offer in Q20.

22. Did you receive a financial aid offer from [REDACTED]?*

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

Display this question if Q22 is "Yes"

23. How would you rate your level of satisfaction with the financial aid offer you received from [REDACTED]?*

- ☐ Completely Dissatisfied
- ☐ Somewhat Dissatisfied
- ☐ Neither Satisfied nor Dissatisfied
- ☐ Somewhat Satisfied
- ☐ Completely Satisfied

24. How influential [was/were]⁶ the following in your enrollment decision?*

| | NOT AT ALL INFLUENTIAL | SLIGHTLY INFLUENTIAL | MODERATELY INFLUENTIAL | VERY INFLUENTIAL | EXTREMELY INFLUENTIAL |
|--|---------------------------|-------------------------|---------------------------|-----------------------|--------------------------|
| <i>Display if Q22 is "Yes"</i> Financial aid package from [REDACTED] | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Annual tuition price at [REDACTED] | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |

Note: Answer options are randomized to reduce order effects

Display this question to students enrolled elsewhere and unenrolled respondents

25. What was your expected annual "out-of-pocket" cost to attend [REDACTED] if you chose to enroll there?*

- ☐ Under \$10,000
- ☐ \$10,000 to \$14,999
- ☐ \$15,000 to \$19,999
- ☐ \$20,000 to \$24,999
- ☐ \$25,000 to \$29,999
- ☐ \$30,000 to \$34,999
- ☐ \$35,000 or more
- ☐ Don't know/Not sure

⁶ Respondents see "was" if they did not receive a financial aid offer in Q22 and "were" if they did.

Display this question to students enrolled elsewhere and unenrolled respondents

26. Please rate your level of agreement with the following statements.*

| | STRONGLY DISAGREE | SOMEWHAT DISAGREE | NEITHER AGREE NOR DISAGREE | SOMEWHAT AGREE | STRONGLY AGREE | DON'T KNOW/NO OPINION |
|--|-----------------------|-----------------------|-------------------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------------|
| I would attend [REDACTED] if I received a stronger financial aid package. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| The cost of tuition is too high for the educational value [REDACTED] provides. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |

Note: Answer options are randomized to reduce order effects

27. On average, what annual tuition price would you expect a public, in-state college to charge you?*

- ☐ Under \$20,000
- ☐ \$20,000 to \$24,999
- ☐ \$25,000 to \$29,999
- ☐ \$30,000 to \$34,999
- ☐ \$35,000 to \$39,999
- ☐ \$40,000 to \$44,999
- ☐ \$45,000 or more
- ☐ Don't know/Not sure

COMMUNICATION

28. In which of the following ways would you prefer to receive communication from higher education institutions? Please select all that apply.*

- ☐ Email
- ☐ Postal mail
- ☐ Telephone
- ☐ Social media
- ☐ Online newsletters
- ☐ Other (please specify): _____*
- ☐ I do not wish to be contacted by higher education institutions

Note: Answer options are randomized to reduce order effects

Display this question if Q28 is "Social media"

29. Please select the social media platforms through which you prefer to receive communication from higher education institutions. *Please select all that apply.**

☐ Facebook

☐ Twitter

☐ Instagram

☐ LinkedIn

☐ Other (please specify): _____*

Note: Answer options are randomized to reduce order effects

DEMOGRAPHICS

30. With which of the following gender identities do you most identify?*

☐ Female

☐ Male

☐ Non-binary/Gender non-conforming

☐ Not listed/Prefer to self-describe (specify, if desired) : _____*

☐ Prefer not to respond

31. With which of the following categories do you identify? Select all that apply.*

☐ Asian

☐ American Indian or Alaskan Native

☐ Black or African American

☐ Hispanic or Latin(o/a/x)

☐ Middle Eastern or North African

☐ Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander

☐ White

☐ Not listed/Prefer to self-describe (specify, if desired) : _____*

☐ Prefer not to respond

32. What is your household's annual income?*

☐ Under \$25,000

☐ \$25,000 to \$49,999

☐ \$50,000 to \$74,999

☐ \$75,000 to \$99,999

☐ \$100,000 to \$149,999

☐ \$150,000 to \$199,999

☐ \$200,000 or more

☐ Prefer not to respond

33. Did your parent(s) graduate from college?*

☐ Yes, both

☐ Yes, one parent

☐ No

☐ Don't know

☐ Prefer not to respond

34. What was your high school GPA?*

- ☐ Under 2.0
- ☐ 2.0 to 2.4
- ☐ 2.5 to 2.9
- ☐ 3.0 to 3.4
- ☐ 3.5 to 3.9
- ☐ 4.0 or above
- ☐ Prefer not to respond

35. What is the highest level of school you have completed or the highest degree you have received?*

- ☐ Less than high school degree
- ☐ High school graduate (high school diploma or equivalent including GED)
- ☐ Some college but no degree
- ☐ Associate degree in college (2-year)
- ☐ Bachelor's degree in college (4-year)
- ☐ Master's degree
- ☐ Doctoral degree
- ☐ Professional degree (JD, MD)
- ☐ Prefer not to respond

36. In which country do you currently reside?*

▼ Afghanistan ... Prefer not to respond

Display this question to respondents in the United States

37. In which state do you currently reside?*

▼ Alabama ... Prefer not to respond

INCENTIVE DETAILS

Display this question to respondents who are among the first [XXX]

38. As a thank you for completing the survey, we would like to send you a [INCENTIVE]. Please check the appropriate box below to indicate your preference with regards to the gift card.*

- ☐ Yes, please send me the [INCENTIVE]. I will enter my contact information in the next question.
- ☐ No, I prefer not to receive the gift card.

Display this question to respondents who wish to receive the gift card in Q38

39. Please enter your contact information below.

Your survey responses will not be associated with your contact details in any way; we will only use it to distribute your gift card. Gift cards are sent within four to six weeks of the survey's close by our partner, Tango Card.

○ First name: _____
○ Last name: _____
○ Email address: _____

ABOUT HANOVER RESEARCH

Hanover Research provides high-quality, custom research and analytics through a cost-effective model that helps clients make informed decisions, identify and seize opportunities, and heighten their effectiveness.

HANOVER'S HIGHER EDUCATION SOLUTIONS

Hanover enables higher education institutions to offer a world-class educational experience and operate an efficient and sustainable institution. Hanover's Higher Education Solutions tackle the academic and administrative challenges facing every department at your institution—amplifying your individual efforts with our tried and tested suite of solutions. Our partners include higher education institutions of all varieties: from large to small, public and private, two-year, four-year, professional, graduate, and for-profit schools.

ACADEMIC SOLUTIONS

- **Enrollment Management:**
Target the optimal pool of students and maximize application and acceptance rates.
- **Academic Development:**
Strengthen your academic portfolio through market analysis of existing and potential new programs.
- **Student Experience:**
Spot at-risk students early, identify the drivers of attrition, and pinpoint factors driving poor post-graduate outcomes.

ADMINISTRATIVE SOLUTIONS

- **Finance:**
Increase revenue and dynamically evaluate costs to run an efficient, financially viable, and growth-oriented institution.
- **Advancement:**
Highlight your institutional impact with donors and alumni.
- **Marketing:**
Reach the right audience at the right time with the right message.

GRANTS SOLUTIONS

- **Grantseeking Capacity :**
Develop your organizational capacity to pursue grant funding.
- **Funding Research:**
Spot grant opportunities aligned to your funding needs.
- **Pre-Proposal Support:**
Facilitate the development of competitive project concepts prior to submission.
- **Proposal Review & Support:**
Provide review and revision to ensure robust proposal submissions.
- **Proposal Development:**
Engage full proposal development support.

OUR BENEFITS



EXPERT

200+ analysts with multiple methodology research expertise



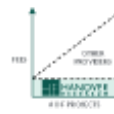
FLEXIBLE

Ongoing custom research agenda adapts with organizations' needs



DEDICATED

Exclusive account and research teams ensure strategic partnership



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Annual, fixed-fee model shares costs and benefits



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