

THE NATIONAL RESEARCH CONSORTIUM OF COUNSELING CENTERS IN HIGHER EDUCATION

HOW TO Optimize Survey Response Rates

To Achieve Higher Response Rates:

1. *Increase* perceived importance, value and legitimacy
2. *Increase* interest level
3. *Increase* trust
4. *Increase* perceived opportunity for reward

The promotional toolkit provided includes:

- “HOW TO Optimize Survey Response Rates” document
- Templates:
 1. Newspaper blurb
 2. Email or press release from school
 3. Flyers for electronic or print use

Promotion:

- As an institution, publicize the survey to increase perceived value of participation.
- Encourage participation as a means of helping fellow students and impacting the larger campus community.
- Publish materials around campus (e.g., electronic billboards, in dorms) and in campus newspapers (e.g., editorials, articles).
- Send a personalized notice with information about the survey prior to the survey distribution (e.g., “Dear _____, You may be selected to participate in an online survey. Please help us...”).
- In your promotional materials, be sure to state the value of incentives and means of selection (e.g., “There will be drawings for 100 Amazon.com gift cards valued at \$50 each.” or “There will be drawings for 100 Amazon.com gift cards valued at \$50 each. Depending on how many of your peers choose to participate in the survey, your chance of winning one of these gift cards is 1 in 250 or 1 in 350.”)

Promotion suggestion given availability of additional funds:

- T-shirt campaign to promote survey participation (i.e., Incorporate catchy phrases or designs and information about the survey on a t-shirt, and hand out t-shirts on campus to allow students to promote participation.)

References

Communications Preferences Among the Student Population: A Supplemental Report Derived from 2009-2010 Academic Year Surveys. *From the Division of Student Affairs, Office of Communications, Office of Assessment at The University of Texas at Austin.*

Dillman, D. A., Smyth, J. D., & Christian, L. M. (2009). *Internet, mail, and mixed-mode surveys: The tailored design method*. Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons, Inc.

“Maximizing CORE Participation” Presentation, 27 January 2010, received from Victor Barr

National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE), <http://nsse.iub.edu/html/tips.cfm>