### PURPOSE OF THIS POLICY

Surveys are widely recognized as an important means for collecting information that can maintain and assure educational quality, enhance institutional effectiveness, improve student and employee satisfaction, and contribute to general knowledge. Technology makes it easier for faculty and staff to distribute surveys to various campus populations. Subsequently, there is a growing perception that the number of surveys being administered has escalated in recent years. An increase in the frequency and volume of surveys raises concerns related to redundancy, privacy and confidentiality, survey quality and general confusion among survey designers and recipients.

The purpose of this policy is to help mitigate survey fatigue by managing survey frequency and prioritizing surveys related to the direct improvement of CSU. The policy also supports the ongoing efforts of CSU to ensure the safety of data collection and usage, enhance communication of survey results, and promote survey practices.
DEFINITIONS USED IN THIS POLICY

CSU community: All students, faculty, and staff of the university, and any segments of this population.

Personally Identifiable Information (PII): Information that, if disclosed alone or in combination with other available information, would make it possible to identify an individual to whom the information pertains. Directory information is not considered PII. PII includes items such as a social security number; a personal identification number; a password; a pass code; an official state or government-issued driver’s license or identification card number; a government passport number; biometric data, such as defined in C.R.S. § 24-73-103(1)(a); an employer, student, or military identification number; a financial transaction device as defined in C.R.S. § 18-5-701(3); grades, financial/account information; CSU ID photo; class and work schedules; residency status; class rank; age; birth date and place of birth.

University Survey Advisory Committee (USAC): A CSU committee charged by the Colorado State University Provost and Executive Vice President to help mitigate survey fatigue within the CSU community and promote surveys that yield valuable results to institutional improvement. USAC represents a cross-section of the CSU stakeholders and has representation from Institutional Research, Planning, and Effectiveness; Registrar’s Office, the Division of Student Affairs, Industrial/Organizational Psychology, CSU Online, and Institute for Research in the Social Sciences.

Survey: The gathering of information (e.g., attitudes, perceptions, behaviors, experiences) or the assessment of a program or service for purposes of making inferences about a population of the CSU community.

APPLICATION OF THIS POLICY

This policy applies to any person, either a member of the CSU community or someone external to the university, planning on surveying members of the CSU community. All who are subject to this policy must complete and submit a Survey Information Form to the University Survey Advisory Committee (USAC).

EXEMPTIONS FROM THIS POLICY

This policy does not apply to:

- Institutional Review Board approved surveys not in need of CSU distribution information (e.g., email addresses);
  - CSU email lists will only be provided for IRB research projects that demonstrate direct impact for the success and improvement of the CSU community.
• Faculty and/or students doing surveys of students in their own class;
• Course evaluation activities;
• Surveys related to performance reviews (e.g., 360° reviews, 5-Year Department Head reviews);
• Non-electronic surveys;
• “Point-of-contact” or “event” surveys (e.g., administering a survey to those who have just participated in an activity, such as an assessment after a workshop or presentation);
• Intercept surveys (e.g., stopping people walking on campus) conducted by CSU personnel;
• Convenience surveys of individuals not asked directly to participate (e.g., asking viewers to comment on a web page (e.g., “How do you like this web page?”, comment cards);
• Surveys of those in an existing CSU subject pool (e.g., psychology course students) or panel;
• Surveys of populations outside the CSU community;
• Fact-based administrative forms as part of routine business operations (e.g., directory information updates, assignment of space, event planning, applications, help tickets) or surveys required for official university assessments, employment matters, or matriculation.

POLICY STATEMENT

This policy intends to balance survey frequency with the burden surveys can impose on students, faculty, and staff. USAC, under the direction of the Vice Provost for Planning and Effectiveness, has the responsibility of minimizing survey burden and costs to the CSU community, and supporting surveys that will yield valuable results for the university. To accomplish this responsibility, all university surveys must be reviewed by USAC, unless exempt under this policy. Prospective survey administrators intending to conduct a survey with the CSU community must complete the Survey Information Form.

POLICY PROVISIONS

USAC will review and coordinate online surveys conducted within the CSU community.

The committee will:

• Coordinate the administration of surveys with the primary objectives of minimizing survey fatigue and supporting surveys that collect high quality survey data beneficial to the CSU community
- Establish a central clearing house for survey administration by reviewing proposed surveys received via the Survey Information Form
- Maintain a survey tracking mechanism for large CSU surveys to assist in survey planning in order to minimize the duplication of survey content and populations
- Provide resources to prospective survey researchers about survey guidelines, research policies, data sharing and recommended practices
- Coordinate access to CSU directory information

Support survey administrators in the dissemination of their results

Survey Review and Approval

1. Anyone seeking to survey CSU community members must request approval from USAC to administer the survey. Please allow five business days to receive a response from the date of application submission.

2. USAC has the discretion to request survey approval from the survey administrator's respective college or division head.

3. All requests for CSU directory information or access to university-wide email lists (refer to the CSU Policy on Central Administrative Email Listservs) should go through USAC.
   - Unless there are compelling reasons to employ a census, the directory information should be produced using a randomly drawn sample that is no larger than what will yield a representative set of answers.
   - No other office may provide CSU directory information without the consent of USAC.
   - Directory information must be kept confidential and not be redistributed or used for any other purposes without the authorization of USAC.
   - CSU directory information will be supplied only for research that will benefit CSU and the CSU community. Directory information will not be provided for an individual's research/assessment projects or for use in recruiting human subjects for research/assessment protocols unless the project's objective demonstrates a direct impact for the success and improvement of the CSU community.

4. All surveys should be administered using Qualtrics software, which is the official survey tool for the university.
5. Decisions by USAC to not approve or limit a proposed survey may be appealed in writing to the Vice Provost for Planning and Effectiveness, whose decision will be final.

6. Recurring surveys need only be submitted to USAC once, unless there are substantial changes to the survey, survey population, or survey frequency.

7. USAC review does not replace any aspect of Institutional Review Board (IRB) review and approval.

8. All surveys conducted must comply with the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) and Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA).

Data Use, Security and Storage

1. Surveys should not collect Personally Identifiable Information (PII) from respondents unless it is absolutely necessary for the purpose of the survey.

2. Survey administrators must store all survey data securely and use data only for the intended purposes designated on the survey information form. Survey administrators must agree to adhere to university policies for handling data. Data containing PII must be saved in an encrypted format on computers or drives that belong to the university, and these data should be properly disposed of when the data is no longer needed. These data must not be stored on computers or servers outside the university. Directory information is not considered PII.

3. Surveys must be conducted, and survey data must be maintained, in compliance with the CSU Policy on Information Collection and Personal Records Privacy.

COMPLIANCE WITH THIS POLICY

Compliance with this policy is required. For assistance with compliance, please contact USAC at USAC@colostate.edu.

ASSISTANCE WITH THIS POLICY

Assistance with any of the provisions of this policy may be obtained by contacting USAC.

REFERENCES

Colorado State University Institutional Review Board

Financial Compensation and Incentives Guidelines

CSU Policy on Central Administrative Email Listservs

University Survey Advisory Committee (USAC)
CSU’s Official Web-Based Survey Software Tool: Qualtrics Login

Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)

Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA)

Information Technology Security

PROCEDURES, FORMS AND TOOLS

In order to have a survey approved, you must complete the survey information form. Once submitted, your form will be reviewed, and you will be contacted by a member of USAC within five business days.

Survey Information Form

APPROVALS

Vice Provost for Institutional Research, General Counsel Planning & Effectiveness

By: ________________________________  By: ________________________________
Dr. Laura Jensen  
Jason L. Johnson

FINAL APPROVAL:
COLORADO STATE UNIVERSITY

By: ________________________________
Anthony A. Frank, President  date