Statement on Survey Administration

IRE serves as the primary institutional administrator for all surveys including the Student Evaluation of Instruction; Dean and Department Head evaluations; Administrator evaluations; and many more whether unit-level, institution-wide, periodic, annual, ad-hoc or otherwise.

Surveys are coordinated through the Scantron Class Climate system and administered on paper, online, or both depending on need and probability of response rate.

IRE Staff works with those interested in developing and delivering a survey on both the instrument, methods of delivery, and administration of survey through Class Climate.

Description of Class Climate Process

Each time a survey is created, whether Student Evaluation of Instruction or Student Athletic interest inventory, IRE creates a "class" in the Class Climate system. A class may be something like ENGL 101 (for an SEI) or "President Williams" (for an administrative evaluation). Each survey is coded in such a way as to link to that "class," to the survey. There are several reasons that each copy of a survey is coded like this:

1. If they get mixed up with another "class," the system will sort them correctly.
2. To protect the integrity of the survey.
   For example, if only 35 people respond to the class/survey "President Williams" but someone who really likes him makes 150 copies and replies "he's wonderful" to all of them, then it's going to skew the results, no matter how wonderful he may actually be. The system will throw out all copies and only record the results of the unique 35 surveys generated.

Since surveys are tied to a class, not a respondent, there is **no link** between the individual responding and the code on the survey they fill out. Take for example, ENGL 101 Section A1. We send out 35 copies of a survey with SEI questions labeled for this class. Thirty-five students fill them out. We cannot link those responses to any student in the class. We know who the 35 students who answered the survey are, but so does the instructor, but we **don't know** who answered a specific question a certain way.

The same is true for Administrative Evaluations. We send out about 50 to the class "President Williams." Those individuals who evaluate President Williams also, on average, evaluate at least 20+ people more. Each document they fill out for each person has a different code because it belongs to the class named after the person being evaluated, not the evaluator. As long as a respondent does not submit his or her responses with the cover sheet with his or her name on it directly to President Williams, then President Williams is not going to know all the wonderful things that you, personally, said about him. He'll be left wondering, late in the night, who all those people are who thinks so highly of him. And he will rest well.

Full Disclosure: We can trace the responses back to the respondents, but we have to write down every code on every piece of paper we sent out along with who received it. Since we send out tens of thousands of pages of surveys per year, this is a completely untenable activity. We have neither the

personnel to do such a thing, nor the inclination. Moreover, we are bound by our Code of Professional Ethics and Practice to ensure confidentiality and integrity in all of our processes and products.

Written Comments

When survey responses come in, we type all comments. The responses are then gathered, filed, and locked in a secure area. We type them so that handwriting can't be figured out by the recipients of the results. We do not do this for SEIs because that would take a small army to process and type the thousands of comments received and because, in a cute story but telling, it would mess up the integrity of responses for visual arts because sometimes students draw their feelings.

Online Administration

For online administration of surveys, the system generates the surveys and sends a notification via email. Once the respondent completes the survey and submits it, the system decouples the results from the email attached to that "document." This happens deep inside the code for which we have no report to access that kind of information. Nor, again, would we, as it would be a violation of our Code of Ethics.

If you have any questions or concerns about this process, or would like assistance in developing a survey, please feel free to contact our office.