



I. ASU SURVEY POLICY

II. POLICY STATEMENT:

The purpose of this policy is to better manage and coordinate institutional surveys at Alabama State University (ASU). This policy will ensure ethical and effective use of surveys by providing a campus wide review and approval process, and to specify how the institutional survey system can be utilized. By having a central office responsible for coordinating surveys, a survey calendar will be maintained that will allow the campus to be aware of approved surveys and those conducting surveys can prepare for the optimum timing of their surveys.

III. SCOPE OF POLICY:

This policy serves to clarify the process for surveys conducted at Alabama State University, whether the surveys are for research or institutional improvement purposes.

- (1) All surveys intended to be administered by ASU faculty, staff, or students or external researchers for the purpose of **research** as specified under the “Common Rule” issued by the Office of Human Research Protections, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services regardless of the intended survey participants.
- (2) All surveys intended for distribution to any members or prospective members of the ASU community (E.g. applicants, students, faculty, staff, board members, and alumni) or the purpose of **institutional improvement** from any source including ASU faculty, staff, and students, or an external entity.

For institutional surveys, the following exceptions are not required to follow the process detailed in this policy. **EXCEPTIONS:** (a) faculty surveys of students in their courses for pedagogical or curricular purposes; (b) evaluation of an event by participants of the event; (c) feedback from customers at the point of service; (d) student course evaluations administered each term; (e) units administering information gathering forms or polls to tabulate votes regarding a position or topic; and (f) alumni involved in alumni chapters (and not employed by ASU) who are surveying other alumni.

IV. CORE INSTITUTIONAL SURVEYS

The following are considered core institutional surveys administered to gather information about student experiences, perceptions, satisfaction and engagement, and do not need to go through the approval process. The core institutional surveys include, but are not limited to:

- National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE)

- Faculty Survey of Student Engagement (FSSE)
- Ruffalo Noel Levitz Student Satisfaction Inventory
- Ruffalo Noel Levitz College Employee Survey
- Ruffalo Noel Levitz Alumni Satisfaction Survey
- ASU Graduation Exit Survey
- Trellis Student Financial Wellness Survey

V. EFFECTIVE DATE:

Immediately upon approval by the ASU Board of Trustees.

VI. AUDIENCE:

This policy applies to any ASU employee or student who engages in the administration of surveys, and External Researchers and External Entities interested in administering surveys at ASU.

VII. DESIGNATED RESPONSIBILITIES AND APPLICABILITY OF POLICY:

Office of Institutional Research (OIR): The OIR oversees the administration of surveys to ASU stakeholders and is the system administrator for ASU’s survey software.

Institutional Review Board (IRB): The IRB ensures federal policies are followed for the protection of human subjects in research projects. The IRB is an independent committee established to review and approve research involving human subjects. The primary purpose of the IRB is to protect the rights and welfare of human subjects.

ASU Survey and Research Committee: The Committee will be responsible for approving research projects that include ASU students, faculty, staff, or alumni as participants or subjects of the survey. The Committee will be comprised of at least six individuals who represent the following areas: Academic Affairs, Institutional Research, Student Affairs and Enrollment Management, Institutional Review Board, ASU Administration and Student Government Association.

The **Vice Presidents, Provost, Associate Provost, Assistant Provost, Deans, Associate Deans, and Directors** have a fundamental responsibility to have a general knowledge of the survey policy and incorporate this policy into the practice for administering surveys for data collection.

VIII. POLICY MANAGEMENT

- **Responsible Office(s):** Office of Institutional Research (OIR)
- **Responsible Executive:** President of Alabama State University
- **Responsible Officer(s):** Associate Vice President for Institutional Effectiveness and Director of Institutional Research

IX. DEFINITIONS:

Institutional Surveys: Surveys administered to ASU stakeholders for university operations or improvement efforts. The data collected from these surveys may not be used for research purposes and cannot be published.

Poll: a tool used to collect respondent votes regarding an elected position or particular topic

Research Surveys: Surveys administered as part of a research study, which must be reviewed and approved by the IRB. All research projects, including those that the researcher thinks will be exempt, must be submitted to the IRB for initial review to determine if IRB approval is needed.

Survey: a method of gathering and compiling information from a predefined group of respondents to gain their insight and perspective about a specific topic

Survey Software: Third-party software designed to facilitate the administration of electronic surveys by ASU affiliated faculty, staff, and students.

X. ASU SURVEY AND RESEARCH COMMITTEE

Representatives from Academic Affairs, Student Affairs and Enrollment Management, Institutional Research (Chair), Intuitional Review Board (IRB), ASU Administration and Student Government Association (SGA) will serve as members of the ASU Survey and Research Committee. The Committee will be responsible for the following:

1. Review survey requests to ensure that the information submitted meets the needs of the university and is not already accessible in another form.
2. Oversee the administration of surveys in order to prevent overlap, duplication and scheduling issues.
3. Provide training and support to the campus community to ensure this policy is followed and to promote best practices in the development, administration and analysis of surveys.
4. Approve external agency surveys.
5. Maintain an ASU Survey Schedule.

XI. SURVEY APPROVAL PROCESS

The following list provides an overview of the approval process required for surveys administered by ASU-affiliated individuals or with ASU stakeholders as participants.

Survey Type:	Administered By:	Approval Required By:
1. Survey Research with External Participants	ASU-Affiliated Researcher (Faculty, Staff, or Student)	IRB
2. Survey Research with ASU Participants	ASU-Affiliated Researcher (Faculty, Staff, or Student)	ASU Survey & Research Committee prior to IRB protocol submission

3. Survey Research with ASU Participants	External Researcher	IRB (IRB will refer to ASU Survey & Research Committee, as needed)
4. Institutional Survey for Program Improvement	ASU-Affiliated Employee/ Student	ASU Survey & Research Committee
5. Institutional Survey for Program Improvement	External Entity	ASU Survey & Research Committee

For faculty-supervised student survey research associated with a class. Student(s) in the class must submit a protocol to the IRB for approval prior to administering the survey. Faculty with questions about the applicability of this policy for class research projects should contact the IRB for clarification of required procedures.

XII. PROCEDURES FOR INSTITUTIONAL SURVEYS:

To obtain approval to administer a survey for institutional improvement, the lead individual (e.g. faculty, staff, students, and external entities) must complete the online Survey Request Form located on the OIR webpage and submit it one month prior to the requested survey launch date.

1. The name of the survey
2. The person and unit responsible for the survey
3. Description of the survey project, including the purpose and intended use of results
4. Specific population receiving the survey
5. Method of survey distribution
6. Time frame for administering the survey, including beginning and end dates; and dates for any reminder notifications to encourage participation
7. A description of any planned incentive for respondents/participants
8. An explanation of how the surveyor will ensure voluntary participation and address issues of confidentiality and anonymity
9. Acknowledgement that university survey administration and analysis must comply with the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA);
10. Current draft of the survey and all invitations and cover letters.
11. Description explaining how the survey results will be communicated to ASU stakeholders and used for continuous improvement purposes at ASU

XIII. INSTITUTIONAL SURVEY SUPPORT

The OIR will maintain a survey calendar to track all campus and research surveys administered to ASU students, faculty, staff, or alumni.

The OIR can provide consultation and support to the survey administrator regarding survey design or sampling strategies, if appropriate.

XIV. PROCEDURES FOR RESEARCH SURVEYS:

ASU faculty, staff, graduate students, undergraduate students, and external researchers who intend to administer surveys for **research** purposes, must have Institutional Review Board approval prior to administering the survey and beginning data collection.

If the intended research survey participants are ASU faculty, staff, students, or alumni then the research must be approved by the ASU Survey and Research Committee prior to administering the survey and beginning data collection. If approved, the researcher will then contact the OIR to coordinate survey dissemination.

XV. ANNUAL AUDIT OF SURVEYS ADMINISTERED:

The ASU Survey and Research Committee will be responsible for the tracking and monitoring of all institutional surveys and provide an annual report to document the number of surveys, types of surveys, survey reports generated, identify any concerns, and report areas that have not complied with the ASU Survey Policy.

XVI. SURVEY SOFTWARE ACCESS:

ASU faculty or staff interested in using ASU's survey software must complete a mandatory training session covering survey policies/ procedures and use of the software. After completion of the training session, faculty/staff will be provided with credentials to use the system. Note: Once a survey has been created in the software system, adherence to the survey policy will be verified before the survey will be cleared for release. Designated individuals affiliated with the IRB, OIR, and ASU Survey and Research Committee will be identified to clear surveys for release within the survey software in a timely manner. The measure is being instituted to ensure compliance with this policy.

ASU students who would like to use ASU's survey software must have an ASU faculty member sponsor who will provide oversight for the survey project and who has completed the mandatory training session. The faculty member sponsor will provide written communication to OIR permitting the student to use the survey software. The written communication must include anticipated expiration date for access to the survey software. The students will then need to complete the training session before being given credentials to the software.

Users are not permitted to share login credentials with individuals not included as researchers in the IRB protocol.

The survey software administrators will set-up user accounts and approve surveys for release within the survey software. Software administrators will not be permitted to view research survey data collected by survey software users.

XVII. SURVEY SOFTWARE TRAINING:

The Office of Institutional Research will provide at least two survey training sessions annually for faculty, staff and students to participate in the mandatory training.

Document History

Approved by BOT, February 5, 2021