

## College Operating Procedures (COP)



**Procedure Title:** Student Surveys  
**Procedure Number:** 03-0304  
**Originating Department:** Vice President of Academic Affairs

**Specific Authority:**

Board Policy Florida Statute n/a  
Florida Administrative Code n/a

**Procedure Actions:** Adopted: 06/01/2010; 02/15/2011; 02/11/2019; 8/16/2021;  
02/14/2025

**Purpose Statement:** The purpose of this procedure is to provide rules and guidelines related to the development and use of research surveys or polls used to determine dispositions, attitudes, and opinions about college programs, services, employer satisfaction with Florida SouthWestern State College (College) graduates, and community educational needs. Compliance with these rules and guidelines ensures that faculty, staff, and students employ standards of good practice in educational research and enables the College to demonstrate continuing improvement and accomplishment of the mission (instructional effectiveness).

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### **Guidelines:**

The College will periodically distribute surveys in order to obtain information useful in evaluating education programs, student services, and many other aspects of the College and its mission. These surveys may be administered through the web-based survey research software licensed by the College or, if necessary, in the classroom.

### **Procedures:**

#### **1.1 CENTRALIZED DOCUMENTATION OF SURVEYS AND RESULTS**

The web-based survey research software should be used for the development and administration of surveys, except where a paper survey administered in the classroom is necessary. All faculty, staff, and students can create an account in the survey software via a College username and password, which is accessed through the College Portal.

#### **1.2 GENERAL REQUIREMENTS & SURVEY REGISTRATION**

Each College school, individual department, or unit is responsible for their own surveys, however, any survey involving students as respondents must be registered with the Office of Academic Assessment and the Office of Accountability and Effectiveness (both parts of Team AASPIRE). This procedure addresses both *college-wide* and *departmental* surveys. College-wide surveys are those designed to sample from the population of the College students-at-large with the purpose of institutional improvement. Departmental surveys differ from college-wide surveys in the scope of survey goals.

The Office of Academic Assessment and Office of Effectiveness provide guidance and assistance to faculty and staff with survey development, administration, analysis, and use of results when requested. Survey registration is required to ensure a centralized point of inquiry to both expedite current studies and inform future studies.

Procedures 1.1 – 1.4 outline the steps that college faculty, staff, and students should take to assist the College in centrally documenting its research processes and results. Procedures 2.1 – 2.3 provide guidelines for the College faculty and staff who wish to conduct departmental surveys.

### 1.3 APPROVAL FOR SURVEY INITIATION

**COLLEGE WIDE SURVEYS.** All *college-wide* surveys must be approved by the Office of the Vice President of Academic Affairs (handled by the Office of Effectiveness (Team AASPIRE)).

**DEPARTMENTAL SURVEYS.** All *departmental* surveys must be approved by the applicable Department Effectiveness Coordinator Chair, Director, or Dean, or Vice President.

### 1.4 SURVEY RESULTS

Electronic survey results are collected and stored in the web-based survey research software licensed by the College. Additionally, reports issued to the college by outside vendors, or internally to a department or discipline, are stored either on the webpages of the Office of Institutional Research or Office of Academic Assessment.

## 2.1 GUIDELINES ON SURVEY METHODOLOGY

Surveys distributed for research to be presented or published publicly must follow the College's Institutional Review Board guidelines to ensure human rights are protected (see [COP 03-1601](#)).

### 2.2 POPULATION & SAMPLING METHOD

The selection of a survey sample and question design should follow ethical guidelines for "human subjects research" documented by the College's Institutional Review Board Policy. Examples of these protections include parental consent for research on minor children (under age 18) and assurances of confidentiality to survey respondents.

A survey "population" may be defined as the entire set of individuals for which the survey has been designed. Sampling method may be established as random or stratified random, as applicable to the population of study.

### 2.3 INSTRUMENT DEVELOPMENT

Two major concerns of survey research are *validity and reliability*. *Validity* is a concern about whether the survey questions cover the relevant areas of research need and whether the results of a survey sample may be validly inferred to the larger target population. Thus, the content of the survey questions and the sampling method are keys to ensuring validity of the research.

*Reliability*, on the other hand, is a concern about whether the questions on the survey were precise and whether the conditions of survey administration were such that the same results from the same student might have been expected during another administration of the survey. Thus, the student's interpretation of the both the survey *directions* and *questions* are keys to ensuring the reliability of the survey instrument used to conduct the research.