

NIPISSING UNIVERSITY

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Policy Name:	Survey Management Policy
Responsible Department:	Office of Institutional Planning & Analysis
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A. PURPOSE

Institutional surveys involve the collection of information for the purposes of informing policy development, planning and assessment, as well as enhancement of programs and services at or for Nipissing University. Surveys of this nature may include activities for assessment, evaluation, quality assurance, management or improvement, and any other non-scholarly activities. Institutional surveys must adhere to institutional policy and procedures.

Members of the Nipissing University community (students, faculty and staff) who wish to conduct a survey of Nipissing University students, staff, faculty, applicants or alumni that asks for information about their use of, or experience with, Nipissing University facilities (includes physical facilities, programs, research, academics, personnel, management and environment, among others) are required to submit a proposal to the Survey Management Committee for approval.

B. PROCEDURES

Any person or group wishing to conduct a survey as described above should submit a request to the Survey Management Committee for permission to proceed. The requests will be completed using an online form and will require the requestor to provide the following information:

- The name of the group conducting or managing the survey;
- Contact information for the survey project manager;
- The topic of the survey / objectives / issues to be addressed;
- Rationale of how the survey will benefit Nipissing University and contribute to its strategic direction;
- The target population and intended sample;
- Mode of contact and timing; and
- Description of how the data will be used, how the results will be communicated and who will retain the data.

In addition, applicants should include a copy of:

- Any materials to be used in communicating with potential respondents (e.g., cover letters, e-mails, website splash page); and
- Finalized survey instrument.

Proposals are to be submitted well in advance of the intended start date of the survey to allow ample time for review; a lead time of six weeks is recommended.

C. APPROVALS

The Survey Management Committee will assess proposals to conduct surveys based on the following criteria:

- Extent to which other surveys supply or could supply the required data;
- Extent of the survey burden on target groups within the University, and timing of other survey commitments (timeline delays may be recommended to avoid conflicts);
- Institutional reporting requirements;
- Usefulness of the data and its relevance to Nipissing University's strategic planning and priorities;
- Design and content of survey instrument and proposed survey administration methods; and
- A commitment to provide a final summary of results to the Survey Management Committee.

Approval to proceed will be granted based on a majority of Survey Management Committee members agreeing that the proposal should proceed. The Committee Chair will vote only in the case of a tie.

The following institutional surveys are considered pre-approved:

- Canadian Graduate and Professional Student Survey (CGPSS)
- Canadian University Survey Consortium (CUSC)
- National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE)
- Ontario University Graduate Survey (Graduate Employment Survey)
- Statistics Canada's National Graduate Survey
- University Report Card (Globe and Mail)
- Nipissing University Student Opinion Surveys
- Nipissing University Cyclical Program Review Surveys

D. SURVEY MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE – TERMS OF REFERENCE

1. Purpose

The Survey Management Committee (SMC) is constituted by the Provost to provide oversight and coordination of institutional surveys used to collect information from members of the Nipissing University community including students, employees, applicants, alumni, and community partners. Surveys conducted for scholarly activities fall under the jurisdiction of the Nipissing University Research Ethics Board (NU REB) and may also require approval from SMC.

2. Guiding Principles

To ensure that institutional surveys at Nipissing University are managed and communicated in the most effective and efficient manner, the SMC will operate with the following objectives:

- Encouraging sound survey methodology, structure, and administration;
- Ensuring that surveys are designed effectively with appropriate and objectively worded questions;
- Minimizing the number of times students and staff are asked to respond to surveys, thereby reducing survey fatigue and maximizing response rates;
- Avoiding the use of surveys in cases where alternate data collection methods may exist and/or be more appropriate;
- Coordinating the timing of surveys to avoid overlap of survey timeframes and avoid survey requests during particularly busy times of the year (e.g., during exams);
- Communicating survey results in a format and schedule that aligns with the central communications plan; and
- Adhering to legislative requirements (e.g. FIPPA) and ethical standards of practice.

3. Key Responsibilities

The SMC is responsible for:

- Creating a catalog of institutional surveys that indexes the types of information collected;
- Creating a repository of institutional survey instruments and results as well as surveys conducted across the PSE sector;
- Drafting, revising, and overseeing the implementation of policies and procedures related to the management of institutional surveys;
- Overseeing institutional survey requests (including review and approval, refusal, or deferral);
- Reviewing and approving an annual survey schedule, proposed by the Office of Institutional Planning and Analysis Office (OIPA); and
- Overseeing the development, refinement, and ongoing implementation of institutional survey guidelines and resources proposed by the OIPA.

4. Committee Membership

The Survey Management Committee will operate with a Chair, a core committee, and additional resource personnel as needed. The core members of the Survey Management Committee will be comprised of five ex-officio members and two additional members appointed by the Provost. These will include:

- Director, Institutional Planning and Analysis (ex officio) who shall be Chair;
- Assistant Vice President, Students (ex officio);
- Registrar (ex officio);
- Director, External Relations (ex officio);
- President of the Nipissing University Student Union (or designate) (ex officio);
- A Dean (two year term); and
- A Faculty Member with survey expertise (two year term).

Membership will be reviewed every two years to support the University's ongoing actions to eliminate systemic barriers to achieve inclusive excellence at Nipissing.

5. Committee Meetings

The committee will meet as needed, but no fewer than two times a year, to fulfill the following responsibilities:

- Review institutional survey applications, as needed (all meetings);
- Oversee the development and refinement of institutional survey guidelines and resources;
- Review the number and nature of institutional surveys conducted over the previous academic year and produce an annual report for submission to the President;
- Gather and review information needs and priorities of the institution for the subsequent academic year(s); and
- Review and approve the forthcoming annual survey schedule.

The core committee will also convene at the call of the Chair to review and approve, primarily but not exclusively, requests for time-sensitive institutional surveys.

E. REVIEW

This policy will be reviewed at minimum every three years to determine if amendments are necessary.