A. Introduction

Surveys are frequently conducted at the university and their results inform us about our performance and guide efforts to improve. The possibility exists for significant overlap of large-scale surveys. These guidelines are intended to help enhance response rates, improve coordination among survey administrators, avoid overlap, and reduce survey fatigue. The Office of Institutional Accreditation, Strategic Planning, and Effectiveness (OIASPE) will coordinate the creation, timing, distribution, and retention of surveys administered to university students, faculty, staff, or alumni. OIASPE will also assist in the development and review of survey instruments.

B. Guidelines Statement

Surveys conducted by university personnel that will survey students, faculty, staff, or alumni across administrative departments, schools, or colleges or that sample from entire populations (e.g., all undergraduate students, all tenured faculty, all graduates from a particular year) and for which the administration (e.g., Office of Institutional Research, Planning, and Analysis; Office of Faculty Affairs; Office of Internal Communications) provides distribution lists are covered by these guidelines and should follow the procedures described below. Surveys that are required for academic program accreditation and/or certification purposes (e.g., the School of Medicine Graduation Questionnaire) are specifically excluded from these guidelines.

Most surveys conducted at the university serve specific, limited purposes and do not sample outside a particular administrative department, school or college, library, or from entire populations. Examples include assigned classroom course work, participants' event evaluations, and point-of-service surveys that are addressed to specific users/clients. Such surveys are not covered by these guidelines. Survey administrators who are not certain if their survey is covered by these guidelines may contact the OIASPE.
C. Procedures

When an academic or administrative unit of the university plans a survey that is covered by these guidelines, the survey administrator should first review the Institutional Survey Schedule, a calendar of surveys that is maintained by the OIASPE and is published on its website, to determine if the proposed survey will overlap with other scheduled university-wide surveys. The Institutional Survey Schedule includes information about surveys scheduled for the current fiscal year as well as those planned for the immediate future.

The survey administrator should then notify OIASPE of its plans to conduct a survey by providing the following information:

- Instrument name
- Overview and objectives associated with the instrument
- Intended participants (e.g., students, faculty, alumni, recent graduates, etc.)
- Timeframe planned for survey administration
- Survey administration modality (e.g., e-mail, paper and pencil, etc.)
- Survey administrator name and contact information

Additional information is included in the Institutional Survey Schedule and survey administrators are encouraged to provide such additional information. OIASPE will let the unit know of any time conflicts and will work with the survey administrator to reschedule the survey.

There may be times when university personnel are approached by an external individual, group, or other entity for the purpose of soliciting participation in a survey that involves University of Colorado Denver’s students, faculty, staff, or alumni across administrative departments, schools, or colleges or that samples from entire populations (e.g., all undergraduate students, all tenured faculty, all graduates from a particular year). The university personnel should follow these procedures to ensure the external survey does not overlap or otherwise conflict with a university-wide survey.

Some surveys may be subject to review and regulation by the Colorado Multiple Institutional Review Board (COMIRB), University of Colorado Denver’s institutional review board. Survey developers who are not sure whether their survey activity requires COMIRB oversight should consult the COMIRB website located at: http://ucdenver.edu/academics/research/AboutUs/comirb/Pages/comirb-home.aspx.
D. Resources

The OIASPE maintains a web site containing the Institutional Survey Schedule, selected results and reports from university-wide surveys, articles, resources, and other information on best practices in developing and conducting surveys. The website is located at:
http://www.ucdenver.edu/about/departments/oiaspe/surveys/Pages/surveys.aspx.