**LP 12.1**

**Effective:**
3/9/2021

**Revised:**

**Policy Owner:**
Board of Trustees

**Policy Administrator:**
Planning, Analytics &
Decision-support

**Affected Parties:**
Faculty
Staff
Students

**Table of Contents:**

# Lander Population Survey Distribution (LP12.1)

## 1   Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to provide guidance regarding the distribution of surveys to large population groups of the Lander University community, including, for example, all faculty, all staff, all students, and all alumni. This policy does not apply to smaller population groups (see Section 4) such as class rosters, clubs, departments, etc. The policy includes guidance on survey planning, survey approval, and distribution of surveys through university channels in order to:

1.1   Ensure that the survey content is consistent with the mission of the institution.

1.2   Ensure survey regulatory requirements have been satisfied according to (but not limited to) IRB, HIPAA, and FERPA.

1.3   Minimize survey fatigue and maximize survey response rates for all university-approved surveys by:

  1.3.1   Limiting the total number of surveys per semester;

  1.3.2   Prioritizing the scheduling of institutional surveys each year so that they are evenly distributed and sensitive to the university's calendar of events;

  1.3.3   Reducing the number of surveys that collect similar data from the same respondents.

1.4   Maintain a detailed record of all surveys conducted.

1.5   Ensure that survey design, administration, data analysis, and reporting are methodologically sound.

## 2   Scope

2.1   Survey creators, distributors, and data collectors

2.1.1   All faculty, staff, and students who wish to post a survey (or link to a survey) through official university communication channels, including but not limited to email, websites, digital signage, printed materials, campus portal, content management system, or relationship management system.

2.2   Lander populations surveyed

2.2.1   Large population groups only

All surveys sent to any of the university's large population groups, including but not limited to:

- All employees
- All faculty
- All staff
- All students
- All alumni (see Section 4.3)
- All donors (see Section 4.3)

## 3   Survey approval policy

3.1   No survey, as defined within the scope of this policy, may be posted to any of the university's large population groups without approval from the university survey administrator.  All exceptions to this policy are found in Section 4 below.

3.2   Effective May 16, 2021, the distribution of unofficial surveys for faculty research, faculty projects, or other faculty-led initiatives through any of the university's large population groups defined in Section 2.2.1 is prohibited.

3.3   The distribution of unofficial surveys for staff research, staff projects, or other staff-led initiatives through any of the university's large population groups defined in Section 2.2.1 is prohibited.

3.4   The distribution of unofficial surveys for student research, class projects, or other student-led initiatives through any of the university's large population groups defined in Section 2.2.1 is prohibited.

3.5 All requests for survey approval should be submitted on the <u>Lander Population Survey Distribution Approval Form</u>.[1]  For reference, the online form includes the following required fields:

- Requestor's name
- Requestor's email address
- Requestor's department
- Preferred dates for survey distribution
- A copy of the proposed survey that includes all proposed survey questions via an attachment (PDF, Word, Excel, text file)
- IRB approval indicator (optional)
- Survey software/tool to be used
- Description of how the data are to be used (e.g., research, assessment, feedback)
- Description of how the data are to be stored.
- Population(s) to be surveyed
- Large population distribution list(s) to be utilized
- A description of any planned incentive programs for potential respondents
- Will this survey be repeated or is a one-time only

3.6 The university survey administrator, in consultation with the necessary stakeholders, will approve or deny the request and will contact the requestor with additional instructions.

3.7 The university survey administrator will maintain the master survey schedule.

3.8 The university survey administrator will maintain a record of all survey requests with current and final disposition status.

# 4 Exceptions and qualifications

4.1 Distribution to smaller populations

This policy only applies to surveys sent to any of the university's large population groups (via one of Lander's email lists, for example) outlined in Section 2.2.1.  Examples of small population groups that are exempt from this policy and that do not require approval from the university survey administrator include but are not limited to:

4.1.1 Division-, college-, or department-level surveys

4.1.2 Surveys distributed to classes, clubs, groups, committees, and opt-in lists

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[1] Lander Population Survey Distribution Approval Form:
https://www.cognitoforms.com/LanderUniversity3/landerpopulationsurveydistributionapprovalform

4.2    University Advancement surveys

Surveys sent to any University Advancement lists (e.g., alumni, donors, friends of the university) must receive prior approval from the Vice President of University Advancement and do not require approval from the university survey administrator.

# 5    Survey content guidelines

5.1    By default, unless otherwise specified in the survey, survey creators should be aware that all survey participants presume that their responses will be anonymous. If a survey is not anonymous, it must contain the following statement at the beginning of the survey: "This survey is not anonymous and survey responses can be associated with the identities of individual respondents."

5.2    If the survey seeks to collect students' personal or course-required research data, or a faculty member's personal or tenure-related research data, the survey creator must contact the IRB chair[2] to determine if IRB approval of the survey is required.

# 6    Survey scheduling guidelines

6.1    In order to prioritize the scheduling of institutional surveys so that all surveys sent through the university's large population (see Section 2.2.1) distribution channels are evenly distributed and sensitive to the university's calendar of events (see Section 1.3.2), it is recommended that survey creators submit survey approval requests as soon as possible, preferably several months in advance of a target release date.

# 7    IRB approval

7.1    All questions related to the need for prior IRB approval of a survey should be directed to the IRB Chair.[3]

7.2    IRB-approved surveys

Survey creators, whose surveys have gone through the IRB approval process and who wish to distribute or publish links to the survey through any of the university's large population email lists (see Section 2.2.1) must complete the Lander Population Survey Distribution Approval Form and obtain approval and scheduling guidance from the university survey administrator before sending the survey through any of those channels.

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[2] Lander University IRB page: https://www.lander.edu/about/offices-departments/academic-affairs/institutional-review-board

[3] Lander University IRB page: https://www.lander.edu/about/offices-departments/academic-affairs/institutional-review-board

# 8 Definitions

## 8.1 Survey

A questionnaire consisting of one or more questions.

## 8.2 Anonymity

A survey is considered anonymous if survey responses cannot be connected with information that might identify individual survey respondents and the survey does not contain a statement waiving a respondent's anonymity (see Section 5.1 and 5.2). Respondents who choose to include identifying information in their survey responses forfeit any claims of anonymity.

## 8.3 University Survey Administrator

Director of Institutional Effectiveness or designee.  See Sections 3.2, 3.3 and 3.4.

## 8.4 Large distribution lists

Contact lists of whole populations, including but not limited to all employees, all faculty, all staff, all students, and all alumni.  Channels to these whole population groups include the university's email lists but also include such non-email channels as MyLander portal content channels, Microsoft Teams "teams," or web-based forums set up for the same large-scale population groups defined in Section 2.2.1.

## 8.5 Unofficial surveys

Surveys unrelated to official communications and operations of the university.  Examples of unofficial surveys include surveys for faculty research, class projects, and community-led initiatives.

# 9 History

- Draft created on 3/31/2020.
- Reviewed and by key stakeholders on 4/24/2020, and 2/18/2021.
- Reviewed by Policy Administrator, Director of Institutional Effectiveness and Director of Institutional Research on 2/19/2021.
- Reviewed by Trustee Policy Committee on 2/21/2021.
- Reviewed by IRB Chair on 2/24/2021.
- Revised by Policy Coordinator on 2/25/2021.
- Approved by Board of Trustees on 3/9/2021.