



# Policy on Surveying the Lakehead University Community

**Category:** General;

**Jurisdiction:** Provost and Vice President, Academic;

**Approval Authority:** Executive Team;

**Established on:** September 1, 2008;

**Amendments:** August 2009.

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## 1. Rationale

Over the last few years there has been a growth in the number of surveys used to gather data from and about Lakehead University students, faculty and staff for administrative, planning and reporting purposes. The growing need and desire to understand the student and / or employee experiences and to measure outcomes, by both internal and external groups, means an increasing need for surveys.

To be useful, data gathered via surveys must be reliable and meaningful, meaning that surveys need to be well designed and administered using rigorous procedures. Survey proliferation can lead to survey fatigue of the target population and thereby reduce survey effectiveness, compromise data quality and infringe on individuals' right to privacy.

Furthermore, disparate surveying efforts may represent an inefficient use of university resources.

The policy outlined here provides guidelines for the gathering of data from the Lakehead University community by means of surveys. The aim is to minimize duplication of surveying efforts, help ensure that the data gathered are reliable and useful, minimize the survey burden on campus constituencies and help protect individuals' right to privacy.

This policy refers to survey projects meeting the criteria defined in section 2. This policy is not intended to limit: surveys of a small scale, surveys by labour unions of their members, surveys that are an evaluation of a commercial service by clients at the point of service, or surveys by faculty members of their classes.

## 2. Policy

Any person or group wishing to conduct a survey on a broad sampling or census of Lakehead University students, staff, faculty, applicants or alumni, who wishes to access contact information held by Lakehead University about these individuals (for example, names, mailing addresses, telephone numbers or e-mail addresses); **or** members of the Lakehead University community (students, faculty and staff) who wish to conduct a survey on a broad sampling or census of Lakehead University students, staff, faculty, applicants or alumni that asks for information about their use of, or experience with, Lakehead University facilities (includes physical facilities, programs, research, academics, personnel, management and environment, among others) are required to submit a proposal to the Institutional Survey Management Committee for approval.

In addition, members of the Lakehead University community conducting surveys not covered by this policy are encouraged to submit their survey proposals to the Institutional Survey Management committee for feedback.

## 3. Institutional Survey Management Committee

The Institutional Survey Management Committee will be composed of five members:

- Director of Institutional Analysis / Government Relations (Chair - non-voting)
- Research Analyst / Survey Specialist - Institutional Analysis / Government Relations
- Vice Provost Student Affairs
- Faculty Member with survey expertise (2 year term)
- Chair of the Research Ethics Board

The Institutional Survey Management Committee will meet on an as-needed basis. The mandate of this committee is to assess proposals to conduct institutional surveys and to recommend changes in order to:

- Encourage the co-ordination of data collection using surveys and make effective use of resources.
- Minimize the survey burden on the Lakehead University community.
- Ensure high quality data are collected using sound survey methodology and good questionnaire design.
- Ensure that proposed surveys do not conflict with current or planned survey efforts being conducted by the University or its administrative or academic units.
- Promote the communication of survey results.

#### 4. Procedure

Any person or group wishing to conduct a survey as described in section 2 should submit a proposal to the Institutional Survey Management Committee for permission to proceed. The proposal should identify:

- The name of the group conducting or managing the survey.
- Contact information for the project manager (or campus project manager).
- The topic of the survey / objectives / issues to be addressed / specific questions to be asked.
- How the survey will benefit Lakehead University and contribute to its strategic direction.
- The target population and intended sample.
- Mode of contact and timing.
- 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)
- 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.

## 5. Approval

The Institutional 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 Lakehead University's strategic planning and priorities.
- Design and content of survey instrument and proposed survey administration methods.

Approval to proceed will be granted based on a majority of Institutional Survey Management Committee members agreeing that the proposal should proceed. Ties will be decided by the vote of the Chair.

### 1. Grand-parented surveys

The following surveys are considered 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
- Student Evaluation of Teaching
- Lakehead University Program Review Surveys
- University Report Card (Globe and Mail)

## Contact

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**Review Period:** 7 years;

**Date for Next Review:** 2021-2022;

**Related Policies and Procedures:** To be determined;

**Policy Superseded by this Policy:** None.

The University Secretariat manages the development of policies through an impartial, fair governance process, and in accordance with the Policy Governance Framework. Please contact the University Secretariat for additional information on University policies and procedures and/or if you require this information in another format:

Open: Monday through Friday from 8:30am to 4:30pm;

Location: University Centre, Thunder Bay Campus, Room UC2002;

Phone: 807-346-7929 or Email: [univsec@lakeheadu.ca](mailto:univsec@lakeheadu.ca).