Survey Advisory Committee Meeting
January 20, 2012
3:00 – 5:00 PM
1911 Building rm 129
Meeting Minutes

Members present: Nancy Whelchel, Maxine Atkinson, Mike Carter, Leslie Dare, Jason DeRousie, Ken Esbenshade, Ginny Hall, Sarah Lannom, Stan North Martin, Shevaun Neupert, John O'Daniel, Deb Paxton, Kevin Rice, Alan Schueler, Mike Williams, Carrie Zelna

Not attending: Michelle Johnson, Malina Monaco, Haylee McLean, Donna Petherbridge, Sheri Schwab, Paul Umbach,

Call to order: Nancy Whelchel called the meeting to order at 3:10.

Agenda

Welcome and introductions

Approval of November 21, 2011 minutes: Minutes were approved.

Agenda
Review of Draft Calendar and Survey Registration Form
Nancy and Leslie demonstrated the draft versions of the 'survey registration form' and the 'survey activities calendar' for the group (see http://www2.acs.ncsu.edu/UPA/survey/procedures/). Overall, the group was supportive of the general process, the information requested on the form, and the information displayed on the calendar. Deb recommended revising the language about IRB on the registration form and offered to draft the new text for that item.

Concerns were expressed about various issues, such as the extent to which submitted materials would be open to Public Records requests. Sara explained that such material would more than likely need to be made available if requested. While it is possible that under certain circumstances the files could be protected by FERPA or considered part of personnel records, that is unlikely. Several members commented that it could be problematic if results from, e.g., program review activities, were released to the public. Units would be concerned about conducting a survey to get input on services because negative feedback - - which is useful in identifying areas for improvement - - could become the focus of unwanted public scrutiny. While a Public Records request could be made for such files with or without them being showcased on a Survey Activities Calendar, having them on the Calendar probably increases the likelihood of someone becoming aware of them and making a request. The committee discussed the possibility of having different criteria for needing to complete the registration form and for what would be included the calendar in order to limit public awareness of survey activities. Another approach suggested was to make users authenticate to get to the calendar.

Although committee members support the registration and calendar process, there was continued discussion about the need to clarify the reasons for it. Members mentioned several reasons that had been previously discussed and/or that relate to the Charge for the Committee, such as using the registration process to help assess the extent of surveying being done on campus, to help educate those wanting to conduct a survey about potential alternative sources of data, to potentially help regulate the timing of surveys, and to better enable UPA to systematically pull requested samples to limit the number of times any given individual is asked to participate in a survey. Information collected in the registration form could also be used to identify opportunities to educate those conducting a survey on particular aspects of their research design (e.g., you don't need to survey the entire population you can use a sample). The proposed registration and calendar process is also not envisioned to be regulatory at this time, i.e., while projects meeting certain criteria (see below) would need to submit a registration form, projects would not be prohibited from being administered.

The group continued to grapple with what criteria should be used to determine what activities should and should not be included in the registration process and on the calendar. While on the one hand virtually any survey activity could be included in the process, inclusion could be based on the number of people in the survey population/sample, who is being surveyed (e.g., if it is just those having attended an event or activity the project could be excluded), or the purpose of the project (e.g., program assessment could be excluded).

The group also continued to think ahead to when the registration form might be used to evaluate a project and determine whether or not it would be approved. Faculty and graduate student research (and to a lesser extent that by undergraduates) was discussed as a particular concern. How to prioritize projects (rather than just permit them on a first-come first-served basis) was also raised as an issue. Another was determining what enforcement mechanisms would be possible and useful. And, the Committee continued to see the need to develop educational materials and support systems to help those conducting survey activities as very important.

It was determined that at the next meeting the Committee would focus on identifying specific criteria that we see as important to distinguishing between what projects should and should not be "required" to submit the registration form, and what criteria would be used to determine what projects are posted on the calendar.

Next steps
- Nancy will send out a Doodle Poll to schedule the next meeting.
- Committee members think about criteria to determine what projects need a registration form and what goes on the calendar.

Meeting was adjourned at 5:00

NEXT MEETING:
Friday February 24, 2012.
10:30-12:30
1911 Bldg room 129