

University of British Columbia

Survey Governance Committee Terms of Reference

Version Date: April 28, 2021

Purpose

UBC often uses surveys to solicit feedback from students, faculty and staff. Results from these surveys are used to inform strategic planning and decision-making. However, the accessibility of digital surveying tools has led to an increase in surveys at the university. Over-surveying our community has led to survey fatigue and lower response rates, which limits the interpretations we can draw from the data. Further, surveys that are not well coordinated may represent an inefficient use of university resources.

The university has established a Survey Governance Committee (“the Committee”) to provide a consistent and coordinated approach for surveys intended for broad distribution to the university community. The purpose of this Committee is to:

- Coordinate surveys of the university community;
- Avoid the collection of duplicate information;
- Determine avenues for accessing students, faculty, staff and alumni;
- Reduce survey fatigue and maximize participation rates by managing timing and sampling methods;
- Ensure results are shared with the university as appropriate;
- Ensure adherence to privacy legislation and data governance; and
- Promote appropriate survey methodology and design.

Authority

The Committee is established under the authority of the Provosts and Vice-Presidents Academic (both campuses), the Vice-President Students, and Vice-President Human Resources.

Scope

All surveys intended for broad distribution to the university community require approval by the Committee before being deployed. The Committee will prioritize surveys that are being conducted for academic research, institutional surveys, and those strongly supporting the strategic priorities of the university. They will also evaluate requests by external agencies to conduct surveys with UBC students, faculty, staff and alumni.

Surveys covered by this Committee:

This governance applies to any broad sampling or census of a population at the university (including applicants, former students, and alumni) addressing the internal operations of the university or topics directly related to the internal operations of the university. A survey may be addressed to any part of the university community.

Examples are:

- Surveys that address all faculty, staff, and/or students within the university;
- Surveys that are aimed at a broad subset of the population (e.g., first-year student population, longitudinal studies); or
- Surveys covering a variety of topics (e.g., use and satisfaction with various university services).

Surveys not covered by this Committee:

The Committee will not review surveys that are course-based, classroom projects, Faculty-specific or those initiated by staff and faculty employee groups. Also, it does not replace the Research Ethics Board for those surveys requiring ethics review.

Surveys not reviewed by the Committee:

- Course-based and/or classroom projects;
- Faculty-specific surveys;
- Surveys initiated by staff and faculty employee groups;
- Student Experiences of Instruction; and
- Surveys administered through UBC's insight community for panel recipients (if the Insight community surveys the broader UBC community, those surveys will be reviewed by the SGC)

Responsibilities

The Survey Governance Committee will be responsible to:

- Evaluate requests for surveys intended for broad distribution to the university community.
- Ensure surveys deployed at UBC adhere to privacy legislation and data governance.
- Oversee the number of surveys imposed on different constituencies of the campus community.
- Review existing survey results to determine redundancies or enhance existing knowledge.
- Evaluate requests for access to survey data (dashboards and case-level data).

- Report to and advise the Provosts and Vice-Presidents Academic (both campuses), the Vice-President Students, and Vice-President Human Resources of survey activity at the university.

Composition and Appointment

Composition

The following positions are members of the Survey Governance Committee:

- Chief Institutional Research Officer, Planning and Institutional Research (Chair)
- Associate Director, Student Experience Evaluation and Research (Vice-Chair)
- Vice-Provost and Associate Vice-President, Enrolment and Academic Facilities
- Director, Student Development & Advising
- Manager, Strategic Initiatives (Okanagan)
- Chief Data Officer, Office of the Chief Information Officer
- Director, Marketing Intelligence Communications and Marketing
- Project Manager, Center for Teaching, Learning and Technology
- Senior Manager, Research and Evaluation, Centre for Teaching Learning and Technology
- Director, Workplace Engagement and Communications
- Manager, Data Systems and Analysis, Graduate and Post-doctoral Studies
- A student representative (UBCSUO, Okanagan)
- An undergraduate student representative (AMS, Vancouver)
- A graduate student representative (GSS, Vancouver)
- Associate Vice President, Students (Okanagan)
- Executive Director, Vice President Students (Vancouver)
- Deputy Registrar, Okanagan
- Interim Deputy Registrar, Vancouver
- Executive Director, International Student Initiative
- Associate Vice President, Equity & Inclusion
- Associate Registrar, Student Recruitment and Undergraduate Admissions
- Associate Director, Aboriginal Programs and Services (Okanagan)
- Global Engagement Advisor, Global Seminars
- Associate Dean, Students, Faculty of Arts (Vancouver)
- Associate Dean, Irving K. Barber School of Arts & Sciences (Okanagan)
- Senior Instructor, Management (Okanagan)
- Secretariat

For requests affecting their areas of responsibility, others may be invited to attend meetings, including representative(s) of student constituent groups, Development and Alumni Engagement, Marketing and Communications, the General Counsel, etc.

Appointment

A regular member may appoint another person to attend a meeting or meetings on their behalf, or to act on their behalf for a specified timeframe. A person so appointed will be deemed to be a regular member of the Committee for the specified time and may vote as a regular member.

At least the Chair or Vice-Chair should attend all meetings. A Secretariat will be appointed to take meeting notes and follow-up on action items.

Operating Procedures

Frequency of Meetings

The Committee will meet once every two months, or more frequently if deemed necessary. Meetings will be conducted via Zoom, in person, or through email as determined by the Chair.

Operations

- The Committee may meet about or discuss other matters related to surveys intended for broad distribution to the university community and related procedures outside of requests for survey review or survey data.
- The Committee will keep informed of survey activities initiated by external agencies who request the assistance of the university in survey administration, and can provide advice or recommendations if requested.
- The Chair and Vice Chair of the Committee will collect the records and documents of the Committee's work and ensure that such records and documents are appropriately stored and retained.
- Decisions of the Committee shall be communicated to the individual(s) who requested the approval, in writing and promptly.
- The Committee may ask to see final reports of surveys, at its discretion.
- The Chair, on behalf of the Committee, will report to the Provosts and Vice-Presidents Academic (both campuses), the Vice-President Students, and Vice-President Human Resources at the end of each academic year on the Institutional Survey activities that have taken place at the university during that year.
- The Committee may seek advice, as appropriate.

Quorum

A quorum consists of a simple majority of members (i.e., 50% plus one person).

Decisions

Decisions reached by the Committee should normally be based on a simple majority vote (i.e., 50% plus one person) when a quorum has been reached. All members will be notified of decisions requiring voting ahead of Committee meetings. If Committee consensus cannot be reached, the Chair and Vice Chair will submit their recommendations to the Provosts and Vice-Presidents Academic (both campuses), the Vice-President Students, and Vice-President Human Resources at each campus. In this circumstance, final approval rests with the UBC Executives.

Terms of Reference Review

Terms of Reference and Committee membership will be reviewed every two years as the development of the framework progresses and the Committee changes to adapt to the new needs of the university.