**Survey Response Strategies**

**Make it relevant.**

* Solicit responses from specific student populations who have reason to be interested.
* Explain thoroughly in the email what the purpose of the survey is.

**Help students understand the value of their response by sharing results.**

* Preface survey links with an explanation of what results are being used for.
* Send follow-emails sharing a few findings.
* Cite assessment results when publicizing new programs/decisions.
* Publish certain results on a website, newsletter or blog.

**Decrease the number of times you ask a student to complete a survey.**

* Break the student body into 3 – 6 “panels” of random students so each student does not get each survey.
* Use the larger group only when necessary, such as when you need to generalize to the entire population or significantly filter results.
* Use other methods: web-based on-site, PDAs, etc.

 **Use incentives.**

* Consider smaller incentives with higher chances of winning (give out three $10 gift cards instead of one $30) which has shown to be more effective.
* Consider “immediate” incentives, like coupons or printable gift certificates, which have shown to be more enticing.

**Send notification at appropriate times.** People are more likely to complete a survey when they first open it than to go back into it. They’ll either do it, or delete it. This is why most responses come in the first day.

* Identify when students are more likely to respond and email during those times.
* Send reminders to non-responders using the Mass Mailing feature. You’ll see a peak with each reminder without having to aggravate those who have already completed the survey.

**Keep survey length down**, and tell the student exactly how long it will take them to reply.

* Include only truly necessary questions. Ask yourself: Why would I use this piece of data?
* If you need to link responses to demographics, upload student data to Campus Labs Baseline to be matched to student responses.

**Establish credibility.**

* Send a pre-notification email asking for their participation.
* Ask student leaders/government for their endorsement and help publicizing.
* Think carefully about the “from” address. Send emails from a name students will recognize and trust.