

**How to Get the Information  
You Need:  
*Best Practices in Survey  
Design and Implementation***

# About Us

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# Learning Objectives

***By the end of the session, attendees will be able to:***

- 1) Identify common survey flaws.
- 2) Describe how to design surveys with high content validity.
- 3) Explain how to implement surveys based on best practices to minimize social desirability influences and increase response rate.

# How to join the conversation...

1

Enter this as the  
phone number:  
37607

2

Enter this as your  
message:  
56421

In which section are you a member?

What is the primary reason  
you are here today?

# Session Outline

- Session rationale
- Formulating strong research questions
- Developing survey instruments
- Survey activity
- Sampling and recruitment
- Increasing response rate
- Survey resources
- Q & A

# Surveys Pros & Cons

## ● Pros

- > Gather a lot of information
- > Access to large N
- > Can be good for sensitive information
- > Ability for statistical analysis
- > Typically less costly and time consuming

## ● Cons

- > Self-reported information and social desirability
- > Can't confirm population of interest
- > Lack of response depth/inability to follow up

## ● Consider triangulation and mixed methods



# Why discuss this topic?

- Strong survey design & implementation = Gets you the information you need
  - > Today's session will share best practices

# It all starts with your research question

- Foundation for what you want to know; guides the development of your survey
- A research question is a **clear, focused, concise, complex and arguable** question around which you center your research  
(GMU Writing Center)
- Must include topic and population of interest
- Determines your research design

# Research Questions

- *Was my program effective?*
- *What is the frequency of alcohol use among NCAA collegiate athletes during their sports season?*

# Steps for Developing Surveys

- Define research question and population of interest
- Review literature for existing surveys
- Decide on type of survey
- Develop survey questions
- Determine formatting and response/question order
- Have survey reviewed

# Types of Surveys

- ◉ Self-administered vs. researcher administered
- ◉ Self administered more common
  - > Paper surveys
    - Classroom
    - Location-specific
    - Mailed
  - > Online

# Online Survey Tools

- SurveyGizmo
- SurveyMonkey
- Zoomerang
- Google forms
- Polldaddy
- Qualtrics

The screenshot shows a web browser displaying a survey on the SurveyGizmo platform. The URL is <https://appv3.sgizmo.com/projects/preview?id=1219769>. The survey title is "Trans\* Forming Body Image Facilitator Survey". The survey content includes an introductory message and five questions:

We want your feedback to improve programming and measure the effectiveness of GT Campaign for Everybody programming.

1. What is your gender? \*
2. What is your race/ethnicity? \*
3. What is your class year? \*
4. Please identify two meaningful messages you learned from this program that you would share with other GT students?  
1   
2
5. Please select how much you agree or disagree with the following statements.  
(Strongly Disagree=1, Disagree=2, Agree=3, Strongly Agree=4)

	1	2	3	4
Transgeneration was an effective educational tool.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The small discussion group was an effective way for me and others to learn about the topics of gender and body image.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

# Types of Questions

- Closed-ended
  - > Responses are provided
- Open-ended
  - > Space for respondent to write

# Types of Closed-Ended Questions

- Dichotomous
- Likert Scale
- Multiple choice (check 1)
- Multiple choice (check all that apply)
- Ranked order
- Semantic Differential





# Dichotomous

Do you like Bisco?

- > Yes
- > No

# Likert Scale

To what extent do you agree with the statement “I like Bisco.”

- > Strongly agree
- > Agree
- > (Neither agree or disagree)
- > Disagree
- > Strongly disagree

# Multiple Choice: Check One Only

Which of the following do you like most about Bisco? (*only check one*)

- a) His ears
- b) His lack of tail
- c) His appetite
- d) His demeanor
- e) His ability to follow commands

# Multiple Choice: Check All That Apply

Which of the following do you like about Bisco? *(check all that apply)*

- a) His ears
- b) His lack of tail
- c) His appetite
- d) His demeanor
- e) His ability to follow commands

# Ranked Order

What do you like most about Bisco? *Rank each response in the order of 1-5, with 1 being what you like the most and 5 being what you like the least.*

- > His ears
- > His lack of tail
- > His appetite
- > His demeanor
- > His ability to follow commands

# Semantic Differential

I think Bisco is:

Cute    1    2    3    4    5    6    7    Ugly

# Open-Ended Response Option w/ Closed-Ended Question

Which of the following do you like most about Bisco?

- a) His ears
- b) His lack of tail
- c) His appetite
- d) His demeanor
- e) His ability to follow commands
- f) Another feature not listed  
(please fill in: \_\_\_\_\_ )

# Open-Ended Example

In the space below, write about what, if anything, you like about Bisco.





# **Common Survey Mistakes**

# Leading Questions: Loaded

*(social desirability)*

Eating fast food (e.g. McDonalds, Burger King, Wendy's) can make people gain weight and have negative health consequences. How often do you eat fast food?

- a) Never or almost never
- b) A few times a week
- c) About once a week
- d) A few times a month
- e) About once a month

# Leading Questions: Built in Assumption

Did you lose weight the last time you dieted?

- a) Yes
- b) No

# Overly Complex Language

Have you had the rhinovirus in the last year?

- a) Yes
- b) No

Do you think RC in the HP Section has a good reputation?

- a) Yes
- b) No

# Undefined Terms

How many times have you had sex in the last month?

- a) None
- b) 1 time
- c) 2-5 times
- d) 6+ times

# Modifiers

Do you feel stressed often?

- a) Yes
- b) No

# Double-Barreled

What do you think about wearing a helmet when you're riding your bike or on a motorcycle?

- a) I think it is a safe decision
- b) I don't think it matters
- c) I don't know

# Non-Mutually Exclusive Response Categories

What is your age?

- a) Under 18
- b) 18-25
- c) 25-30
- d) 30-40
- e) 40-50
- f) 50+



# Unrealistic Recall Period

How many times in the last year  
have you eaten fast food  
(McDonalds, Burger King, Wendy's,  
etc.)

Fill in number of times: \_\_\_\_\_

# Survey Formatting

- Underline important terms
  - > e.g. Which of these items do not belong?
- Don't ask sensitive questions first
- Spell out response options
- Consider order of questions/responses

# Survey Activity

- Please review the survey
  - > Identify three strengths
  - > Identify three areas of improvement

# Survey Instrument Review

- Before survey implementation, 2 types of review should happen
  - > Pre-testing with population similar to sample
    - Check validity & reliability
  - > Expert review
    - Survey design
    - Topic

# Sampling and Recruitment

- What size should the sample be?
  - > Power analysis
- How are you going to access the sample?
  - > Census vs. random vs. non-random sample
  - > Recruitment plan

# Survey Response Rate

- What is a response rate?
  - > % of participants who participate in survey
- Why does response rate matter?
- How do we interpret response rate?

# Strategies to Increase Response Rate

- ◉ In-person paper-based surveys
- ◉ Reminders
- ◉ Ease of taking survey
  - > Directions
  - > Length
  - > Formatting
- ◉ Confidentiality

# Strategies to Increase Response Rate

- Salience
- Personalization
- Prenotification
- Incentives
  - > Prepaid incentives
  - > What we know about “lottery” incentives



# Consider IRB Review

- Consider these questions
  - > Is the survey you are conducting considered research?
  - > Are you planning to present/publish?
- Consult experts/IRB Board

# Checklist for Survey Development and Implementation

How will you use this information  
when you leave the conference?

**Thank you!**

# Questions & Comments