

2026-2027 HEDS Pre-Advising Survey

Updated: 8/14/2026

In this information sheet, we detail the survey options available to you, as well as our expectations, practices, fees, and terms of service.

- [Survey Content and Design](#)
- [Survey Administration Window](#)
- [Results and Data Files](#)
- [Survey Administration Methods](#)
- [Fees](#)
- [Other Survey Information](#)
 - *Including information about survey contacts, live updates, IRB approval, unfinished surveys, supplemental questions, changes to survey questions, additional languages, etc.*
- [Data Security](#)
- [Deadlines](#)
- [Registering for the Survey](#)
- [Contact Information](#)

Survey Contents and Design

The [HEDS Pre-Advising Survey](#) is designed to support the work of academic advisors to move beyond the mechanics of scheduling classes and have holistic, meaningful conversations with students. The survey invites students to reflect on their short and long-term goals, reasons for pursuing a degree, worries, and the experiences that are hindering their progress. The survey also asks how confident students are in continuing their education at your institution. An advisee's responses are automatically sent to their academic advisor prior to their upcoming advising meeting. This gives the advisor a chance to review how a student responded to the survey and incorporate any helpful information from the student's responses into their conversation with that student.

The questions in the survey draw on the many focus groups that HEDS has conducted with undergraduate students at colleges and universities around the country about their short- and long-term goals for college; the kinds of success in life they hope college will help them achieve; what experiences in college have the most impact on them; and how often and why they think about leaving college before they graduate. In our conversations, students with different backgrounds and identities across a wide range of institutions talked about a successful life after college including four components: *1) meaningful work, 2) financial stability, 3) positive relationships, and 4) balance.*

Students attend college to achieve this successful life, even when they don't talk about it, and they often leave because they can't see a path from what they're doing day-to-day in college to their vision of a successful life. Unfortunately, traditional academic measures of success, such as GPA and timely course completion, often overlook these four longer-term goals that many students value. However, effective academic advising can help students connect their academic choices to this broader sense of purpose, navigate barriers early, and feel that people at their institution see their aspirations beyond completing a major, earning a degree, and landing a job.

Survey Administration Windows

The survey is for students who are currently attending your institution and are eligible for registration for the next academic term. You can administer the HEDS Pre-Advising Survey for a 3-6-week period between October 5, 2026, and May 28, 2027. To ensure that we have time to set up your survey correctly, please register at least seven weeks before the date on which you plan to begin administering the survey.

Results and Data Files

You will receive:

- The individual responses of each student emailed directly to their advisor immediately after the student submits their survey.
- A live online summary report
 - During your survey administration, you will be able to monitor responses through a link to a live summary report displaying aggregate results to select survey questions.
 - The report updates continuously throughout the administration period, allowing you to:
 - gain an early, high-level sense of how people are responding to key parts of the survey;
 - monitor response rates and adjust communication or outreach strategies as needed; and
 - access an immediate summary of results as soon as the survey closes.
 - This report can be downloaded and printed.
- Unit-record SPSS and Microsoft Excel files with your institution's survey data.
 - You will receive these within 5 business days after your survey closes.

Please note that the purpose of the survey is to initiate important conversations with your students. **We do not collect any demographic information in the survey and will not be creating comparison reports.** Since you will receive a unit record data file with student identifiers, your institution can connect institutional data on grades, progress, retention, and other student success data to the survey results. Additionally, you may add up to five variables to be connected to your students' responses in the data file and/or use your three supplemental questions to collect demographic information.

Survey Administration Methods

Administration methods are how you invite people to take your survey. For full details about these methods, including the advantages and disadvantages of each, please see our [Administration Methods](#) document.

- **Email Method** – We send each of your students a personalized email invitation with a unique link to the survey. You may send up to three reminders to students who do not complete the survey. You may personalize both the invitation and the reminders, and each message appears to come from your institution.
- **Authentication Method** – You provide your students with a common link, and they use a unique password, such as their email address and/or student ID number, to log into the survey.

If you want to use both email and authentication, please let us know so we can discuss the advantages and disadvantages of this approach. To ensure consistency in the administration process, we do not allow institutions to administer any HEDS survey through their own survey engines.

Follow-up Conversations

We will ask you to list the name and email address of each student's academic advisor. You will provide this information in the participant list along with students' names and email addresses. We will set up the survey so that both the advisor and student automatically receive an email with a summary of that student's survey

responses. Please note, they will only receive a copy of the responses to the core survey. We cannot send responses to supplemental questions in these emails. You will receive these in your data file only.

Fees

	HEDS institutions	Institutions not in HEDS
Base cost includes: - One 3- to 6-week survey administration - One administration method (only email and authentication are options) - Up to 1,000 responses - One survey invitation and up to three reminders for email method 3 supplemental questions (please see below) - Data summaries and files as specified above	Free of Charge	\$760
Using both the authentication and email administration methods	+\$150	+ \$200
Surveys beyond the first 1,000. <i>(Count includes all administration methods and partial responses. Invoiced after survey window closes.)</i>	+ \$0.65 per additional survey	+ \$0.95 per additional survey
Late registration fee <i>(see explanation in registration section below)</i>	+ \$275	+ \$325
Cancellation fee if you cancel <i>after</i> we have set up your survey in our survey engine.	+ \$300	+ \$350

Special Fees

Contracts or survey agreements from your institution – If your institution requires us to use an agreement or contract developed by your institution and we determine that we need our attorney to review that agreement, we will add the cost of that review to your survey fee. The standard rate for a contract review by our counsel is \$500.

Errors in participant list – If you realize that you made an error in the participant list you provided us (e.g., incomplete list, incorrect group of students, emails with incorrect names) after the survey has launched, please notify us immediately. Depending on the scope of the error, we may need to close the survey, clear any responses, and relaunch the survey for an additional fee.

Invoicing

We will send your invoice about the time your survey opens. This invoice will include the base cost of the survey, any additional options you chose, and (if you registered less than seven weeks prior to your survey start date) the late registration fee. You can pay by credit card (3.5% fee applies), direct deposit, or check.

HEDS member prices – In order to qualify for the HEDS member discounted survey fees listed above, your institution must have paid its HEDS membership fee for 2026-2027 by the time we invoice you, or we will charge you the full survey price. Please talk to us if you are uncertain if your institution is up to date on its membership fee.

Surveys above 1,000 – If your total responses, including partial responses, go over 1,000, we will invoice you separately for this after your survey closes and we have a final count.

Non-payment – Please be aware, we will not send your data file until your invoice has been paid.

Other Survey Information

Survey Liaison – You will need to identify one individual from your institution to serve as the survey liaison. We'll direct all communication to the survey liaison, and the survey liaison is responsible for contacting other people on their campus about survey logistics. The survey liaison will be responsible for providing the survey materials needed based on the administration method chosen ([see above](#)), testing the survey, and collaborating with us to troubleshoot if technical problems arise.

HEDS Primary Contacts – If you belong to a HEDS member institution, you have a [HEDS Primary Contact](#) who, according to [Section 1.03 of HEDS Bylaws](#), is responsible for approving institutional participation in HEDS surveys. The survey liaison does not need to be the primary contact, but we will need your primary contact to give their consent for your institution to administer the survey. We will include them in the invitation to your set-up call, and they will also receive a copy of any files containing data from the survey.

IRB approval – The HEDS Pre-Advising Survey has been [approved](#) by the Wabash College Institutional Review Board (IRB) as a voluntary survey. We encourage your institution's survey liaison to contact the IRB at your institution to determine whether their approval is needed prior to administering the survey. Wabash's IRB does not enter into authorization agreements with institutions that use HEDS surveys.

Unfinished surveys – Participants may choose not to answer any question in the survey. They may also stop taking the survey at any time and not submit their data. If a student does not hit "submit" at the end of survey, their responses will not automatically be sent to their advisor. However, you will receive these partial responses in your unit-record data files.

Supplemental questions – You can add up to three supplemental questions related to the survey's subject matter at the end of the survey. Each sub-question on a multipart or matrix question counts as one supplemental question. For more information on how to count and format supplemental questions before submitting them to HEDS, please review our [Supplemental Question Guide](#). Your data file will include participants' responses to these questions, but the automatic summary of responses sent to students and advisors and the live online summary report will not.

Changes to the survey questions – While you can *add* supplemental questions to the end, we do not modify our survey questions or response options.

Embedding institution names – We will set up the survey so that your institution's name appears in the survey questions.

Additional language versions – Qualtrics, our survey engine, can translate your survey into other languages using Google Translate. If you are interested in this option, please let us know. Depending on our survey load, we may have to limit you to using one additional language or charge extra for using more than one additional language.

Data Security

We will secure your survey data and participant information by:

- Using a secure survey engine. Our survey engine, Qualtrics, stores your participant information and responses securely. Qualtrics protects its servers with firewalls, security scans, and nightly data backups. Qualtrics' security statement is available at <http://www.qualtrics.com/security-statement/>.
- Using Box, a password-protected, encrypted, secure file storage system. We use Box to receive, store, and send files with personally identifiable data. See more information about Box's privacy and security at <https://www.box.com/security-compliance>.

- We use TunnelBear as a virtual private network (VPN) to secure our online tasks when we work remotely. Learn more about how TunnelBear secures internet browsing here: <https://www.tunnelbear.com/blog/stronger-encryption/>.
- We will not share any personally identifiable information with any outside individuals or entities.

Deadlines

Below we review your deadlines for each step in our work together to set up a survey. Setting up surveys exactly how you'd like them is complicated, and we may be setting up and running many dozens of surveys at a time. We've set the following deadlines to ensure we have enough time to do a good job administering your survey. If you miss a deadline, we will probably have to delay the opening of your survey. The following deadlines are based on the date you wish to start your survey administration.

Task for your institution	Deadline
Register for the Survey	At least seven weeks (35 business days) before the survey start date. <i>Earlier is better to allow you more time to work out the details of your survey.</i>
Set up Call with HEDS to Discuss Survey Details HEDS will contact you to set up a call to discuss the details of your survey administration, fees, and to let you know what materials you will need to provide.	Call takes place 2–9 business days after registering. <i>We will offer you meeting times and dates within this 2–9 day window. If our call occurs during this period, you will have at least ten (10) business days to gather your materials.</i>
Provide All Final Survey Materials to HEDS Final means <i>all stakeholders</i> have viewed and approved any of the following submitted to HEDS: how your institution's name will appear in the survey, information about the survey leader(s) at your institution, administration method(s), a participant list, dates to send and information to personalize the invitations and reminder messages, and supplemental questions. <i>Once we set up your survey in our survey engine for testing, any changes you make to the content of these materials will result in a significant delay in launching your survey.</i>	By end-of-day, sixteen (16) business days before the survey start date. <i>This is a very important deadline for meeting your desired survey start date. The earlier you register and meet with your HEDS survey team member, the more time you will have to gather your materials and get them approved.</i>
Provide HEDS with Feedback on Survey Test	By end-of-day, eight (8) business days before the survey start date. <i>You will have a minimum of 3 business days to test your survey.</i>
Provide HEDS with Feedback on Final Survey Test (only if necessary) A second test will <i>only</i> happen if there was a technical difficulty to resolve, or if we made an error when setting up your survey.	By end-of-day, four (4) business days before the survey start date. <i>You will have a minimum of 2 business days to review the second test.</i>

Important Note About Survey Testing

The purpose of testing is to ensure that the survey will run smoothly and to fix any technical difficulties (i.e., invitation messages going to spam) before your survey launches. Testing also allows you to check that we entered the custom section in your invitation message (if using the email method) and supplemental questions exactly as you submitted them to us. We need to work with the final, approved version of all survey materials when setting up your survey for testing. **Testing isn't the time to edit the content of emails or supplemental survey questions. Once we've used the information you've sent us to set up your survey for testing, any changes you make in that information will result in a significant delay, potentially days, in when we can launch your survey.** It is important that you ask anyone at your institution who needs to review and approve your survey materials to do so before sending that material to us.

Registering for the HEDS Pre-Advising Survey

You can register for the 2026-2027 HEDS Pre-Advising Survey using our [online registration form](#). **Please register at least seven weeks from the date you wish your survey to begin.** The last day to register will be March 19, 2027. Once you submit the registration form, we will contact you to discuss your survey preferences and the associated fees. Following this conversation, we will send you the materials we need filled out to set up your survey as we discussed.

HEDS Pre-Advising Survey Administration Contact

Please email us at preadvisingsurvey@hedsconsortium.org if you have any questions. You can download copies of the survey from our website at: <https://www.hedsconsortium.org/heds-pre-advising-survey/>.