2026–2027 HEDS Student Satisfaction Survey Information Sheet

Updated: 9/14/2026

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

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Survey Contents and Design

The HEDS Student Satisfaction Survey is designed for undergraduate students at 2-year and 4-year institutions. It asks your students how satisfied they are with their academic experiences, course instruction, campus services and facilities, and campus life.

You can use information from this survey to:

- identify strengths and areas for improvement in these four key areas of student experience that promote student success; and
- learn more about how students with different identities and backgrounds experience these different aspects of your institution.

Survey Administration Window

You can administer this survey for any 3–6 week period between October 12, 2026, and May 21, 2027. You must **register at least seven weeks before the date on which you plan to begin administering the survey**.

Report and Data Files

You will receive:

- 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 results for 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 is printable and may be shared with anyone on your campus.
- Unit-record SPSS and Microsoft Excel files with your institution's survey data.
  - You will receive these within 10 business days after your survey closes.
- A report that compares your institution's results to those of all other participating institutions.
  - We cannot begin developing these reports until the survey closes at the end of May. Please note, that we have several surveys that close at this time and will be working on multiple reports. We anticipate delivering these reports in the fall semester.

Custom Reports

As time permits, we occasionally create custom reports for institutions. When we have the capacity to create a custom report, the fee will be based on the complexity of your request. If you are interested in a custom report, please let us know when we are working with you to set up the administration of your survey.

Consulting About Survey Results

As time permits, we are glad to schedule an hour-long conversation with you and your colleagues to answer questions and provide some guidance for interpreting your survey data. We charge a fee for more extensive support, such as writing a short memo summarizing your institution's survey data or making a presentation on your data to select groups at your institution. For example, we occasionally make virtual presentations on an institution's survey data or visit campuses to make presentations, conduct follow-up focus groups, or work with the institution to consider ways of acting on data from the survey. For the 2026-2027 academic year, our typical fee for up to three virtual presentations is $3,100 for HEDS institutions and $4,100 for institutions that don't belong to HEDS. For campus visits, we typically charge $3,400 plus expenses for HEDS institutions and $4,500 plus expenses for institutions that don't belong to HEDS. Please note, the fees we list above are examples, and what we charge will vary depending on what you ask us to do. Furthermore, we are a small organization, so the number of consultations we can provide is limited.

Survey Administration Methods

We typically use one of three methods to 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 your students an email invitation with a unique link to the survey. You may send up to three email reminders to students who do not complete the survey. Each message appears to come from your institution and is personalized with your institution name and contact information.
- **Authentication method** – You provide participants with a common link, and they use a unique password, such as their email address and/or ID number, to access the survey.
- **General link method** – You provide participants with a general link to the survey. No password is required to access and complete the survey. *Anyone* who follows the link can submit their responses. Responses will be anonymous and you can't link them to other student data.

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 and the comparability of our survey data, we do not allow institutions to administer any HEDS survey through their own survey engines.

Fees

	HEDS Institutions	Institutions not in HEDS
Base cost includes: • One 3–6 week survey administration • One administration method • Up to 1,000 surveys • One survey invitation and up to three reminders for email method • 10 supplemental questions (*any type*) • Report and data files as specified above	Free of Charge	$1,525
Using both the authentication and email administration methods	+ $150	+ $200
Surveys beyond the first 1,000. *(Count includes all administration methods and partial responses. Invoiced after survey window closes.)*	+ $0.65 per additional survey	+ $0.95 per additional survey
Late registration fee *(See explanation in registration section below)*	+ $275	+ $325
Late cancellation fee *(If you cancel after we have set up your survey in our survey engine, we will invoice you for a cancellation fee.)*	+ $300	+ $350

Special Fees

Multi-campus/Multi-institution administrations – If you want to administer a survey to people at multiple campuses or within a multi-institution system, please contact us for more information and pricing.

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 people, 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. You can cap the total number of *completed* responses your survey accepts. So, if you are concerned about these costs, please talk to us.

Non-payment – Please be aware, we will not send your reports 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 all data files and reports from the survey.

IRB approval – The HEDS Student Satisfaction Survey has been approved by the Wabash College Institutional Review Board (IRB) for use 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, including approval of supplemental questions if applicable, before administering this survey. The Wabash IRB will not enter into authorization agreements with institutions that use HEDS surveys.

Mandatory participation – Making the survey mandatory is a sound strategy that can increase your response rate, but please consult your institution's IRB before doing so.

Unfinished surveys – Participants may choose not to answer any question in the survey. They may also stop taking the survey at any time and choose not to submit their data. However, you will receive these partial responses in your unit-record data files.

Supplemental questions – You can add 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 HEDS reports 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. We standardize the questions and response options across all institutions to maintain the quality of the comparative data. For two-year institutions, we have a small set of response options that may not apply that we can hide. If your institution is a two-year college, we will discuss these options with you during our call about your survey administration.

Embedding institution names – We will set up the survey so that your institution's name appears prominently on each page and in 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

HEDS secures 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 deadlines below 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. *Earlier is better to allow you more time to work out the details of your survey.*
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. *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.*
Provide All Final Survey Materials to HEDS Final means *all stakeholders* 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), your participant list, dates to send and information to personalize the invitations and reminder messages, and supplemental questions. ***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***.	By end-of-day, **sixteen (16) business days** before the survey start date. *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.*

Provide HEDS with Feedback on Survey Test	By end-of-day, **eight (8) business days** before the survey start date. *You will have a minimum of 3 business days to test your survey.*
Provide HEDS with Feedback on Final Survey Test (*only if necessary)* A second test will *only* 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. *You will have a minimum of 2 business days for a second test.*

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 Student Satisfaction Survey

You can register for the 2026–2027 HEDS Student Satisfaction Survey using our online registration form. **You must register at least seven weeks from the date you wish your survey to begin**. Late registrations are accepted only in rare circumstances, and there will be a late fee (see the Fee table). The last day to register will be March 12, 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.

Questions about the HEDS Student Satisfaction Survey?

Don't hesitate to get in touch with us at satisfactionsurvey@hedsconsortium.org if you have any questions.