



HEDS Returning Student Survey

This is a PDF representation of the online version of the survey. It includes all questions and response options, as well as notes (in italics) about how questions will display to survey takers.

If the survey is being administered via the authentication method, students will see the following message:

Welcome to the HEDS Returning Student Survey.

[Institution Name] would like to hear more about your goals for college and for your life after college. Once you enter your [email/student ID], you will be taken to the survey.

Please enter your [Institution Name] [email/student ID] and click “Next” to continue to the survey: _____

All students will see the following introduction text:

We know the spring term was challenging, and we realize that these challenges create uncertainties about the coming year. But we also know that the COVID-19 crisis will eventually subside. When that happens, what you accomplish now and in the coming months will help you create the life you want to lead after college. Whatever joys and struggles you’ve had in college, it is important to think about how these experiences are preparing you for life after college. Your hopes and dreams matter to us. So, we’d like you to complete this short survey about your long-term goals and some strategies you might use in college to help you get there. It should take 5-10 minutes to complete the survey.

Your survey results will be shared with a handful of people at [Institution name] who work on student success, retention, and efforts to improve teaching and learning. Anyone who has access to your responses will keep them confidential and abide by the standards of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). At the end of this survey, we’ll ask whether you’d like us to forward your responses to specific people at [Institution name] so you can talk to them about your goals and strategies. If you choose to do this, they will also see your survey responses.

By clicking “Next,” you indicate that you’ve agreed to participate in the survey. Thank you for taking the time to share your thoughts.

Students will see a “Next” button here.

1. Imagine some point in the future, after you’re done with school and you’re leading a successful life. What does your life look like? What are you doing? How are you living? Please think big!

2. Looking ahead to the upcoming term, what key areas would you like some help with? (Check all that apply)

- Getting more out of online classes if we have to transition back to online learning
- Accessing internships, research opportunities, study abroad, or other out-of-class opportunities
- Doing labs, studios, clinicals, practicums, or other face-to-face work that’s necessary for my major if classes go back online
- Financial concerns (e.g., finding ways to pay for college, questions about my financial aid or on-campus jobs)
- Accessing mental health services
- Thinking about what I’m going to do immediately after college (employment, graduate school, etc.)
- Other: _____

3. Given the uncertainty around what may happen with [Institution name]’s teaching and learning environment in the fall, what could we do to help you be successful?

4. Taking into account what you’ve learned and experienced in the spring, what are the most important reasons to stay in college to complete your degree? (Check all that apply)

- To get a job that provides financial security
- To get a job that helps me start a meaningful career
- To learn new things and expand my horizons
- To become a more thoughtful and better-informed citizen
- To make life-long friendships
- To prepare for post-graduate education
- To honor the support my family has given me while I am in college
- To build a better life than my parents and/or my family had
- To build a good life for my children and/or family
- To improve my ability to give back to my community
- Other: _____

5. What are your biggest worries or concerns as you think about what’s coming up in college and beyond? (Check all that apply)

- Getting the right courses, internships, and experiences in college to set me up for my career
- Taking a leave of absence or a gap year during or after college and losing momentum
- Getting into the graduate school I need to build my career
- Paying off my student loans
- Finding a job that’s meaningful
- Finding a job that gives me the resources I need to be comfortable
- Settling for a job I don’t enjoy because it pays the bills
- National/global issues that impact society at large (e.g., climate change, the political environment, social inequality, COVID-19)
- Maintaining my mental health and well-being
- Creating balance between work, family, friends, and my personal interests/hobbies
- Knowing how to do “life stuff” (e.g., managing my finances, finding a good place to live, getting the right kinds of insurance)
- Other: _____

6. Changes from COVID-19 have disrupted the lives of people across the country, including many students, staff, and faculty at colleges and universities. Looking back on your academic experience in the spring after your classes moved to an online format, please rate how well you did each of the following:

	Good	Fair	Poor
I set concrete goals for my readings, papers, and other assignments to ensure that I stayed on top of my classes	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I pushed myself to stay motivated even when it was hard to do	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I reminded myself that working hard and maintaining my studies, even in a new environment, would pay off in the long run	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I found healthy ways to manage the stress of all the changes	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I tried to bounce back when things didn't work out	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

7. Going forward, which two of the actions listed in the previous question would you most like to improve? (Choose two)

- Setting concrete goals for my readings, papers, and other assignments
- Pushing to stay motivated
- Reminding myself that working hard and maintaining my studies will pay off
- Finding healthy ways to manage stress
- Bouncing back when things don't work out

8. Suppose [Institution name] has to resume some form of online learning for a time because of COVID-19, which of the following might be useful strategies to help you be successful and get the most out of your education? (Check all that apply)

- I would work harder
- I would be more active in seeking help from faculty with my courses
- I would try to think of new solutions like changing my schedule, getting help from other students, or reviewing my notes more thoroughly
- I would think of the situation as a challenge to overcome
- I would remind myself that the situation is temporary
- I would try to create a space to work in that was more distraction free
- I would try to do things during breaks to relax
- I would limit my exposure to news and other media
- I would think more about my strengths and weaknesses to help me work better
- I would seek encouragement from my family and friends
- I would seek encouragement from faculty or someone else at my institution
- I would start to monitor and evaluate my achievements and effort
- I would celebrate my successes and hold myself accountable when my performance isn't where I want it to be

Institutions can adapt Question 9 to fit their organizational structures by identifying up to three people/offices with whom students may choose to share their survey responses. We suggest that one option is students' academic advisor. You might also ask if students want to share their responses with staff in an advising office, staff in career services, the dean of advising, etc. If you include an office in the list below, please provide a link to a website with a list of the people in that office. We want to make sure students know who will see their responses if they check "yes."

9. Would you like us to send your responses on this survey to any of the people or offices listed below, so you can have a conversation with them about your goals and how to accomplish them? Please select "yes" or "no" for each.

	Yes	No
[Advisor name], your official academic advisor	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Staff in [Office name] (click here to see a list of the people in this office)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
[Person's name], [Person's title]	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

10. Is there anyone else at [Institution name], other than the people/offices listed in the previous questions, that you'd like to talk about your plans with? If so, please write their name and department or title below. We will ask the person at [Institution name] who is coordinating this survey, [Liaison name], to forward your survey responses to them.

- Yes: _____
- No

[The following language appears after respondents click the "Submit" button.]

Thank you for taking the time to answer these survey questions. We will forward your responses to the person(s) that you've agreed may see them. If you do not hear from them in the next few weeks, please feel free to reach out to them to initiate a conversation. We will send you a copy of your survey responses, so you can remember what you said and share it with others. If you'd like to see how your answers compare to the responses of other students at [Institution name], please click [here](#). These results will be updated as students take the survey. We'll also include this link in the email with a summary of your survey results, so you can check back as more data come in.