Council of Graduate Schools
Completion and Attrition in STEM Master's Programs

Instructions for Factors Affecting Degree Completion Survey

Background

Institutions participating in the Council of Graduate Schools' project on *Completion and Attrition in STEM Master's Programs* were required to administer the *Factors Affecting Degree Completion Survey* to: (1) students who voluntarily dropped out of STEM master's programs and MBA programs in academic years 2009/10, 2010/11, and 2011/12 (i.e., students who left the program for non-academic reasons); and, (2) students who are currently "stopped out" of STEM master's programs and MBA programs as of Spring 2012 (i.e., these are students who are still in the program but are neither actively taking courses nor working on their thesis). The following instructions describe the process by which other institutions can use this survey instrument to collect data on their "stop-outs" and "drop-outs."

Receiving the Survey

CGS has created a generic version of this survey instrument that can be used by CGS member institutions in MS Word, PDF, and SurveyMonkey formats. For institutions that wish to offer a raffle to survey participants, CGS has also constructed a separate raffle entry survey in SurveyMonkey, which can be made available as well.

Upon request, CGS will transfer a version of the Factors Affecting Degree Completion Survey (and raffle entry survey, as necessary) to the CGS member institution's SurveyMonkey account. To do this, CGS will need the username that institution uses to log in to SurveyMonkey.

Customizing the Survey

To begin, sign in to your SurveyMonkey account. The survey will appear in your SurveyMonkey list of surveys, which can be found by clicking "My Surveys."

Testing the Survey

To test the survey, please do the following:
- Click "Collect Responses" tab
- Click "Factors Affecting Degree Completion Survey"
- Click "Edit Messages"
- Click "Factors Affecting Degree Completion Survey" under "Draft Messages"
- Click "Send a Test Message"
- Enter the e-mail address of individuals at your institution that should test the survey
- Click "Send Test Message"

Test the survey a number of times until it is satisfactory.

Launching the Survey

PREPARING FOR IMPLEMENTATION:
- Prepare an e-mail list (an Excel file works fine) of all students who were enrolled in a master's program but are not taking classes (i.e., stop-outs on leave of absence) or have left or withdrawn from the program (i.e., drop-outs)
- Prepare prenotification, invitation, reminder, and thank you texts in an MS Word document

TO LAUNCH THE SURVEY:
- Login to your SurveyMonkey account
- Click "My Surveys" at the top of the web page
- Click "Factors Affecting Degree Completion Survey"
- Click the "Collect Responses" tab
- Click "Clear" located on the right-hand side of the screen under "Actions"
- Click "Yes, Clear Responses" (this will delete any data collected during the testing phase)
- Click "Factors Affecting Degree Completion Survey" under the "Collector Name" heading

STAGE 1: Enter invitee e-mail addresses
- Click "Edit Recipients"
- Click "Add Recipients"
- Click "Add Recipients Manually" (after reading and accepting the Terms of Use)
- Copy and paste e-mail addresses from your Excel file
- Click "Add Recipients"

STAGE 2: Enter invitation text
- Click "Create Email Message to Send" button near the top of this screen
- Click "New/unsent" under the "Who Should be Sent the Message?" question
- Click "Save Selection & Continue"
- Enter a subject of email message
- Copy and paste the invitation text (NOTE: You will be required to include an opt-out link [RemoveLink] in the invitation text. Please make sure that this link appears at the very bottom of the invitation text)
- Enter a reply e-mail address (replace "nbell@cgs.nche.edu" and/or "research@cgs.nche.edu")
- Click "Save & Preview"
- Preview the message and make any changes as necessary

STAGE 3: Test the invitation message
- Click the "Send a Test Message" button
- Enter your e-mail address and send yourself a test
- Make edits/changes as necessary
- Re-test until you are completely satisfied with the survey

STAGE4: Schedule delivery of the invitation
- Click the "Schedule Delivery" button
- Schedule the date and time of desired delivery, then click "Send Message"

Sending Reminders

On or around the designated dates for sending the reminders, follow these steps:

STAGE 1: Enter reminder text
- Login to your SurveyMonkey account
- Click "My Surveys" at the top of the web page
- Click "Factors Affecting Degree Completion Survey"
- Click the "Collect Responses" tab
- Click "Factors Affecting Degree Completion Survey" under the "Collector Name" heading
- Click "Edit Messages" on the left-hand side of the page
- Click "Create New Message" button
- Click "Not Responded" (this will send reminder e-mails only to individuals who have not responded to the survey)
- Enter a subject of email message
- Copy and paste the invitation text (NOTE: You will be required to include an opt-out link [RemoveLink] in the invitation text. Please make sure that this link appears at the very bottom of the invitation text)
- Make sure the reply email address is associated with your institution
- Click "Save & Preview"
- Preview the message and make any changes as necessary

STAGE 2: Test the reminder message
- Click the "Send a Test Message" button
- Enter your e-mail address and send yourself a test
- Make edits/changes as necessary
- Re-test until you are completely satisfied with the survey

STAGE3: Schedule delivery of the reminder
- Click the "Schedule Delivery" button
- Schedule the date and time of desired delivery, then click "Send Message"

Repeat this process for subsequent reminders.

Data Collection

At any time, institutions may preview or download responses to the survey by clicking on the "Analyze Results" tab.

Closing the Survey

Once the survey has closed, close the survey by clicking "Close Collector Now" under the "Collect Responses Tab." This will prevent anyone from attempting to complete the survey.

Downloading Survey Data

To download **<u>numerical</u>** survey results:
- Click the "Analyze Results" tab
- Click "Download Responses"
- Under "Choose Type of Download," select "All Responses Collected"
- Under the "Columns" option, select "Condensed"
- Under the "Cells" option, select "Numerical Value (1-n)"
- Enter your e-mail address and click "Request Download"

To download **<u>nominal</u>** survey results:
- Click the "Analyze Results" tab
- Click "Download Responses"
- Under "Choose Type of Download," select "All Responses Collected"
- Under the "Columns" option, select "Condensed"
- Under the "Cells" option, select "Actual Choice Text"
- Enter your e-mail address and click "Request Download"

Other formats are available and can be accessed using the same procedure as above. Results will be e-mailed to the specified e-mail address.

Questions?

Please feel free to call or e-mail Jeff Allum with any questions, 202-461-3878 or jallum@cgs.nche.edu