



Larry Hogan
Governor

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Anwer Hasan
Chairperson

James D. Fielder, Jr., Ph. D.
Secretary

MEMORANDUM

To: Institutional Research Directors
Maryland Community Colleges

From: Barbara Schmertz, Ph.D.
Associate Director of Research and Policy Analysis

Date: April 20, 2017

RE: Follow-Up Survey of 2016 Community College Graduates

Starting this year Maryland's community colleges will begin conducting a survey of their graduates every two years. This year, community colleges will administer the graduate follow-up survey to students who graduated during fiscal year 2016 (July 1, 2015-June 30, 2016). The objective of the survey is to gather information concerning post-graduation employment and educational activities of recent graduates in addition to their perceptions about their experiences at their institutions, and other outcomes-related matters.

The following items are enclosed with this memorandum:

- 1) 2017 Procedures and Guidelines;
- 2) Survey Timeline;
- 3) A copy of the 18 core questions which must be included on your institution's survey;
- 4) Survey Results Form to complete and return directly to me; and
- 5) The format for the data file (Standard Data Format), which will be submitted to the Maryland Higher Education Commission (MHEC).

As in the previous survey cycle, each institution will be responsible for conducting its own survey using its own questionnaire. Each institution's questionnaire must include the 18 core questions exactly as they are supplied by MHEC. Institutions may choose to administer the survey via mail, telephone, or online.

Institutions will not be reimbursed for the survey administration this year.

The deadline to submit the survey data is September 30, 2017. Data should be submitted on MHEC's Secure Data Website (<http://data.mhec.state.md.us>).

I look forward to working with you to make this year's survey process a success. Please direct any questions regarding the procedures, guidelines, or schedule to me by phone at (410) 767-3094 or via e-mail at barbara.schmertz@maryland.gov.

Thank you in advance for your cooperation.

cc: Jon Enriquez
Parris Jackson
Alexander Robertson



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PROCEDURES AND GUIDELINES

2017 Follow-up Survey of 2016 Graduates of Maryland Community Colleges

I. Study Population

The survey will include all students who graduated from your community college with a certificate or an associate degree in fiscal year 2016 (July 1, 2015 to June 30, 2016).

II. Survey Process

A. Survey Administration

Each community college will conduct its own survey using its own questionnaire. This will involve designing, producing, and disseminating the questionnaires and accompanying survey material as well as processing the responses. Each institution must develop its own cover letter to accompany the questionnaires. This letter is crucial; it *will* affect the return rate. Upon request, sample copies of letters are available from the Commission.

Institutions are encouraged to conduct their surveys online instead of using a mailed questionnaire. In an attempt to contact as many members of the graduating class of 2016 as possible, graduates without valid email addresses should receive a standard, paper-based survey. All paper-based surveys should be mailed using first-class postage.

Each institution must determine the appropriate number of follow-up email reminders and/or mailings. However, the Commission recommends that each college conduct *at least* one follow-up paper-based survey mailing to non-respondent graduates regardless of the method by which they were initially contacted. Colleges and universities should avoid including any non-survey related materials in their mailings.

The initial survey should be distributed between **April 20 and August 15, 2017**.

B. Core Questions

Each institution's survey **must** contain the 18 core questions approved by the Commission and the Maryland Association of Community Colleges. A copy of these questions accompanies the guidelines. **The questions and response categories must be worded exactly as they appear.**

C. Uniform File Layout

The Commission has provided institutions with a uniform file layout to be used in reporting the responses to the core questions and the common demographic data. Institutions **must** adhere to this format in creating the data file. **No deviations are allowed.** Blanks should be used for reporting missing data and the numbers in each column should be right justified.

III. Completed Surveys

A. Transmission of Survey Data

Each campus must supply the Commission with the survey responses in CSV format by September 30, 2017. Please ensure that the submitted data file includes the unique identification number (IDN) for each respondent (i.e., SSN, ITIN or other student identifier) used for MHEC data submissions.

B. Reimbursement

Institutions will not be reimbursed for survey administration this year. In the future MHEC anticipates reimbursing institutions in years that do not coincide with the four-year institutions' survey cycle.

C. Survey Results Form

Upon completion of the survey, institutions should complete the Survey Results Form and submit it via fax, email, or mail to Barbara Schmertz. Contact information is included in the form.

IV. Statewide Survey Results

Once the Commission receives each school's data, we will prepare a printout of the responses and demographic information for the institution's review. After the review is completed, statewide data will be provided to the campuses, their governing boards and associations as per agreement with the Commission. The target date for the dissemination of statewide results is November 30, 2017.

Please address any questions regarding the Follow-up Survey of 2016 Community College Graduates to Barbara Schmertz at (410) 767-3094 or barbara.schmertz@maryland.gov.