

Title & Number: CM3 – Surveys

Effective Date:

April 28, 2023

Approval Date:

April 28, 2023

Policy Type:

Internal Policy

Review Date:

This policy shall be reviewed every three (3) years.

Responsible Body:

Executive Committee

Designated Executives and Staff Members:

Marketing and Communications Manager/Policy Advisor, President/VP Academic and University Affairs

Authority:

AMS Code of Procedure Section II, Article 11(1)

“Council may create external and internal policies as well as combined policies.”

Purpose and Goals:

Surveys are an increasingly important means for collecting information that can be used to understand and improve the student experience. The purpose of this Policy is to maximize the benefits from surveys run by the AMS and minimize survey redundancy. This Policy outlines the roles and responsibilities relating to the development and administration of surveys by the AMS to AMS Members. It also provides specific information relating to the development and administration of AMS Annual Surveys - the Student Engagement Survey and the Academic Experience Survey - and this Policy also outlines procedures on how additional Ad Hoc surveys may be conducted.

Applicability:

This policy only applies to surveys that are AMS Surveys.

Exclusions:

This Policy does not apply to surveys that are not AMS Surveys; surveys that are distributed by the University of British Columbia, Constituencies, and Clubs are not AMS Surveys and are not covered by this Policy.

Definitions:

For the purposes of this policy and in all other policies in which they are not otherwise defined:

1. **AMS Surveys:** Surveys that are created and distributed by the Alma Mater Society of UBC Vancouver, distributed to AMS Members (as defined in the AMS Bylaws), and request information from AMS Members to advance the mission of the AMS (as defined in the AMS Mission Statement). AMS Surveys may be targeted at the entire AMS Membership or they may focus on a specific group of AMS Members. There are two categories of AMS Surveys which are Annual Surveys and Ad Hoc Surveys.
2. **Annual Surveys:** AMS Surveys that are conducted once each Academic Year and are sent directly to all AMS Members via email. Annual Surveys include the Student Engagement Survey and the Academic Experience Survey.
 - a. **Student Engagement Survey:** Questionnaire distributed in term one of the winter session of the Academic Year with the purpose of gathering data on students' experiences with the AMS.
 - b. **Academic Experience Survey:** Questionnaire distributed in term two of the winter session of the Academic Year with the purpose of gathering data on students' *academic* experiences at UBC.
3. **Ad Hoc Surveys:** Any AMS Survey that is not conducted annually and is not sent directly to all AMS Members via email. Ad Hoc Surveys may run any time throughout the Academic Year.
4. **Stakeholder:** Any group, external or internal to the AMS, that is involved with, or impacted by, the development, administration, or outcomes of an AMS Survey. Common Stakeholders include - but are not limited to - Constituencies, the VP Academic Caucus, AMS Staff and Executives, and external contractors.
5. **Academic Year:** The annual period of academic sessions of UBC as defined in the UBC Vancouver Academic Calendar.

Policy:

General

1. All AMS Surveys are to be created and administered for the purpose of furthering the AMS Mission to improve the quality of the educational, social, and personal lives of the students of UBC. To achieve this, all AMS Surveys are to be administered according to best research and survey principles, including:
 - a. Promoting good survey methodology and design
 - b. Encouraging the communication of survey results with the AMS community and relevant Stakeholders
 - c. Avoiding the collection of duplicate information and survey redundancy
 - d. Reducing possible survey fatigue by limiting the number of surveys and coordinating the timing of surveys for UBC students

2. AMS Surveys will be created and distributed in accordance with the AMS's Responsible Use of Student Contact Information Policy (CM2), the AMS's Privacy Policy (SR1), PIPA, and other relevant privacy and information legislation.
 - a. If an AMS Survey collects any personal information the survey will make clear the purpose(s) of collecting that personal information and what that personal information will be used for. For example, the collection of personal email addresses for the purpose of awarding prizes.

Annual Surveys

1. The AMS shall only run two Annual Surveys every year: the AMS Student Engagement Survey (SES) and the Academic Experience Survey (AES). Annual Surveys provide a comprehensive overview of student and academic topics and help inform AMS priorities and advocacy year over year.
2. Student Engagement Survey (SES)
 - a. The Purpose of the SES is to collect information on students' experience with the AMS as an organization. Questions to collect information on are organized into the following themes:
 - i. AMS Services
 - ii. AMS Businesses
 - iii. AMS Nest
 - b. The SES is to be distributed in term one of the winter session of the Academic Year. The AMS President is responsible for organizing and administering the SES in consultation with the Executive Committee.
 - c. The President, and the Executive Committee, shall ensure that they adequately consult with AMS personnel and relevant Stakeholders on the questions to be included in the survey.
 - d. The SES shall open the week of the AMS Annual General Meeting and will remain open for the following 4 weeks. For clarity, this means that the SES will typically be open between late October to late November.
 - i. Based on response rates, the President may decide to extend the SES close date.
 - e. After having collected the data, the Office of the President shall facilitate a presentation to Council outlining the data and key findings from the survey. At this time the Office of the President shall also submit a report to Council outlining the collected data, with recommendations based on the data collected.

3. Academic Experience Survey (AES)

- a. The purpose of the AES is to collect information on the academic experiences of UBC students in order to support the AMS's data-driven approach to student advocacy to the university. Questions to collect information on the academic experience are organized into the following themes:
 - i. Demographics
 - ii. Academics
 1. Communication of course expectations
 2. Grading and Assessment
 3. Exam Hardship
 4. Academic Integrity
 5. Time to complete degree
 - iii. Constituency-specific questions
 - iv. Education Affordability
 1. Course and Textbook Expenses
 2. Tuition
 3. Personal Finances
 4. Expected Debt upon Graduation
 - v. Wellbeing
 1. Academic impact on mental health
 - vi. Safety
 - vii. Post-Graduation
- b. The AES is to be distributed in term two of the winter session of the Academic Year. The AMS Vice President, Academic and University Affairs (VPAUA) is responsible for organizing and administering the AES.
- c. Preparation for the AES shall begin a minimum of two (2) months in advance of the survey's release date.
 - i. Two months prior to the AES release date, the VPAUA shall send an invitation to submit a **maximum of five** questions for that year's AES to each Constituency for constituency-specific questions. These questions will only be asked to those who select the corresponding constituency in the demographics section. The purpose of this is to allow constituencies an opportunity to collect data to understand the experiences at a faculty or school level.
 - ii. The VPAUA shall also consult with the AMS Advocacy Committee, AMS executives, AMS Marketing and Communications Manager, AMS Policy Advisor, external contractors, and other relevant personnel in preparation for the AES.
- d. The AES shall be open for the four (4) weeks leading up to the term two reading week and the survey will close at the beginning of the term two reading week. For clarity, this means that the AES will typically be open between mid-January to mid-February.

- ii. Frequency of survey administration
 - g. A description of any planned incentive program for survey respondents.
 - h. An explanation of how information from the survey will be used and how confidentiality and anonymity will be addressed in the survey
2. AMS departments or individuals that are interested in conducting an AMS Ad Hoc Survey are encouraged to consult with the AMS Communications Manager or the AMS Policy Advisor to ensure their surveys are developed in alignment with best survey practices.
3. AMS Executives & Ad Hoc Surveys
 - a. AMS Executives should identify at the beginning of their terms (when they are developing their goals) if they will be conducting Ad Hoc Surveys. If an Executive is proposing an Ad Hoc Survey, they must first consider the following:
 - i. If the data from the proposed survey can be found from other sources or surveys
 - ii. If the data from the proposed survey is found in the AMS Annual Surveys
 - iii. If their proposed survey or questions can be incorporated into the AMS Annual Surveys
 - iv. If their proposed survey can be combined with the surveys of other AMS Executives

Consultations:

The following groups have been consulted during the development of this policy:

- AMS Advocacy Committee
- Insights West
- Executive Committee

History:

This is the third draft of the first version of the policy.

The AMS has been conducting the AES since 2012. Questions have varied inconsistently from year-to year, limiting the ability of the AMS VP Academic and University Affairs to show changeover-time in data. The policy also seeks to minimize overlap with UBC's Undergraduate Experience Survey (UES) and ensure the AES maintains an academic experience lens. This policy differentiates the AES from the Nest Experience Survey, and the most recent drafting removes AMS-specific questions from the Appendix accordingly.

Related Policies:

No related policies