October 1, 2013

TO:   Vice Presidents, Deans, Chairs, and Directors
FROM: Susan D. Phillips, Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs
      James A. Dias, Vice President for Research

RE:   Coordinating Surveys of UAlbany Students, Faculty, Staff, Parents, and Alumni

Please share this information with your faculty and staff.

Many academic departments and administrative units have plans to survey students, faculty, staff, parents, and/or alumni in the coming months. We are writing to remind you to please inform the Office of Institutional Research, Planning, and Effectiveness (IRPE) of any anticipated 2013-14 survey activities occurring in your units. This policy was developed to ensure that the many survey efforts across campus do not overwhelm our constituencies or create interference among surveys, and to facilitate our respective efforts as much as possible.

Please contact Dr. Joel Bloom, Director of Academic Assessment and Survey Research, at 437-4791 or by e-mail at jbloom@albany.edu to begin the coordination process. More information on assessment surveys at UAlbany can be found at http://www.albany.edu/ir/uasurvey/.

- This policy applies even when you are surveying within your own unit of the University.
- This policy applies even to surveys and focus groups used only internally for assessment or program review purposes.
- Exceptions are surveys: (1) used only for course evaluation or teaching purposes; or (2) involving the Psychology 101 student pool.

The reasons for this coordination policy include:

1. Avoiding conflicts in survey timing and/or purpose;
2. Utilizing scientific sampling techniques to minimize multiple demands on faculty/staff, students, and alumni to participate in several surveys within a given time frame;
3. To limit solicitations of University populations to those that support University interests;
4. To inform UAlbany’s institutional interest in tracking the various assessment activities of academic and administrative units for accreditation purposes;
5. To ensure that surveys that meet the federal definition of research involving human subjects are referred to UAlbany’s Institutional Review Board (IRB) as appropriate for review and approval;* and
6. To make IRPE’s survey research expertise available to assist with assessment efforts.

We appreciate and encourage the important assessment activities undertaken throughout the university. Coordination with IRPE will help ensure that your research objectives are met.

*Questions related to the IRB and human subjects research review should be addressed to Adrienne Bonilla, Assistant Vice President for Research & Director, Office of Regulatory Research Compliance at 442-9050 or gbonilla@albany.edu.