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Equity Survey: Ask Us Anything About Data Collection

Can you comment on the decision to run a survey that is separate and disconnected from existing data structures on campus?

The long-term goal is to collect this data through Waterloo's administrative systems; however, because of a pressing need to begin data collection before the end of the year, the decision was made to collect confidential data through a Qualtrics survey.

Since the survey will be a moment-in-time snapshot, how often do you plan to re-do this survey to make sure it's useful as an accurate and up-to-date reflection of our campus community?

The survey will be administered to new students and employees on an annual basis, with reminders available to those who have already completed yearly as well.

How can stakeholders be engaged in the analysis and/or recommendations resulting from this data collection? An overview of the analysis plan would be really interesting.

Data analysis plans and reports will be developed with feedback and in consultation with relevant experts, such as members of the Equity Data Advisory Group who have experience in equity data management and equity data collection and reporting.

If partnering with stakeholder groups, will data sharing agreements be established?

All requests for equity survey data beyond that provided in institutional reports will be assessed on a case-by-case basis and only shared where participant confidentiality and the strictest data privacy rules followed. Data sharing agreements will be signed if any data is shared beyond institutional reporting as outlined.

Can retirees participate in the survey based on their prior experience working at the University of Waterloo?

The equity survey is gathering data on current members of campus and so, at this time, only current students and employees can participate.



How will the survey be addressing intersectionality?

While the survey questions do not directly address intersectionality, it may be possible to examine intersectionality between various identities (i.e., sexual identity and racial identity) where sample sizes permit.

Will the survey data be available to equity services (Glow, RAISE, Women's centre)?

Yes, any department, unit, or association on campus will be able to request reports on the equity survey results and use them to help inform their policies, programs, and practices.

How will the survey be accessible to all staff at Waterloo such as those in Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE) or Food Services positions who do not use a computer in their daily work?

Paper copies of the survey are available to CUPE members from area supervisors, or by request to equitysurvey@uwaterloo.ca.

Will anonymized data be publicly available?

An annual institutional equity survey report will be developed each fall while data survey collection is paused between November 1 and January 1.

How can I have access to the data outside the first public report?

Requests for equity survey data beyond what is provided in the institutional reports will be assessed on a case-by-case basis and data sharing agreements will be required as appropriate. All reports will maintain participant confidentiality.

What about people who find the questions intrusive?

We would like to have an accurate and complete understanding of the makeup of our community; however, we acknowledge that this survey is asking you to share information that is personal. We also acknowledge that this may be information you have not shared in the past. We understand that collecting equity data is in many ways a trust building exercise and hope that individuals feel comfortable participating knowing that the data they provide will remain confidential, is voluntary, and will be used to help address gaps and barriers to create a safe and welcoming community.

How can a survey provide a true picture of students and employees at the University?

We hope that a strong proportion of Waterloo students and employees complete the survey. A high response rate (proportion of students and employees) will hopefully result in a more true picture of students and employees at the University. We will calculate statistical significance



when we report our data so that our community can understand the likelihood that the data is accurate.

Why are we only collecting certain kinds of socio-demographic data and not others? (age, ethnicity)

The questions in the equity survey were developed in consultation with the Equity Data Advisory Group and in consultation with stakeholders. In completing external scans, an initial “core” set of questions was identified which would help provide a comprehensive view of the campus community and may allow comparison with other external data sources. The final survey instrument sought to balance a set of core questions with ensuring that the length of the survey was not a barrier to participation.

What are three things you’d like people to know about the Equity Data Survey?

- a) The survey is easy to complete! It takes only five minutes and can be accessed through the link in the announcement in Learn and Workday.
- b) Providing us with your data is the first step in understanding the makeup of our community so we can understand gaps and start addressing inequities and removing barriers.
- c) The data collected will be managed with the highest degree of privacy and security so that each individual’s identity is protected and confidentiality is maintained.