

Survey Reporting Examples

Below are two examples of survey reporting that illustrate some best practices when it comes to survey reporting. These suggestions are by no means comprehensive (please see the Reporting section [\[hyperlink\]](#) of this website for more resources). The first example is for an internal audience (e.g., UMD staff and faculty), while the second is for a wider audience (i.e., the entire UMD community, including students, faculty, and staff). Note the differences between the reports as well as the fact that they both utilize the following suggested practices for survey reporting:

- 1 Clearly articulate any research questions and/or main findings.
- 2 Provide context about survey administration, such as response rate and areas of over- and under-representation.
- 3 Use language to emphasize the report is only about survey respondents, not all students.
- 4 Show percentages both in text and visually, as different people prefer different ways in processing the information. Try different types of visualizations (e.g., pie, donut, icon array) or translating a percentage into other formats keep the text and visuals engaging. For example, 75% of student respondents could also be stated as 3 out of 4 student respondents.
- 5 Even one open-ended question can provide a lot of information! Be aware that it is time-intensive to analyze and interpret. If you include an open-ended questions, allow ample time for reading through, labeling, and having another person double check your labels, at the very least. However, it can be powerful to have the student, faculty, and/or staff voice, so do include in any reporting, which will make it more memorable.
- 6 Provide links to further reporting or additional information in footnotes so it is available for those that want more information but does not detract from the main findings.

Example 1: Internal Memo

This example was sent to UMD staff and faculty stakeholders who were involved in the survey creation, whose work may be informed by the results, or who have previously expressed interest in this working group's survey findings. It is also available for the general public on a website, but that is not the primary audience.

1

Clearly articulate the research questions

2

Provide context about survey administration

4

Show percentages in the text and visually

6

Provides links or footnotes to additional information



First-year students' communication preferences

This report, written by the Campus Assessment Working Group (CAWG) Beginnings subcommittee and based on the Beginning Student Survey from Fall 2023, discusses how first-year students would like to be communicated with from the university and provides information to assist university communication services in meeting those preferences. This report was guided by the following research questions:

- 1) What platforms and modes of communication do respondents prefer for different types of content?
- 2) What types of video content are respondents most interested in receiving?

This report also provides insight into how these preferences vary by demographics, particularly for first-generation and U.S. nonresident respondents.

About the Beginning Student Survey

The BSS23 was administered online to new, first-time undergraduates (including Freshmen Connection) in select courses from October 16 - November 3, 2023.¹ During the Fall 2023 semester, 3,144 (50%) out of 6,250 new first-time students² completed the survey. The distribution of respondents by race/ethnicity and first-generation status mirrored that of the population. Female students were slightly over-represented (55% of respondents compared to 50% of the population). In-state students were also slightly over-represented (73% of respondents compared to 68% of the population).

General Communication Preferences

Eight to 11 weeks into their first semester, almost **all respondents** said they had accessed TerpMail. When asked about their preferred social media platform, over 70% said they prefer to receive information from UMD on Instagram.

Respondents were asked whether they had accessed their TerpMail email account this semester, and what their preferred social media platform was for receiving information from UMD.

- **Access to TerpMail:** Over 99% of respondents said they had accessed their TerpMail account by the time they took the survey. The remaining respondents either said they had not accessed their account yet (11 respondents) or were not sure (6 respondents).

Over 99% of respondents have accessed their TerpMail email account



Figure 1. Percent of respondents who said "yes," they have accessed their TerpMail email account this semester, BSS23.

¹ The BSS survey was administered in ENGL101, UNIV100, BSCV181, BSCV191, CPET100, CPGH100, CPJT100, CPSA100, CPSF100, CPSC100, CPSN100, FIRE120, GEMS100, HACS100, HBUS100, HGLO100, HLSC100, HHUM105, HNUH100, IDEA101, PLCY201S, and TLPL288D. Percentages may not sum to 100 due to rounding.

² New first-time students include new freshmen, Freshmen Connection, and new Applied Agriculture students.

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Emphasize that findings are about survey respondents, not all students

Example 2: Public Infographic

This abridged example was posted on a UMD website and is meant to be a high-level overview of the survey findings that is available for the entire campus. Other reporting products on the website include a longer executive summary as well as the compendium, which includes all analyses and documentation related to the survey. Internal stakeholders were sent to this website as a the place to read and review the results.

