

Preparing your Population File

Faculty Job Satisfaction Survey | Module 4

Building the Master Population File

The file that you deliver to COACHE in advance of the survey allows us to reach eligible faculty and gives us information critical to analyzing the results and understanding patterns of nonresponse.

Eligible survey population

Please include the following appointment types:

- Full-time; tenure-stream; assistant, associate, and full professors
- Full-time; non-tenure-track; senate (i.e. voting) faculty
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... and optionally (see your Terms of Research Participation):

- Clinical faculty (health sciences and other professions)

Do *not* include:

- Faculty in their terminal year after being denied tenure
- Faculty that have not yet been employed for a full calendar year at time of survey
- Senior administrators, e.g., Dean, Assistant Dean, Associate Provost (but chairs may be included)

Format and content

Prepare the database in Excel format using our [provided template](#) and only include faculty who meet the above eligibility criteria.

The following variable table (p. 4-5) outlines the *required*, *important*, and *optional* variables that participating institutions will prepare. The first row of your Excel file will include the headers listed under the “Variable” column in the table below. Accepted values for rows following the header row should correspond to their column labels. For “Academic Area” (acarea), please follow the instructions outlined on page 2 of this document.

If any questions arise in the creation of your population file, please contact COACHE at coache@gse.harvard.edu.



Building your Department to Academic Area Crosswalk

Your [Chief Academic Officer Report](#) will include results by “Academic Area.” These academic areas were developed based on a review of structural designations (i.e., schools and colleges, which differ from campus to campus) and Classification of Institutional Programs (CIP) codes, which are too narrowly defined for IRB-approved reporting. The academic areas are:

| Code | Academic Area | Code | Academic Area |
|------|--|------|--|
| 11 | Humanities | 18 | Agriculture/Natural Resources/Environmental Sci. |
| 12 | Social Sciences | 19 | Business |
| 13 | Physical Sciences | 20 | Education |
| 14 | Biological Sciences | 21 | Medical Schools & Health Professions |
| 15 | Visual & Performing Arts | 22 | Other Professions (e.g. Law, Journalism) |
| 16 | Engineering/Computer Science/ Math/Statistics | 23 | Interdisciplinary Department/Division - STEM |
| 17 | Health & Human Ecology | 24 | Interdisciplinary Department/Division - Other |

For the purposes of creating your master population file, first generate a list of all academic departments on your campus and assign each department to one of the fourteen groups listed above.

Example:

| Department | acarea | Academic Area |
|-------------------------|--------|--|
| Physics | 13 | Physical Sciences |
| Philosophy | 11 | Humanities |
| Psychology | 12 | Social Sciences |
| Mathematics | 16 | Engineering, computer science, mathematics, and statistics |
| International Relations | 24 | Interdisciplinary Department/Division - Other |

Then, give this “crosswalk” to the person responsible for assembling your master population file, that is, the database of eligible faculty.

Additional Considerations

Preparing the population file seems like a relatively straightforward task. Over time, however, COACHE partners have taught us that faculty can be counted in many ways. When we inadvertently include faculty in the population file who are unable to accurately respond to the survey for whatever reason, a few issues arise. When faculty (or anyone for that matter) are asked to complete a survey where the questions do not reflect their experiences, they either drop out, which impacts your institution's response rates, or they complete the survey but provide unreliable data. Both cases will negatively impact your ability to work with the results.

There are also circumstances where the decisions about who to include or exclude become more about strategy than technical specifications. Is excluding a handful of faculty worth the risk of making some faculty feel excluded? Eventually you will have to justify that decision, so it is important to have a cogent rationale from the outset.

Guidance on librarians

Most institutions consider librarians to be faculty, but their daily work and expectations for performance differ from their colleagues. Inclusion or exclusion of these community members is a campus-specific decision.

To make the decision about whether to include librarians in your population file, review [the survey instrument](#). Can librarians at your institution answer most of the questions honestly and accurately based on their experiences?

Guidance on full-time designation

While full-time/part-time status may seem like a clear delineation, we have learned there can be some grey areas. At some institutions, human resource systems consider part-time faculty whose appointments are more than half time as *benefits eligible*. Benefit eligibility is often seen as interchangeable with full-time status. For the purposes of this population file and survey, however, part-time but benefits eligible faculty *should not be included*.

Guidance on visiting appointments

Many liberal arts colleges want to include their *Visiting Faculty* in the survey. However, because Visiting Faculty typically only work at an institution for a year, they do not meet one of the minimum standards for inclusion in the survey and should, therefore, *not be included*.

Closing thoughts

All of this is to say that to build a population file well requires more than a database and a programmer. The Provost's Office should spend time with the Institutional Research Office and faculty leadership (e.g. Senate or Collective Bargaining Group) to map out the parameters for survey eligibility. Then, once the file is built, it should be reviewed by the Provost's Office before final delivery to COACHE. Making sure that you build in time for these preliminary discussions, as well as a final review, will assure your team that COACHE is surveying the right people so that you can trust the results.

Population File Variables

| Category | Variable | Description | Value labels or examples | (N)umeric (S)tring | (R)eq (I)mp (O)pt |
|---------------|--------------|---|---|-----------------------|-------------------------|
| 0_Sample | localid | Record ID number from campus administrative personnel data. This is a unique identifier (NOT SSN!) that will allow COACHE to link each record to additional, faculty-level data from your campus at a later date. | var. | N | R |
| 1_Institution | institution | Partner institution, i.e., your institution, as the name would appear in an official document. | e.g., University of California Los Angeles | S | R |
| 1_Institution | nickname | Nickname of partner institution, as it would appear in an email to faculty. | e.g., UCLA | S | R |
| 1_Institution | unitid | IPEDS "Unit I.D." of partner institution | 000001-999999 | N | R |
| 1_Institution | school | School, College, or Division of partner institution (if applicable). Exclude eponyms (e.g., "Government," not "Kennedy School of Government"). | e.g., Arts & Sciences | S | R |
| 1_Institution | dept | Department of partner institution (if applicable). Avoid acronyms like "MCB". | e.g., Molecular and Cellular Biology | S | R |
| 1_Institution | dept_NRC | NRC Program ID of department/program at partner institution, if applicable (see http://www.nap.edu/rdp/) | 00000000-99999999 | N | O |
| 1_Institution | contactname | Name of COACHE liaison, i.e., the individual at partner institution whom faculty may contact to verify COACHE's bona fides. | e.g., Dr. Jane Smith | S | R |
| 1_Institution | contactemail | Email of individual named in contactname | e.g., jsmith@ucla.edu | S | R |
| 2_Name | lname | Last name / Surname of faculty member. | | S | R |
| 2_Name | fname | First name of faculty member (and middle name, if necessary) | | S | R |
| 2_Email | email | Current primary email address | | S | R |
| 3_Demog | race | Race | 1 = Asian, Asian American 2 = White (non-Hispanic) 3 = Black or African American 4 = Hispanic or Latino/a 6 = Multiracial 7 = Pacific Islander or Native Hawaiian 8 = Middle Eastern, North African, Southwest Asian 9 = American Indian or Native Alaskan 91 = Other | N | R |
| 3_Demog | gender | Gender identification | 1 = Female 2 = Male 3 = Other 4 = Trans | N | I |

| Category | Variable | Description | Value labels or examples | (N)umeric (S)tring | (R)eq (I)mp (O)pt |
|----------------|---------------|---|---|-----------------------|-------------------------|
| 3_Demog | citizen | Citizenship status | 1 = US Citizen 3 = Permanent Resident 5 = Nonresident Visa Holder (J-1, F-1, etc.) 6 = Other | N | I |
| 3_Professional | rank | Rank | 1 = Instructor/Lecturer; 2 = Assistant Professor 3 = Associate Professor 4 = Full Professor 5 = Emeritus 9 = Other | N | R |
| 3_Professional | tenure | Tenure status | 1 = Not tenured, not on tenure track 2 = Not tenured, on tenure track 3 = Tenured | N | R |
| 3_Professional | title_primary | Primary title(s) | | S | R |
| 3_Professional | title_admin | Title for any administrative appointment | e.g., Center Director, Department Chair | S | O |
| 3_Professional | yearhire | Year of hire at partner institution | YYYY | N | R |
| 3_Professional | apptyear | Year in which current/most recent faculty appointment began | YYYY | N | R |
| 3_Professional | cip | Classification of Instructional Programs code from NCES (see https://nces.ed.gov/ipeds/cipcode/Default.aspx?y=55). | 00.0000 – 99.9999 | S | R |
| 3_Professional | acarea | COACHE "Academic Area" code. (See p. 2) | 11 - 24 | N | R |
| 3_Professional | clinical | Clinical status | 0 = None 1 = Clinical faculty 2 = Adjunct 3 = In residence 4 = Other | N | R |
| 3_Professional | clinical_loc | Clinical site | e.g., Midtown Clinic - West | S | O |