

# BCSSE Participation Agreement

## 1. Purpose of the BCSSE Survey.

- a. The Beginning College Survey of Student Engagement and the Fall Check-In Participation Agreement ("Agreement") entered into between The Trustees of Indiana University on behalf of the Beginning College Survey of Student Engagement ("BCSSE") and Participating Institution.
- b. The BCSSE Survey is designed to collect data about entering college students' prior academic and co-curricular experiences, as well as their expectations for participating in educationally purposeful activities during the upcoming year of college. The Fall Check-In surveys are optional and designed to capture student's experiences in September, October, and November. BCSSE and Fall Check-In surveys are collectively referred to as "BCSSE" below. BCSSE will provide electronic surveys to the Participating Institution. The Participating Institution will administer the survey to students.
- c. The results of this research will help Participating Institution identify aspects of the undergraduate student experience that should be modified in order to improve or enhance the Participating Institution's programs and services for students.

## 2. BCSSE Procedures and Safeguards.

- a. BCSSE may use aggregated survey data for national and sector reporting purposes and other undergraduate improvement initiatives. BCSSE may also make de-identified data available to researchers.
- b. BCSSE utilizes Qualtrics survey and dashboard products. Access by to Qualtrics servers storing institutional and self-reported student survey data are controlled by user IDs and passwords.
- c. BCSSE data are also stored on secure IU servers. Access by BCSSE staff to servers storing institutional data is controlled by user IDs and passwords. See links below for additional information about Indiana University and Qualtrics data security and BCSSE accessibility (VPAT)
  - I. [Indiana University data security](#)
  - II. [Qualtrics Security Statement](#)
  - III. [BCSSE VPAT](#)
- d. BCSSE may disclose the name of Participating Institutions, but institutionally identifiable BCSSE results shall not be made public by BCSSE except by mutual

agreement between BCSSE and the Participating Institution, or in accordance with any applicable law, such as the Indiana Access to Public Records Act.

- e. BCSSE Survey administration protocol is approved by the Indiana University Institutional Review Board (IRB). See [BCSSE IRB Documentation](#) for more information.

### **3. Participating Institution Procedures and Requirements.**

- a. Participating Institution shall maintain a minimum of two campus contacts with access to BCSSE's institution dashboard. Participating Institution shall promptly inform BCSSE when staffing changes necessitate updates to campus contacts.
- b. Participating Institution must present the BCSSE Survey as a voluntary activity. Though incentives may be used, no coercion can be used to increase participation.
- c. The participating Institution shall not mislead students about the extent to which participation is anonymous or confidential.
- d. BCSSE is a locally administered survey, which means that the Participating Institution will be solely responsible for contacting students to solicit their participation.
- e. BCSSE recognizes there may be interest in using text messages to invite survey participation and general awareness of the project. Participating Institution shall consult its legal and privacy experts to ensure compliance with federal and state laws (including the TCPA and CAN-SPAM Act, where applicable) before initiating any text message recruitment efforts to promote BCSSE. Participating Institution acknowledges and agrees that BCSSE and Indiana University shall not be held responsible for any claims, losses, or liabilities that may arise from Participating Institution's text messaging practices. BCSSE requires that all text messages clearly explain that the Participating Institution is sending the text message, not BCSSE.

### **4. Use of Student Data.**

- a. The use of student data is regulated by the U.S. Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act ("FERPA"), which covers how educational institutions may share student data with outside organizations conducting research and assessment for the purpose of improving instruction.
- b. BCSSE understands that Participant Information is subject to FERPA and will exercise due care in handling and processing student data. Further, BCSSE agrees to:

- i. Limit its use of personally identifiable information to the purposes of conducting studies that (1) improve instruction and student learning in higher education, or (2) evaluate the effectiveness of BCSSE Survey methods in order to improve future data collection.
  - ii. Only provide access to personally identifiable information to Participating Institution as well as representatives of BCSSE/Indiana University who have legitimate interests in the information for the purposes described above;
  - iii. III. Delete student name and email address fields from data files within five years of completion of the Fall Check-In Survey. The student ID field will be retained in the data file in perpetuity as an archive for Participating Institutions.
- d. BCSSE may include experimental survey items at the end of the web survey. Data from these items are used for future updates to BCSSE and/or for future research purposes. Your institution may opt out by emailing [bcsse@iu.edu](mailto:bcsse@iu.edu) at least one month prior to the start of administration. Data collected from these experimental items will be provided to the institutions.
- e. As applicable, BCSSE will cooperate with the Participating Institution in complying with Canadian or other foreign data privacy laws.

## **5. BCSSE Pricing.**

- a. Participating Institution agrees to pay a nonrefundable \$300 registration fee.
- b. Pricing is based on the entering student enrollment using the most recent IPEDS data available. Details about BCSSE pricing can be found at: <https://nsse.indiana.edu/bcsse/registration-pricing/index.html>
- c. An institution may withdraw prior to their administration survey start date. *This withdrawal must be in writing and emailed to [bcsse@iu.edu](mailto:bcsse@iu.edu) prior to their administration start date.*
- d. This withdrawal will void all fees *except* for the non-refundable \$300 registration fee.
- e. Participating Institution shall pay BCSSE the total cost within 30 days of receipt of the survey participation fee invoice.

**6. Indiana Access to Public Records.** Participating Institution understands and acknowledges that NSSE, an auxiliary unit of the Center for Postsecondary Research at Indiana University, is subject to Indiana's open records law, the Indiana Access to

Public Records Act ("APRA"), Ind. Code §§ 514-3-1 to -10, and that compliance with APRA shall not constitute a breach of this Agreement.

**7. Assignment.** This Agreement shall not be assignable by either party without the prior written consent of the other party.

**8. Force Majeure.** Neither party shall be responsible or liable to the other party for nonperformance or delay in performance of any terms or conditions of this Agreement due to acts of God, acts of governments, wars, riots, fire, flood, or other causes beyond the reasonable control of the nonperforming or delayed party.

**9. Limitation on Liability.** Participating Institution agrees that BCSSE, IU, and its trustees, affiliates, employees, agents, and contractors, shall not be liable to Participating Institution for any claims, liabilities, consequential or incidental damages, costs, or expenses relating to this Agreement for an aggregate amount exceeding the fees paid by Participating Institution to BCSSE.

**10. Entire Agreement.** This Agreement constitutes the entire agreement between the parties regarding the subject matter described herein and supersedes any prior negotiations and agreements. This Agreement may not be modified or amended in any respect except by a written agreement executed by both parties. The terms and conditions of this Agreement shall extend to, be binding upon, and inure to the benefit of the heirs, administrators, representatives, executors, successors and assigns of the parties.

*Feb 10, 2026*