

USP 186 Survey Methods Review

1. What are you trying to find out with your survey?
 - a. Research question should match the survey method, population, questions, etc.
2. What is the population your question addresses?
 - a. Can you attempt survey the population?
 - b. If not, how will you sample?
 - i. Random Sampling (randomly select from population)
 1. Use Excel to generate random numbers
 - ii. Systematic Sampling (every n^{th})
 1. Removes bias in who the surveyor selects
 - iii. Non-random/Convenience Sample – most convenient/nearest respondents
 1. Introduces bias in who chooses to respond
 - iv. Snowball Sample (Identified individuals inform you of other respondents)
 1. Introduces bias by limiting representativeness
 - c. Will you have a control group?
 - i. Control group consists of subjects who do not receive the treatment
 - ii. This is ideal but often very difficult or impossible
3. How / when / where will you conduct your survey?
 - a. Survey needs to fit the time and method of distribution (email vs. in-person)
 - b. Multiple locations and/or times are preferable
 - i. Limit bias that could from the location and/or the time
4. How will you structure your questions?
 - a. See list in Robson pgs. 245-6
 - b. Key points:
 - i. Keep them short and easy to understand
 - ii. Don't using leading or biased questions
 - c. Make sure questions are ordered, grouped, and numbered appropriately
 - d. Types of questions
 - i. Open-ended (lengthy answer; can be harder to analyze)
 - ii. Closed-ended (yes/no/don't know/no opinion/not sure)
 - iii. Scaled questions (numbered; excellent/good/poor; thermometer)
 - iv. Try to mix and match
5. Logistics of Surveying
 - a. Practice on volunteers (both familiar and not familiar with your project)
 - b. Human Research Protections Program (irb.ucsd.edu)?
 - c. Safety first
 - d. Consider how you present yourself and your survey
 - e. If responses are limited try more time or another location or surveying method
 - f. Don't be afraid of null results
6. Analysis
 - a. For quantitative analysis, graphs, etc. closed-ended or scaled questions are best
 - b. Try to remain as objective as possible in analyzing open-ended questions