



## Frequently Asked Questions: Administering CCSSE 2021 Online

**1) Can my college administer CCSSE 2021 online?**

Yes. Colleges can administer CCSSE 2021 online if they believe this is a more suitable option for their students during this unprecedented time.

**2) We don't know if our college will be online next spring. Should we plan to administer the online survey?**

For over a decade, colleges across the nation have gathered engagement data from representative samples of their students through the in-class administration of CCSSE. If possible, the Center encourages colleges to continue to administer the survey in the classroom. If there is the possibility of an in-class administration, colleges should begin the process as if the survey will be administered in-class, as it will be much easier to pivot from that format to an online administration than the other way around.

**3) We are certain our college will need to conduct the survey online. How do we register for the online version of CCSSE 2021?**

Follow the normal [registration](#) steps. When complete, please email [surveyops@cccse.org](mailto:surveyops@cccse.org) indicating interest in the online survey. Colleges will verify the mode of survey administration during the data verification process in December 2020.

**4) How long does the survey take to complete?**

The survey should take 20–25 minutes for the majority of students to complete.

**5) What are the risks associated with administering the online survey?**

Historically, the online versions of Center surveys have yielded lower response rates than the paper-and-pencil, in-class surveys; however, this does not mean data collected through an online survey administration will not be useful. It is imperative, though, that colleges encourage all eligible students to complete the survey and send reminders as needed to improve response rates. College contacts will receive a procedure guide for the online survey on November 2, 2020, that will include sample communications from the college president to faculty about the survey, sample

communications from the college president to students about the survey, reminder message templates, templates and graphics for communicating about the survey through social media, and tips for increasing the online survey response rate.

Center staff will host a webinar in October 2020 describing the recommended survey processes as well as examples of promotional strategies that have been used by other colleges.

**6) What can our college do to increase the number of students who respond to the online survey?**

The Center believes communicating the importance of the survey to students and faculty is **critical** to the success of the administration. The Center's goal is for colleges to receive adequate data for making informed decisions when thinking about redesigning the student experience, and the efforts undertaken by colleges during the survey process can help this happen.

Colleges should encourage faculty who teach credit courses to include targeted messages about the survey on their learning management system course pages. Those who lead orientation and participate in advising can promote the survey in those spaces. The survey should be communicated about on all of the college's social media channels. Tips such as these, examples of how other colleges have worked to increase response rates, and communication templates will be included with the procedure guide that is sent to the college contact.

Center staff will host a webinar in October 2020 describing the recommended survey processes as well as examples of promotional strategies that have been used by other colleges.

**7) Can colleges implement processes to encourage participation in the survey beyond what is recommended in the Center's materials?**

While the Center does not endorse a particular promotion process beyond what is described in the procedure guide and other materials, some colleges may decide to implement additional processes locally as they align with their institutional policies.

**8) How does the online CCSSE differ from the paper-and-pencil CCSSE?**

The items in the online version of CCSSE are the same as those on the [paper-and-pencil counterpart](#), except the online survey will incorporate skip patterns for items where this is appropriate. Both the online and paper-and-pencil surveys will include five items on the [COVID-19 Impact](#).

**9) If the online version of CCSSE is essentially the same as the paper-and-pencil version of the survey, are the items applicable to students taking classes in the online environment?**

The items on the *CCSSE* instrument measure student engagement, which is a proxy for student success. Colleges can use the information gleaned from an online administration of the survey to determine if their students are being engaged at the same levels in the online environment as they are in face-to-face classes. Please contact [info@cccse.org](mailto:info@cccse.org) if you would like to discuss this further.

**10) What type of reporting should my college expect if we administer the online survey?**

Colleges will receive the same reporting as for the paper-and-pencil administration. By July 31, 2021, college presidents and college contacts will receive access to raw data files, standard reports (including the Executive Summary of Results), and custom reports via the *CCSSE* online reporting system. Learn more about *CCSSE* reporting [here](#).

**11) Who should receive the online survey?**

The online survey should be shared with all students enrolled in credit-bearing classes, including developmental education. The survey should not be shared with incarcerated students, as they may not be exposed to the full breadth of the community college student experience. Dual enrollment students should also not be invited to participate in the survey as most are under the age of 18 and many may not be exposed to the full breadth of the community college student experience. The survey will include a demographic item asking if students are dually enrolled, and no data will be returned on these students. Any students enrolled in first-level ESL courses should also be excluded from the distribution list.

The college should communicate with eligible students in advance of the survey being sent and throughout the survey administration process. The Center will provide communication templates for these targeted messages.

**12) How is the online survey sent?**

During the first week of class, the Center will provide the college contact the survey link and a list of unique access codes totaling the number of survey-eligible students at the college. The college will be responsible for delivering the online survey link and an access code to each student. The Center will not collect student IDs on the online survey. Colleges will need to track which students receive each access code in place of tracking students through IDs.

The online *CCSSE* can be administered at any point between the fourth week of the academic term and the May 12, 2021, deadline. The Center recommends that colleges select a four week period within this timeframe to administer the survey and promote participation.

On the first day of the predetermined administration window, the survey link and access codes should be sent to students via email and/or any other mechanism that allows for sharing individual access codes with each recipient. The Center will provide a responder tool that the college contact can use throughout the survey administration process. The tool will list access codes that have been used so that the contact can match unused access codes with students who have not responded to the survey and send them targeted reminder messages. The Center will provide reminder message templates to the college contact.

**13) Can the online survey be administered to students taking face-to-face classes?**

If some courses are meeting face-to-face, the college may want to consider setting aside class time to allow students to complete the online survey. Each student will need a smartphone, tablet, or computer with Internet access and their individual access code to complete the survey. The person administering the survey can distribute access codes to the students in the face-to-face classroom. In order to avoid confusion, it may be prudent to withhold sending invitations to the students enrolled in face-to-face classrooms if the online administration will happen in those classrooms.

**14) What is a reasonable response rate goal for my college?**

Response rates for online surveys will be lower than the typical paper-and-pencil version of CCSSE. The size of your college also has a big impact on how many respondents are needed for the data to be “useable.” For example if you have a student population of 5,000 students, a 25% response rate would be 1,250 respondents; a 10% response rate would be 500. Under either scenario, representativeness would have to be evaluated; while a higher percentage response rate increases the probability that the respondents will be representative, it does not assure that. Research suggests that a response rate of 5%, or possibly even lower, could be useable. However, representativeness would still need to be evaluated. For more information, please send you questions to [data@cccse.org](mailto:data@cccse.org).

**15) What is the deadline for students to respond to the online survey?**

The survey response deadline is May 12, 2021. The campus contact will be reminded of the deadline as it approaches.

**16) What is the cost of administering the online survey?**

The cost is the same as for the in-class survey administration. Colleges will receive the same level of service and reporting with the online survey as with the paper-and-pencil survey.

**17) Can we include an additional item set with the online survey?**

All colleges will receive five items on the [COVID-19 Impact](#) free of charge. Fifteen items on [Students in Need](#) will also be included in the online administration free of charge, but a [fee-based custom or standard 15-item question set](#) can be included instead.

**18) If my college decides it is unable to administer the online survey after registering for it, what is the cancellation policy?**

If a college withdraws at any time after the college distributes the access codes to their students, there will be a cancellation fee equivalent to 25% of the total base membership fee. If payment has already been made, the college may elect to have the appropriate amount refunded or to have the remaining balance applied as a credit toward future services. If payment has not yet been made at the time of withdrawal, the college will receive an invoice for the appropriate amount, as stipulated in this policy.

**19) Can we administer SOSE instead of an online administration of CCSSE?**

No. *SOSE* is intended to be a supplement to the paper-and-pencil administration of *CCSSE*. It was designed to capture the experiences of students who have chosen to take all online classes rather than face-to-face classes. The online *CCSSE* can capture the experiences of students taking all online classes due to COVID-19, students taking a mixture of online and face-to-face classes, and students taking only face-to-face classes.

When colleges administer *SOSE*, they receive a frequency report of their students' responses. With the online *CCSSE*, colleges will be included in the national cohort of participants and will receive an executive summary of results, benchmark, means, and frequency reports. Included in these reports will be comparison data. Colleges will also have the opportunity to conduct subgroup analysis using the Center's custom reporting site.