

The following information is provided to assist you as you complete ATE Survey 2012. If you need additional information, please contact Lori Wingate at [evalu-ate@wmich.edu](mailto:evalu-ate@wmich.edu) or (269) 387-5922.

We strongly suggest taking the following actions to facilitate your completion of this and future ATE surveys:

- Share this document with everyone involved in completing the survey.
- Fill out a hard copy of the survey (available from [www.evaluate.org/annual-survey](http://www.evaluate.org/annual-survey)) and use it as a guide to complete Survey 2012 online.
- Print the e-mail about how to access the survey, which will be/was sent to ATE PIs on February 14, 2012.

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## **GENERAL QUESTIONS**

### **1. What is this survey about?**

Since 1999, The Evaluation Center at Western Michigan University has been funded by the National Science Foundation (NSF) to collect and report information about NSF's Advanced Technological Education (ATE) program on an annual basis. NSF uses the information gathered through the survey in reports to Congress and to monitor the program’s activities and achievements.

Note that the focus is on the overall ATE program. The information collected is not used to evaluate individual projects or centers.

### **2. How/why was I selected for the survey?**

This survey is a census of all ATE projects and centers that were funded in 2011 or earlier. If you were asked to complete ATE Survey 2012, according to our records you are a principal investigator for an active ATE project or center, with a funding start date on or before December 31, 2011.

### **3. Who will see my survey responses?**

Your responses to Survey 2012 are not anonymous to the EvaluATE staff, since your grant number is used to track respondents. However, your answers will not be associated with your project/center in any reports or other publications based on the survey data.

The only grantee-level information we provide to NSF pertains to a list of grantees that did and did not complete the survey. Program officers are provided with this information mid-way through the survey period so that they can follow up with nonrespondents and encourage their participation. We have not and will not provide individual survey response information to NSF in our reports or personal correspondence. Your individual responses to the survey are not available to NSF staff for use in their determinations regarding continued funding for your grant. If you want that information made available to them, you should include it in your annual report or other correspondence to NSF.

In an effort to respond to NSF's interest in research on ATE matters, we will share our survey data with a select group of researchers who have been funded through the ATE program. Their use of the survey data requires their and their institutions' written agreement that they will report only aggregate information and not identify individual projects or centers. We will follow up with these researchers to monitor their reports and to ensure that they meet their confidentiality commitments.

Because the ATE program is federally funded, ATE grantees' responses to the annual ATE survey are subject to Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) requests. If we receive such a request we must comply and provide the requested information. It is unlikely that we will receive such requests; we have not received a FOIA request since the survey's initiation in 1999.

#### **4. The survey seems long. Do I have to answer all the questions?**

Not necessarily. Everyone is asked to complete the sections on Grantee Characteristics and Special Topics. If you received your first ATE funding in 2011, you do not need to complete the remaining sections. Sections 2-4 (Materials Development, Professional Development, and Program Improvement) are required if your project or center allocated EITHER 30 percent of its annual budget OR at least \$100,000 to the activity in 2011. If you do not meet this threshold, you may still complete the section if you wish to report on your activities in that area. Section 5 is a newly created section to accommodate questions of interest to ATE researchers, other ATE grantees, and/or NSF program officers. They will be asked on a one-time or rotational basis. All grantees are asked to complete this section.

#### **5. Can you just use the information we provided in our annual (FastLane) report?**

Although there is some overlap between the information required for the survey and ATE project/center final reports, our survey is much more specific about ATE activities and outcomes. Moreover, there is no way to aggregate information provided via FastLane into a report about the overall ATE program.

#### **6. You ask questions about things we don't keep records on. How should I answer these?**

Ideally, you will have records from which to retrieve much of the information we ask for. However, we understand that this may not always be the case. Therefore, we ask that you provide your best estimates. For example, there are survey questions related to enrollments and ethnicity for programs. One suggestion for obtaining a reasonable estimate is to observe a couple of "typical" courses in a program and base your estimates on these courses.

We suggest that you record your answers to the survey on a hard copy. Keeping this copy on file, along with notes for sources of your data, can assist you with this year's survey and beyond.

## 7. Why are you asking about . . . ?

Many of the questions in Survey 2012 are the same ones that have been asked of ATE grantees since the survey was initiated more than a decade ago. This longitudinal information provides perspective on the development and scope of the program over time.

Section 5 —Special Topics—was added in 2011 as a place to feature questions included at the request of researchers, other ATE grantees, and NSF program officers. NSF is interested in increasing research activity within ATE and the inclusion of these questions will aid that process. These questions are being asked on either a one-time or rotational basis.

The entire survey has been reviewed by NSF program officers and grantees periodically since 1999—most recently in 2009, when the survey underwent a major revision in 2009. If you have suggestions for survey modifications, contact Lori Wingate—her contact information is included at the beginning of this document.

## 8. What do you mean by \_\_\_\_\_? (Definitions)

Definitions of several key terms are included in the survey instrument. Additional terms that may need clarification are defined below.

[In Alphabetical Order]

***Estimated Monetary Value of In-Kind Support*** is the estimated value, based on the actual cost basis, of support (e.g., equipment) given to an ATE project.

***Field-Testing*** refers to testing materials in settings where they will be used when finalized; usually large and more in depth than pilot testing.

***Pilot Testing*** refers to brief, preliminary testing of materials or portions of materials; usually done with a small number of sites.

***STEM*** stands for science, technology, engineering, and mathematics.

## QUESTIONS ABOUT COMPLETING THE SURVEY ONLINE

### 9. Can someone other than the PI obtain a login ID and password in order to complete the survey?

Yes, the PI may delegate responsibility for completing the entire survey to someone else (a delegated PI). This is done by clicking on Delegation of PI Responsibilities after logging into the survey and then following the prompts provided. That person will automatically be sent his or her own unique login information.

The PI/delegated PI may assign individual survey sections to others to complete. This is done by clicking on Delegate for the relevant section on the survey management page and following the prompts provided. When a new person is assigned a section, an e-mail message is automatically sent to that person with all the information he or she needs to access ATE Survey 2012.

If the PI delegates responsibility for the entire survey or a survey section to someone else, he or she cannot redelegate him/herself as the responsible person. Therefore, PIs should delegate only if they are completely confident in the other person's ability and willingness to complete the survey or assigned sections. At all times when the survey is running, however, the PI may view the answers that have been provided for his or her project/center.

### **10. How do I log in to the survey?**

To enter ATE Survey 2012, you must first go to the survey Web site, which is emailed to PIs with their login information when the survey launches (February 15).

To log in to the survey, you need your NSF award number, user name (e-mail address), and password. This information is e-mailed to persons responsible for completing the survey (PIs or their delegates). If you lose your login information, contact Lori Wingate at [evaluate@wmich.edu](mailto:evaluate@wmich.edu) or (269) 387-5922.

### **11. Will the survey system save my answers automatically?**

Your answers will save when you either hit the "Enter" button on your keyboard or click on the "Save" button on the survey. Either action will save your answers and return you to the Survey Management page.

Because this is a computer- and Web-based survey and technical problems may arise (e.g., lost data due to power outage or browser problems), we strongly encourage you to SAVE OFTEN as you answer questions. When you save, your answers are checked for validity (e.g., dates are in the proper format). If all the answers you provided are valid, they are saved on our server, so you may return later to complete the section. You may change your saved answers at any time prior to submitting the survey.

To avoid losing your survey answers due to human or technical errors, we advise completing a hard copy of the survey prior to online completion. A PDF version of the survey is available at [http://www.evaluate-ate.org/annual\\_survey](http://www.evaluate-ate.org/annual_survey).

### **12. I accidentally answered a question that does not apply to my project/center, but I can't "deselect" it. What should I do?**

The survey system will check that your responses are internally consistent and discard extraneous data. For example, if you indicated that your project/center only used an internal evaluator, and then you accidentally answered a question about the use of external evaluators,

your response to the latter question would not be saved. We recommend using the View function to review your answers and check their accuracy before the final Close/Submit step.

### **13. What's the difference between *View*, *Start*, and *Resume*?**

By clicking on View on the survey management page, a person can view the survey questions and any answers that have been provided. When in *View* mode, answers are NOT SAVED.

By clicking on *Start* or *Resume* on the survey management page, a person may answer questions; answers will be saved when the person clicks on *Save*. (*Start* will appear for survey sections not yet opened; *Resume* will be an option for sections that have been opened.)

PIs who delegate survey sections to others to complete may use the *View* option to check the answers that have been supplied and monitor progress.

### **14. When can/should I Close a survey section?**

When all the questions in the survey sections that apply to your project/center have been answered to your satisfaction, you should click on Close Section. If changes are necessary after this point, you may click on Reopen Section to modify and resave your answers.

### **15. When can/should I Submit the survey?**

All sections need to be marked as Closed or Doesn't Apply in order for the completed survey to be submitted. When all applicable survey sections have been closed, a Close/Submit Survey button will appear at the top of the survey management page.

Carefully review the answers in all applicable sections to ensure they are complete and accurate. When all the applicable survey questions have been answered to your satisfaction and all applicable sections are Closed, then you should click on Submit/Close Survey to submit your answers. You will no longer have access to the survey questions after clicking on Close/Submit Survey, so do so with caution. This is the final step in the survey process.

## **QUESTIONS ABOUT CHANGES TO THE SURVEY**

### **16. What's different about the 2012 version compared with 2011?**

The 2012 version of the survey is one-third shorter than the 2011 version.

We've determined that not all questions need to be asked every year, so we've removed several questions, with the intent of reintroducing some of them on a rotating basis. For example, we removed questions about sustainability, research topics, what kinds of workforce needs assessments grantees conducted, the use of various kinds of advisory committees, evaluation practices, professional development for project/center staff, and student outcomes

other than numbers completing and numbers leaving programs. In addition, the topics addressed in Section 5 are different.

**17. I used to be able to indicate a survey section “Does Not Apply” to my grant. What happened to that option?**

In order to ensure we are capturing comprehensive information about the program, we now ask that all grantees complete at least the first question in Sections 2, 3, and 4. That question will determine whether you should complete the full section.

**18. Why am I being asked about student enrollment? We don’t have students—those questions used to be in the Program Improvement section**

At NSF’s request we moved student enrollment question to Section 1 to ensure we are capturing comprehensive information about the number of students impacted by the ATE program. If you do not have any enrolled students, you may skip those questions in Section 1.