Planning implementation of the SOURCE research integrity climate measure at VCU

The Survey of Organizational Research Climate (SOURCE) is the only validated instrument specifically designed to measure empirically the climate of research integrity in academic organizations.

https://ethicscenter.csl.illinois.edu/source/

ReDAC 8/4/2021
The survey instrument:

- Empirical measures of organizational research climate
- 32 items (rated on 5-point Likert scales) + items to assess classification information about academic/administrative rank, departmental affiliation, type of highest degree + ~4 customized items.
- 10-15 minutes to complete
- Invitation to designated participants contains a link to the survey and a passcode. Follow-up reminders are sent once every 4 days x4 to those who have not yet responded.
- No identifiable data available to UoIL, email address deleted after survey completed. Participants are not known to VCU or UoIL.

Thrush, Martinson and Wells with the Council of Graduate Schools, and validated with funding from the DHHS Office of Research Integrity.
Results can:

- compare departmental and group members’ research integrity climate perceptions; benchmark across institutions

- detect where research policies, practices, educational and mentoring approaches need attention through responsible conduct of research (RCR) instruction or other approaches.
Sample questions:

How effectively do the senior administrators at $\text{institutions}$ (e.g., $\text{sample_senior_leaders}$) communicate high expectations for research/scholarly integrity?

- Not at all
- Somewhat
- Moderately
- Very
- Completely
- No Basis for Judging

How effectively do the available educational opportunities at your university teach about responsible research practices (e.g., $\text{sample_methods}$)?

- Not at all
- Somewhat
- Moderately
- Very
- Completely
- No Basis for Judging

How well do the regulatory committees or boards that review your research/scholarship (e.g., $\text{sample_boards}$) understand the kind of research you do?

- Not at all
- Somewhat
- Moderately
- Very
- Completely
- No Basis for Judging

How accessible are individuals with appropriate expertise that you could ask for advice if you had a question about research ethics?

- Not at all
- Somewhat
- Moderately
- Very
- Completely
- No Basis for Judging
Sample questions:

How difficult is it to conduct research/scholarship in a responsible manner because of insufficient access to material resources such as space, equipment, or technology?

- Not at all
- Somewhat
- Moderately
- Very
- Completely
- No Basis for Judging

How committed are people in your $department$ to maintaining data integrity and data confidentiality?

- Not at all
- Somewhat
- Moderately
- Very
- Completely
- No Basis for Judging

How respectfully do $senior_unit_members$ treat $junior_unit_members$?

- Not at all
- Somewhat
- Moderately
- Very
- Completely
- No Basis for Judging

How true is it that pressure to publish has a negative effect on the integrity of research/scholarship in your $department$?

- Not at all
- Somewhat
- Moderately
- Very
- Completely
- No Basis for Judging
What’s involved?

• Obtain licensing agreement with NCPRE at University of Illinois – **DONE**

• Finalize additional questions – **in progress**

• IRB approval (requested by NCPRE) – **application pending**

• Assigning CGS taxonomic disciplines to VCU departments/units – **in progress**

• VCU provides emails of graduate students – **in progress** (FERPA challenges)

• VCU provides emails of post docs – **looks good to go**

• VCU provides emails of faculty and staff by department/unit – **in progress**

• The SOURCE engine sends emails invitations to participant groups and reminders over 4 weeks, then all emails are deleted.

• NCPRE provides a report.
When?

• Placed on university survey calendar for early/mid-October 2021
• To be preceded by targeted communication from OVPRI

• ‘Talk it up’ by chairs, CAR, ReDAC, etc.
Participant groups

- Graduate students
- Post doctoral fellows
- Research staff
- Research faculty

NOT undergraduate students

(Per NCPRE: *We do not recommend including undergraduates in the pool, as the original validation of the instrument indicated that they drive the results upwards*).
Existing demographic questions

• Gender options in newer survey version:
  - woman/female
  - man/male
  - non-binary, gender non-conforming, trans, or genderqueer
  - I prefer not to answer

• Currently there is NO question about affiliation with racial or underrepresented group >>>> do we want such a question?
Per survey:
• Which of the following best describes your role with respect to the research you engage in within or under the auspices of VCU?

– Undergraduate Student
– Graduate Student in a Course-based Masters Program
– Graduate Student in a Research Masters Program
– Graduate Student in a Doctoral Program
– Support Staff / Technician
– Postdoctoral Trainee / Research Associate
– Research Professional
– Fixed-term Faculty; Not Tenure-track
– Tenure-track Faculty; Not Tenured
– Tenure-track Faculty; Tenured
– Clinical Faculty
– Research Scientist

Are these faculty/researcher roles sufficient?
Additional questions recommended by implementation subcommittee

i) How true is it that you are knowledgeable about research integrity topics (RCR) in your field/discipline? (response options as in survey)

ii) What seminars or workshop topics in research integrity would be useful to your department? (Open-ended)

(Additional questions are not benchmarked) We can add up to 4

Also suggest: Any comments you’d like to add about research integrity at VCU? (open ended)

>>> add any more questions?
Incentivize participation?

• Raffle – among individual participants?
• Prize/recognition for department/unit with largest % participation? Eg., donation on behalf of the department/unit

• No – an opportunity to make your voice heard should be enough...
Questions? Comments?

Send questions, comments, or feedback on the yellow highlights to me (Monika Markowitz) - msmarkow@vcu.edu

Appreciate your help. Heads up, I may be reaching out to many of you!