ALEC 621: Online Research Methods
Week #3: Survey Design Characteristics

Welcome
- What we need to do this week:
  - Discuss online survey design characteristics.
  - Review and complete IRB forms.
  - Continue coding processes:
    - Welcome site - *.htm code
    - Survey site - *.asp code
    - Verification site - *.asp code
    - Hidden components - *.mdb structure
    - Follow-up site - *.htm

Survey Design
- KISS, same principle as in mail mode
- Every question should have a purpose
- Strive for a clean, easy-to-navigate layout
- Some factors to consider:
  - Table - 640 pixel width for total content
  - Nested Tables – used as percentages for items
  - Form – must start prior to data entry point
  - Horizontal rules – breaks between sections
  - Toggles – all formatting issues – on/off

Survey Design
- Welcome - Information and Consent Page
  - Instructions/directions to survey
  - Consent by click-through
  - Password? What options are available?
- Easy questions start survey
- Most to least important order for all other questions
  - Unimode construction
  - Online mode will be followed-up by mail mode

Survey Design
- Demographic information at end
- Options:
  - Comments’ textbox – multiple line design
  - E-mail for request of information/follow-up
- Check all code
- Double-check all fields
- Closed form

Survey Design
- Colors:
  - White background, avoid background graphic
  - Limited color use throughout
  - Tables/scales, differentiate for multiple lines
- No horizontal scrolling
- Encourage use of minimal vertical scrolling
- No forced answers – increases dropout
7 Survey Design
- Lists – always with instructions
  - Drop-downs save space
  - First option is always “Click Here” or “Select from Below”
- Consistent scaling
  - Agree -> Disagree
  - Disagree -> Agree
- Avoid:
  - Check all that apply
  - Open-ended questions

8 IRB Forms
- Review all sections
- Verify exempt status
- Completeness assures conformity to rules
- Special factors for online surveys:
  - IRB may need the “Information and Consent” Web page
  - IRB will want to see the “Survey” page

9 Weekly Code - *.asp
- Week #3 begins *.asp code for the online Survey Web site
- Weekly code writing sessions include:
  - Welcome site - *.htm
  - Survey site - *.asp
  - Verification site - *.asp code
  - Hidden components - *.mdb structure
  - Follow-up site - *.htm

10 Final Thoughts
- Survey Design Characteristics:
  - Unimode construction
  - KISS
  - Passwords (or end around)
  - Multiple contact modes, maybe incentives
- For next week:
  - Read “Chapter 2,” Dillman (2000)
  - Continue exploring the Internet for relevant materials to discuss in the next class