



SNAAP Survey Data, Methodology, and Reliability

Alumni surveys present particular challenges in terms of response rates. It is difficult for institutions to keep their alumni files current, especially with email addresses. About 60% of the alumni records submitted to SNAAP include an email address. The email addresses that are submitted may or may not be current.

The SNAAP research team has studied the issues of bias and response representativeness. A study based on a SNAAP field test did not discover significant biases that would prevent schools from drawing conclusions from their data. Furthermore, a 2014 publication using SNAAP data found that respondents to alumni surveys are just as representative as respondents to student surveys, which are commonly used for purposes of assessment.

A total of 386,496 individuals with arts degrees from 82 postsecondary institutions and 6 arts high schools were invited to participate in 2015 and/or 2016. Of this population, 65,376 alumni of all ages responded to the online survey. (The SnaapGraph does not include data from two institutions with non-standard survey administrations.)

Approximately 73% of respondents had undergraduate arts degrees, 23% were graduate-level alumni, and 4% responded about their high school degrees.

SNAAP is committed to assisting institutions in locating as many arts alumni as possible for invitation to take the survey. Most participating institutions take advantage of an online service offered through SNAAP to “find” lost alumni. In 2015 and 2016, the SNAAP survey was completed by 3,398 previously “lost” alumni, representing about 5% of total respondents.

The average institutional response rate for institutions was 18%. The highest institutional response rate was 33%, and six out of seven institutions achieved a response rate of 12% or higher.