

UNIVERSITY OF LOUISIANA AT LAFAYETTE

STEP Committee

Technology Fee Application

Qualtrics Survey Software for the Psychology Department

Title

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Name of Submitter
(Faculty or Staff Only)

Department of Psychology

Organization

Title: Qualtrics Survey Software for the Psychology Department Date: Jan. 14, 2019
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ABSTRACT (250 words or less):

The Psychology Department is requesting funding for access to the Qualtrics research platform (<https://www.qualtrics.com>) for three years. The ability to conduct web-based surveys and other research projects is crucial to the academic mission of the department (emphasizing the science of psychology). The previously-used method for providing student researchers access to web-based survey software is no longer available; our ability to continue to involve students in the research process depends to a large extent on our ability to access online survey software tools. Student researchers will be the primary beneficiaries of this funding, but all students taking psychology classes will potentially benefit to some extent.

STEP Proposal Spring 2019

Qualtrics Survey Software for the Psychology Department

Purpose of Grant

Background. The ability to conduct survey research is vital to the students and faculty of the Psychology Department. We are a research-based discipline and we emphasize the importance of empirical research to our students in several ways: by teaching about the scientific basis of knowledge in psychology, by requiring introductory psychology students to get experience with aspects of the research process, by recruiting psychology majors to assist in faculty research lab, and by supervising undergraduate and graduate student independent thesis projects.

The psychology department includes 19 full-time faculty; 13 of whom are on tenured or tenure-track professor lines. At least 12 faculty currently conduct survey-based research, or have in the past and plan to again in the future. These faculty supervise at least 50 graduate and undergraduate student researchers in their labs.

Contemporary psychological research demands access to technology. Most psychology studies (both surveys and experimental studies) are programmed and delivered via computer or handheld device. Many studies within the department are administered via web-based survey applications—students access these surveys or experimental tasks remotely and participate using their own device on their own time, or students come to a computer lab within the department and complete studies (often utilizing that same web-based survey software) in person. Web-based surveys are far superior to paper-and-pencil surveys for a variety of reasons: they allow for remote participation (which is more attractive to participants than in-person studies and thus allows for recruiting larger samples), they make counterbalancing and random assignment automatic, and they can be easily integrated into data analysis programs to eliminate human error in data entry. (We should be clear that although we are emphasizing survey research in this proposal, MANY different types of research designs are possible with web-based survey platforms; departmental use of such products is not, and will not be, limited to survey studies only.)

The web-based survey application most commonly used by students and faculty in the psychology department is SurveyMonkey. Several faculty members have individual user accounts on SurveyMonkey, paid for by grants, by the department, or by the faculty members themselves. Most of these accounts are used by other people in addition to the primary account-holder. It has been common practice within the department for one researcher who has paid for an account to share their login information with students working in their lab, or occasionally with collaborating faculty members. This allows students to conduct their own surveys without having to purchase their own SurveyMonkey account, as well as to assist with construction and analysis of faculty-led surveys. SurveyMonkey, in recent efforts to enhance security, is now requiring e-mail verification of account logins. A user can have two devices verified simultaneously, but not more than that. Any time a new device is verified, a previously-verified device must be removed. SurveyMonkey's account-verification process now makes it largely impossible for student researchers to access the faculty member's account.

If faculty within the psychology department continue to use SurveyMonkey at the rate they currently are, in addition to faculty paying \$360 annually for accounts, each student doing survey research will have to purchase their own account at a cost of \$37/month. Assuming that in a given year there are 10 faculty researchers doing survey research, and they each obtain an annual SurveyMonkey account, the cost for faculty research would be \$3600 a year. Assuming that each of our 50 students a

year work on at least one online research project, and that the average length of these projects is 4 months, and that each student purchases their own account for that length of time, students will be spending a total of \$7400. This comes to \$11,000 a year that individuals within the psychology department will have to spend to conduct research.

Proposal. We are requesting funding for three years of access to Qualtrics (<https://www.qualtrics.com>). Qualtrics is a competitor to SurveyMonkey that is more powerful and more flexible, allowing for even more of our studies to move online. The only reason that SurveyMonkey remains the dominant product within the department currently is that the cost for a single-user account on SurveyMonkey is considerably cheaper than a single-user account on Qualtrics. However, a departmental Qualtrics license costs \$4500 annually and includes unlimited user accounts within a department. Although a single-user Qualtrics account is more expensive than a single-user SurveyMonkey account, a departmental Qualtrics account is more cost-effective than funding the large number of individual SurveyMonkey accounts that would be needed.

We are requesting three years of funding in order to have enough time with the product to maximize its benefits. We assume that not everyone will start using Qualtrics immediately (some will still have active SurveyMonkey accounts, and some will not have research projects ready to go), so we need enough time for everyone to get the chance to use the product. Three years will also give us some time to figure out other sources of funding for Qualtrics for the future.

Impact to student body. Psychology department access to Qualtrics would benefit students in a variety of ways. First, the students who would benefit most are students working/volunteering in research labs and working on independent-study research projects. These students will get the benefit of being able to complete research projects timely and efficiently. Research experience is extremely helpful to students planning to apply to graduate programs and/or to work within the field of psychology – a fact recognized by the university in our upcoming QEP focusing on student research. Second, the students who take introductory (and other) psychology classes that have research participation experience as a requirement or opportunity would benefit. Web-based studies make participation easy and encourage greater participation by students. Participating in studies helps students understand the research process a little better and helps them understand where the knowledge that they read about in texts actually comes from. Third, other universities offer undergraduate courses in research methods that require students to design, conduct, and analyze data from their own research projects. The UL psychology department, although emphasizing research methods in a variety of courses, has no set course that regularly provides students with an opportunity to conduct their own research. One reason is that it is not logistically practical. But a departmental license to Qualtrics would greatly facilitate such an endeavor. It would be relatively easy to assign a Qualtrics user account to every student in a given course for the duration of a semester. Providing students with access to Qualtrics as part of a course would make it much easier for students to design and administer research projects. Currently, only students working in research labs are able to get hands-on research experience. Departmental access to Qualtrics would improve our ability to provide this experience to all psychology majors through new or existing courses. Fourth, Psychology students are empowered by our curriculum to understand human behavior from a scientific perspective, collecting data where possible rather than relying on biased impressions. Access to Qualtrics would allow our departmental student organizations (Psi Chi, Psychology Colloquium, and the pending, Psi Gamma Delta) the ability to easily survey their membership to more effectively evaluate programming, plan events, and hold elections and other votes. Faculty members could use Qualtrics similarly to ensure we are meeting the needs of our students.

Projected Lifetime of Enhancement

We would like access to Qualtrics indefinitely. We are therefore seeking funding for three years immediately, but plan to explore additional funding to maintain Qualtrics access after the three years of STEP funding are concluded.

Responsible Persons

Because we are seeking funding for access to a web-based product and not for physical technology improvements, this grant would require little in terms of installation and maintenance. The PI and future Department Head, Dr. Amy Brown, will be responsible for working with Qualtrics on purchasing and setting up UL Psychology Department access. Dr. Robert Michael will be appointed as the Qualtrics coordinator within the department. Dr. Michael has extensive experience using Qualtrics. Dr. Michael will host an information/training session to orient all faculty to the features and use of Qualtrics. Dr. Michael will also be responsible for administering user accounts. He will process requests for new user accounts, maintain a list of all students and faculty with Qualtrics access, and cancel accounts for users who graduate or otherwise leave the psychology department.

Budget Justification

The annual cost of Qualtrics access for an academic department is \$4500, based on an e-mailed price quote from August 2017 (that price was re-confirmed in a phone conversation in November 2018). The departmental license comes with unlimited accounts within a single department, unlimited surveys and responses, unlimited web training sessions, custom branded survey templates to match the color scheme and logo of the university, custom URLs, and data encryption.

Three years of Qualtrics access at \$4500/year comes to \$13,500 total.

Previously Funded STEP Projects

Two authors of the current proposal have been authors of previously-funded STEP proposals. Dr. Michael collaborated with Dr. Brooke Breaux on the proposal for “Cognitive PSYC Instructional & Experimental Lab Upgrade” that was funded in Fall 2017. Less recently, but more relevant to the current request, Dr. Brown received funding for the Psychology Department in 2012 to purchase access to Sona Systems experimental management software. Sona is similar to Qualtrics in that it is a web-based platform that is customizable for an academic department and requires annual renewal. Sona aids with the management of experiment scheduling and sign-ups. Sona can actually work with Qualtrics such that students can sign up on Sona to participate in studies that are run on Qualtrics; upon completion of a study on Qualtrics, students can receive participation credit on Sona. The Psychology Department’s Sona license was funded through STEP for three years. We have managed to maintain the product through other sources of funding since the STEP money expired in 2015. This illustrates that the department has the ability to use temporary STEP funding to jump-start longer-term technology enhancements.

Budget Proposal

1.	Equipment	\$	
2.	Software for three years.	\$13,500	Annual fee for Qualtrics Departmental License (\$4500)
3.	Supplies	\$	
4.	Maintenance	\$	
5.	Personnel	\$	
6.	Other	\$	

TOTAL: **\$13,500**

File Message Tell me what you want to do...

Delete
 Reply
 Reply All
 Forward
 Quick Steps
 Move
 Mark Unread
 Categorize
 Follow Up
 Translate
 Zoom



Brian Carter <brianc@qualtrics.com> | alb6095@louisiana.edu

8/23/2017

Qualtrics

i Follow up.
 If there are problems with how this message is displayed, click here to view it in a web browser.
 Click here to download pictures. To help protect your privacy, Outlook prevented automatic download of some pictures in this message.

Amy,

It was a pleasure speaking with you. Below is the pricing structure for your grant. Please let me know any questions you have.

5 user Lab License within 1 department (used within the library)

- 5 user accounts within 1 department
- unlimited surveys and responses
- unlimited web training sessions
- 1 custom branded survey template to match color scheme and logo of university
- custom URL
- data encryption
- \$3000* annual fee**

Departmental License

- unlimited accounts within 1 department
- unlimited surveys and responses
- unlimited web training sessions
- 1 custom branded survey template to match color scheme and logo of university
- custom URL
- data encryption
- \$4500* annual fee**

Thanks again,

Brian

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Brian Carter

Academic Account Executive

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 (801) 374-6682 support
qualtrics.com

