One of the responsibilities of the Institutional Research office is to administer and analyze surveys as part of the College’s institutional effectiveness process. One of the challenges is getting people to complete the surveys in order to have reliable results.

According to the Indiana University Center for Postsecondary Research, the creators of the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE), once a survey achieves a **25% response rate, the survey results are reliable**. Studies show a +0.98 correlation* between the results after the first 25% of the population responds and the final survey results, assuming a survey population of 250 or more. For small survey populations (n<250), once there are 50 or more respondents the results are considered reliable.

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*A correlation of +1.0 means the results would be exactly the same, -1.0 means the results would be opposite. A correlation of .98 is almost exactly the same.


*Reprinted from Donny Femino, Director of Institutional Research, Endicott College*