

Newman Strategic Planning Study – Questionnaire Results (Part 1)



We are anxious to share the results from the community-wide questionnaire that ran during November 2014. The final report preparation has been delayed slightly due to the data coding and validation requiring greater attention, which arose from the volume and quality of the open-ended responses in the questionnaire – people had a lot to say! Our strategic planning team is expecting this to be complete near the end of March and look forward to presenting the findings over the course of the next few months according to the following schedule:

- April: Why people come to Newman and program participation
- May: Demographic information on the Newman community
- June: Open-ended responses to enhancing our mission and areas for growth in the community.

What we can share at this time is that we are highly impressed at the overall response to the questionnaire. There were 641 respondents who partially or fully (516) completed the questionnaire. Most respondents completed the questionnaire online, while others filled out the paper questionnaire.

In order to ensure reliable, honest responses, respondents were given the assurance that all their information would be held in confidence. The survey was anonymous in that no information was collected that could link a questionnaire with the respondent's identity. Also, all results will be produced in aggregated form, again to assure respondent anonymity.

A vigorous effort was made to ensure that all the diverse groups of the Newman Centre community were fairly represented in the final sample. The contact process involved email notifications and reminders from a variety of databases maintained at Newman Centre. It also included invocations to participate by the presiding priest at the Masses, social network appeals involving Facebook and other social sites, as well as intercepting participants directly at meetings, after Mass and other group activities. Most of this work was undertaken by members of the strategic planning team.

With such a fluid community, ranging from university students, to faculty and staff at the University of Toronto, to individuals residing in the wider community, to visitors temporarily resident at the University, reliable population figures across these diverse groups was difficult to obtain. The questionnaire was sent to 1,894 mail and email addresses from various databases at Newman Centre, but was also available in the church and house after Masses to those we do not have contact information for. Our best guesstimate on those who were presented the questionnaire is 1,900.

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We can thus determine that the response rate to our questionnaire is just over 33% or one in three. This is a fairly respectable result, as far as most surveys go. As the following releases will demonstrate, the Newman Centre is a highly engaged and welcoming community that encompasses a wide diversity of people who find joy and meaning in their experience here. Stay tuned to the next edition of the bulletin for more on who these people are, their characteristics, and their relationship to the Newman community.