Description of the Session:

Getting high survey response rates while collecting data is not always easy, and online surveys present additional challenges. You may have heard success stories about great response rates in online survey data collection and wonder how those researchers got those rates. Did their methods differ from yours? What can we learn by sharing our successful (and not-so-successful) experiences? For new AIR members, this session provides foundational information to those seeking solutions to data collection challenges.

Factors that influence the choice of survey delivery method include whether the sample is a convenience sample or a specific population of interest; cost or time limitations for staff or incentive items; and which delivery methods are accessible. If cost is not a concern, in-person survey collection is preferred due to the ability to achieve response rates at 80% or higher. However, access to an online survey collection tools can save time and money while achieving response rates at 20-30%. Sample size and statistical power also need to be considered in relation to the target audience. Can you increase the number of participants invited to increase the sample size? Or is there a specific, size-constrained group you are interested in?

There are things you - as a researcher, administrator, faculty member, or individual gathering data from your target audience - need to be aware of and consider before planning data collection in order to achieve your goal due to your method and limitations. In a brief presentation and as a handout, we will be offering 20 best practice strategies that may help you to plan your method and improve response rates. Strategies include how much and what kind of content to include in a survey, what day and time to send out invitations to participate in an online survey, how to maximize the impact of incentive items, and more.
The central theme of the discussion will focus on: (1) discussing challenges in administering online surveys and their impact on response rates; (2) identifying strategies useful in increasing online survey response rates; (3) articulating ways to implement these strategies in your own data collection.