

The Administration of the 2013 Christian Life Survey (CLS)

The Christian Life Survey (CLS) has been used since spring of 2011 to provide insights into the spiritual lives of people in the United States. Though it will become more broadly available in the future, it has primarily been used to allow students at Christian colleges to take their own spiritual pulse and allow those colleges to better understand the spiritual lives of their students. The most recent administration of the CLS was on 13 Christian college campuses across the USA in spring of 2013. The Christian Life Survey is a copyrighted survey.

The CLS has a set of core questions used to create comprehensive indexes that look at participants' spiritual foci, spiritual orientations, and scripture engagement as well as a variety of additional questions that change in different administrations (so new aspects of peoples' spiritual lives can be considered), and a set of demographic questions.

The core indexes constructed from the results of the survey provide insight into participants'...

Focus on God	Orientation toward outreach
Focus on others	Orientation toward connectedness
Focus on the Bible	Orientation toward ascetic spirituality
	Orientation toward reflective spirituality

The indexes on scripture engagement have provided a way to see which kinds of Bible interaction (eight were considered through the survey) transcend context of Bible interaction and so are key aspects to Christian life. The four kinds of Bible interaction that supersede the context of Bible interaction are:

Experiencing the presence of the Holy Spirit while encountering the Bible,
Considering the well-being of others and society when encountering the Bible,
Placing oneself into the story of biblical passages, and
Connecting the biblical passage to one's feelings.

Using the increased dataset of responses gained from each new administration of the CLS the number of questions used for the core indexes was reduced so the survey is shorter but still maintains its measurement validity and reliability.

The spring 2013 administration of the CLS had 51 questions used for the core indexes, 48 questions used for the scripture engagement indexes, 19 demographic questions, and additional 101 questions about participants' spiritual lives and views. Future administrations will be based on a smaller, more easily used, version of the survey. The full 2013 version of the survey can be seen at the Center for Scripture Engagement's website. Also available at the website are summary briefs for the results of the 2013 administration to 4,210 students at 13 Christian colleges in spring of 2013 and an explanation of the indexes (which questions are in them and how they were constructed).

The CLS is administered through an online survey format with invitations sent to participants through email. In the 2013 administration, a generous donor covered substantial portions of the costs of administration and the colleges paid a small fee for participation. The fee (500 dollars) provided access to the survey for all students at the college. The colleges were also asked to provide incentives to the students for participating.

Participating colleges received reports on their student populations' index scores, question item distributions and means listings, the demographics for their participating students, and the full data set of their students' responses. Students had the option in the survey to allow their name to be left with their responses or not.