

SCHEV Post-College Outcomes Study: Progress Report

Presented to the Academic Affairs Committee

State Council of Higher Education for Virginia

May 19, 2020

Survey and Evaluation Research Laboratory

Center for Public Policy

L. Douglas Wilder School of Government and Public Affairs

Virginia Commonwealth University



Overall Project Plan (revised – COVID-19)

- Design (Jul 2019-Jan 2020) – literature reviews, advisory committee, focus groups, additional stakeholder input
- Develop (Aug 2019-Feb 2020) – draft questions, cognitive interviews, revise
- **Pilot (Mar-May 2020) – test protocols, strata, linkages, questions, other**
- Revise (May-Jun 2020) – stakeholder input, final qstr & sampling plan
- Production (Jul-Aug 2020) – large-scale, multi-mode (mail, web)
- Analysis (Aug-Sep 2020) – multifaceted
- Reporting (Aug-Sep 2020) – intensive

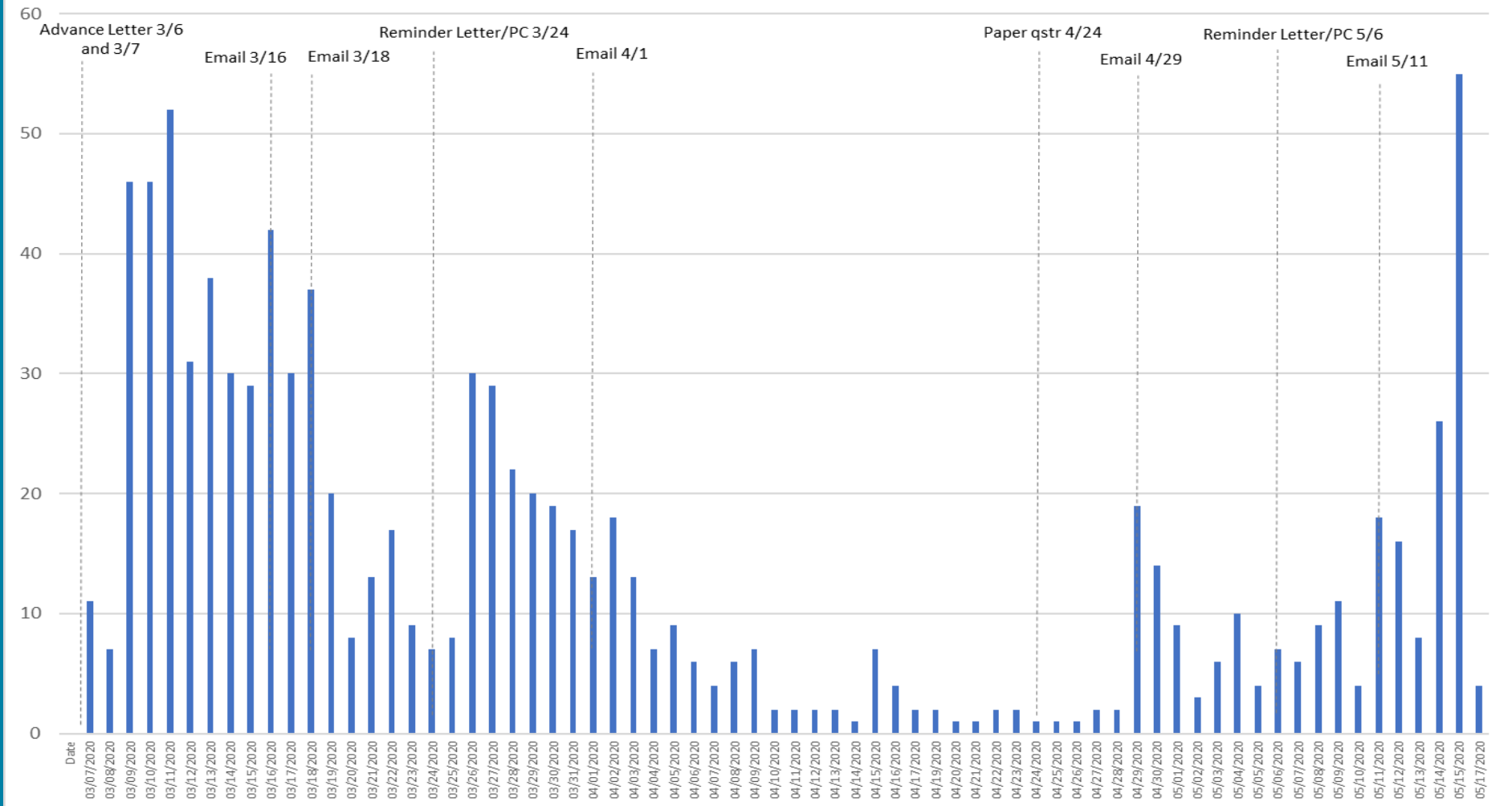
Other Progress to Date

- With assent from SCHEV, gained approvals from Wilder School and VCU IRB for revised study procedures under COVID-19
 - Home-based work
 - Printing vendor stepped in to stuff and post mailings, courier returns
 - Revised wording about delays in fulfilling Target gift cards by mail
- Received first administrative dataset from SCHEV
- Hired part-time report writer position
- Evaluating responses to RFP for electronic gift card services
- Advertised RFP for printing services

Pilot Survey Data Collection

Date	Milestone
3/6 and 3/7	Contact 1: Mail advance letter
+ 10 (3/16)	Contact 2: Email sent to non-responders
+ 12 (3/18)	Contact 3: Email sent to non-responders
+ 18 (3/24)	Contact 4: Mail reminder letter/PC
+ 26 (4/1)	Contact 5: Email sent to non-responders
+ 49 (4/24)	Contact 6: Mail questionnaire packet
+ 53 (4/29)	Contact 7: Email sent to non-responders
+ 60 (5/6)	Contact 8: Mail reminder PC/letter
+ 65 (5/11)	Contact 9: Email sent to non-responders
+ 76 (5/22)	Close data collection(?)

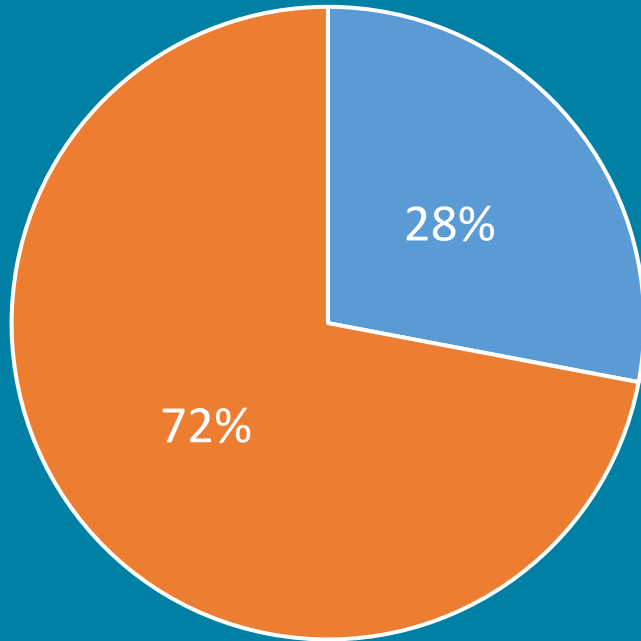
Number of responses by date



Through May 18

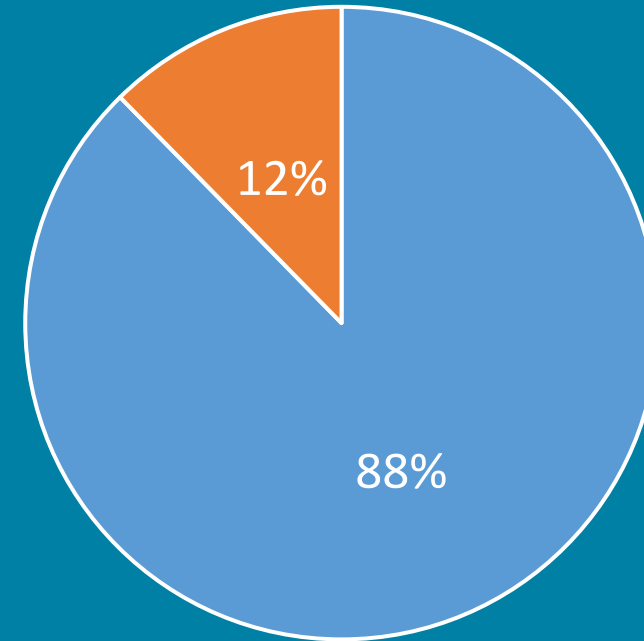
Pilot Survey Metrics (as of 5/18/2020)

Survey Starts (web only)



■ Started (n=1021) ■ Did not start (n=2627)

Survey Completions (web only)

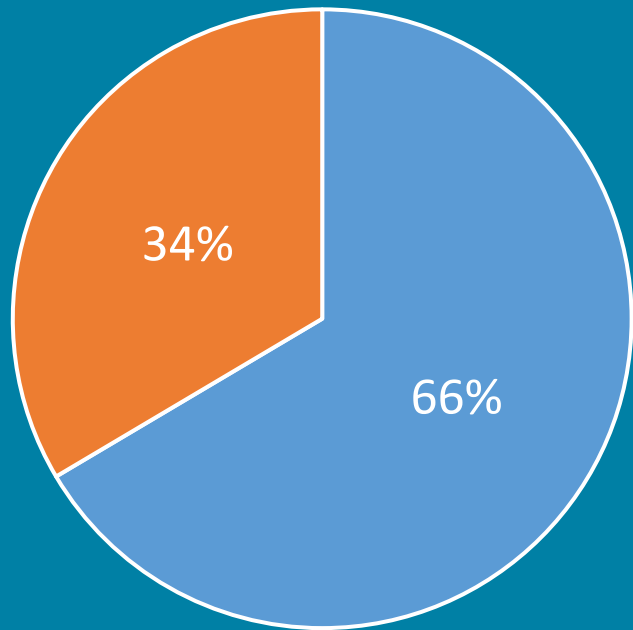


■ Completed (n=895) ■ Abandoned (n=126)

- About 30 minutes to complete (median)

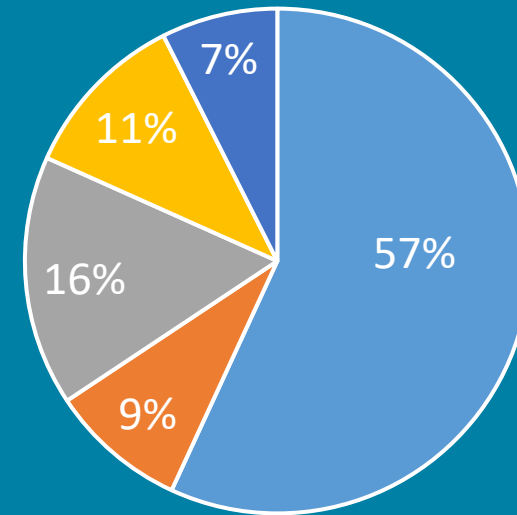
Pilot Survey Metrics (as of 5/18/2020)

Agreeing to Link Secondary Data



□ Agreeing to link (n=601) ■ Not agreeing (n=303)

Method Used to Do the Survey



- Anonymous link with login code (n=550)
- Text-back anonymous link (n=85)
- Responding to personalized email (n=155)
- QR code (n=105)
- Paper (early returns) (n=72)

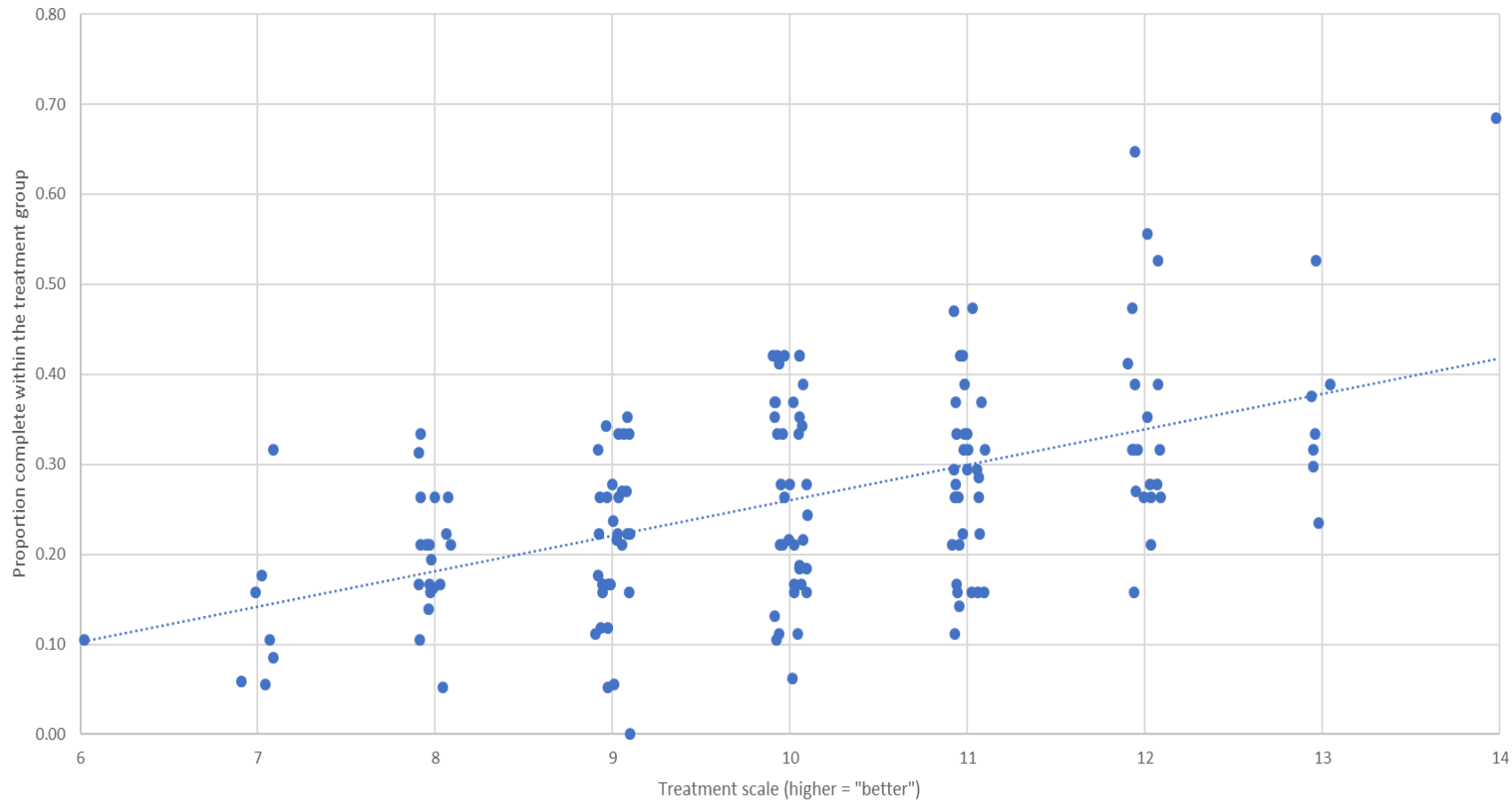
• Response rate 27% overall

Methods Experiments

- Cash: \$1 vs. \$2 in the initial invitation letter
- Envelope: Standard SCHEV vs. “special seal” vs. invitation-style
- Stationery: Standard paper vs. linen paper
- Arm: Letter reminder then postcard vs. postcard then letter
- Gift card: No card/\$5/\$10/\$20 gift card upon completion
- Drawing: No offer of a drawing vs. drawing offered upon completion

Inform costs, response rates and differences in non-response bias

Proportion completed by treatment scale for experimental groups (n=160 groups)



Treatment Scale	Response Rate
6	10.5%
7	13.7%
8	20.1%
9	21.1%
10	26.8%
11	28.1%
12	35.0%
13	35.3%
14	68.4%

Through May 18
(Treatment values shown with “scatter”)

Early Indications

- People will do this survey and take it seriously, despite its length
- Reasonably clean addresses (~93%) and emails (~88%)
- No major issues with the questionnaire function
- People will use the QR code on the letter
- The “special seal” #10 envelope is a winner – no extra cost to add 3-5 points to the response rate; “invitation-style” mailing has no effect
- May add survey content to take COVID-19 impacts into account
- Restrictions placed on SERL’s activities due to COVID-19 may preclude operating at production scale until they are lifted

Coming Up

- For key variables: Expanding data linkage, completing data analysis, coding open-ends
- Summary report from the pilot – assessments, changes, deletions to the questionnaire and the process
- Cost modeling for the production survey
 - Explore full automation for reminder mailings
 - Explore postage options (e.g., pre-printed postage for the questionnaire mailer)
- Sample design for the production survey
- Execution of the production survey and final reporting

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