In this study we sought to better understand response intentions and response behavior to an online special topics university satisfaction survey to not only advance theory but to better inform practice on the meaning and implications of nonresponse to their efforts. Using the Rogelberg, Luong, Sederburg, and Cristol (2000) response behavior model, data collected in this 2-wave field study (394 students, 50% men) supported most of the framework’s major assertions, supported our proposed extensions, and resulted in a few unexpected findings. Overall, to understand response behavior to an online special topics organizational survey, one must take into consideration factors related to technology, attitudes toward surveys in general, satisfaction with the specific topic in question, and response intentions.

As organizational scientists, we commonly collect and analyze data from stakeholders (e.g., employees in a manufacturing site, students in a university setting, customers in a service industry). We are typically interested in the targeted or general attitudes, opinions, and perceptions of these individuals in our attempt to understand, evaluate, and improve individual and organizational health, well-being, and effectiveness. Our most common tool for collecting this type of information is the organizational survey (Rogelberg, Church, Waclawski, & Stanton, 2002). Two common types of organizational surveys are a general employee opinion
survey (e.g., assess general job satisfaction/retention type issues) and, of interest to this paper, a special topics survey (e.g., looking at a particular issue such as benefits).

In any survey effort, some members of the population will choose to participate and some members of the population will choose not to participate. A lack of survey response is problematic to the extent that it compromises sample size and, hence, statistical power (Cohen, 1988); erodes the credibility of the data in the eyes of the survey sponsors (Borg, 2003); and/or undermines the generalizability of the collected data (Rogelberg & Luong, 1998). Given these concerns, researchers have noted the importance of understanding nonrespondent characteristics and have proposed survey response behavior models.

Survey Response Behavior Models

The study of individual survey response behavior has been most prevalent in public opinion research (e.g., Dillman, Eltinge, Groves, & Little, 2002) and marketing (Bosnjak, Tuten, & Wittmann, 2005; Cavusgil & Elvey-Kirk, 1998; Green, 1996). For example, Groves, Cialdini, and Couper (1992) suggest that telephone polling participation is influenced by attributes of the interviewer, societal-level factors, attributes of the survey design (e.g., length of the interview), characteristics of the participant, and respondent–interviewer interaction. Groves, Singer, and Corning (2000) outlined a theory describing the decision to participate in a public opinion poll as a function of a series of factors. Some factors are survey specific, such as topic and sponsorships. Other factors are personal specific, such as civic duty. Yet, other factors relate to the potential respondent’s social and physical environment. Bosnjak et al. (2005) most recently looked at intentions to respond to a series of online marketing research type studies. Perceived behavioral control, attitude toward participation, internalized social pressure, and moral obligation best predicted response intention, which in turn predicted behavior. Although the above stream of research provides interesting insights into response intentions and behavior, its relevance to the organizational survey context is somewhat questionable. Namely, substantial psychological and practical differences exist between polling interviews, marketing studies, and organizational surveys (Rogelberg, 2006).

Unlike most polling and marketing studies, in organizational surveys there is a relatively closer connection between the potential respondent and the survey sponsor, a perceived track record of inaction or action with past organizational survey data typically exists for the survey sponsor, data results are typically shared, and potential respondents may also perceive greater psychological risk associated with completing or not completing
an organizational survey (potential retribution). Although organizational commitment and satisfaction with the survey sponsor and perceptions of social exchange relationships with the survey sponsoring organization appear relevant for response decisions in organizational settings (Rogelberg et al., 2003; Spitzmueller, Glenn, Barr, Rogelberg, & Daniel, 2006), they are less likely to matter in public opinion or marketing research.

Given these fundamental differences, Rogelberg, Luong, Sederburg, and Cristol (2000) posed, but did not test, a model identifying a host of variables related to organizational survey response behavior. Our search of the literature suggests that the Rogelberg et al. (2000) model appears to be the only extant model focusing on employee response behavior to organizational surveys. The variables included in this framework stem mainly from four bodies of research: the compliance literature, the survey response rate literature, the polling and marketing research literature, and the organizational citizenship behavior/helping literature. In this study, we examine and extend the Rogelberg et al. (2000) model. Specifically, we look at individual response intentions and response behavior to an online special topics university satisfaction survey to not only advance theory but to better inform practice on the meaning and implications of nonresponse.

Model Testing

The Rogelberg et al. (2000) model has two principal parts: (a) predictors of organizational survey response intentions and (b) the link of response intentions to actual behavior. With regard to the former, the model proposes that a response intention is a function of individual traits, attitudes toward surveys in general, survey specific impressions, perceptions on how the survey data will be used, organizational commitment, the extent to which the individual perceives the organization as having been good to them (satisfaction with the survey sponsor), available time, and organizational survey response norms. Specific propositions stemming from the model are tested here and described below.

Individual traits. The relationship between personality dimensions and task performance has been frequently studied (Barrick & Mount, 1991; Judge & Bono, 2001). Fewer studies have used personality as a predictor for helping behavior, such as filling out surveys. In general, Agreeableness and Conscientiousness have been found to predict organizational citizenship behaviors, particularly generalized compliance (i.e., following rules and procedures when behavior is not monitored; Organ & Paine, 1999; Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Paine, & Bachrach, 2000). Furthermore, when studying response to a paper-based organizational survey, respondents tended to be higher in Conscientiousness and Agreeableness than nonrespondents (Rogelberg et al, 2003).
Proposition 1. Agreeableness and Conscientiousness will be positively related to the intention to participate in a future online organizational survey.

Attitudes toward surveys. Attitudes toward surveys consist of individual’s overarching (not tied to a particular survey) attitudes about the value of survey research and his/her attitude about the actual act of filling out a survey (e.g., “I hate filling out surveys”). Using paper-based surveys, Rogelberg, Fisher, Maynard, Hakel, and Horvath (2001) found that attitudes toward surveys were generally related to a host of respondent behaviors (item response rates, following directions, timeliness of a response to a survey request, and of most relevance to this study, willingness to participate in additional survey research). In addition, Baruch (1999) argues that declines in response rates over time may be due to over surveying of organizations and growing negative attitudes toward the value of survey research (e.g., “How will this research benefit me or anyone else?”).

Proposition 2. Attitudes about the value of survey research and his/her attitude about the actual act of filling out a survey will be positively related to the intention to participate in a future online organizational survey.

Survey-specific impressions: anonymity. Survey-specific impressions refer to individuals’ perceptions of the survey in question. The principal challenge facing Web researchers concerns participant privacy and anonymity perceptions—especially when passwords are given to prevent the problem of “ballot stuffing.” These perceptual concerns appear well founded. Namely, in online research, regardless of technological sophistication, it is very difficult to guarantee the anonymity of respondents (Stanton & Rogelberg, 2000).

If potential respondents do not perceive the online survey to be anonymous, they may be quite reluctant to form an intention or engage in a behavior that in any way would compromise their security (e.g., possible retribution given their survey responses). This would seem particularly true given that survey response is a voluntary behavior. This notion is consistent with selection research that found that privacy perceptions related to reluctance to submit organizationally relevant information over the Internet for a U.S. sample (Harris, Van Hoye, & Lievens, 2003). In addition, Yost and Homer (1998) and later Thompson, Surface, Martin, and Sanders (2003) found that employee support for taking future surveys via the Web was tempered by concerns regarding anonymity.

Proposition 3. Perceptions about the existence of survey anonymity will be positively related to the intention to participate in a future online organizational survey.

Data usage. Data usage represents an individual’s beliefs regarding how survey data from past survey efforts have been handled by the survey
sponsor. For example, has the organization acted appropriately based upon the findings of past data collection efforts? Individuals believing that the sponsor has ineffectively used survey data should be less inclined to comply with a future survey request due to a perceived violation of a psychological contract (Dillman, 2000). Namely, it may be the case that when individuals feel that their organization does not handle survey data responsibly, a form of psychological contract is broken—a contract that implicitly suggests that if you “ask me my opinions; you need to do something with them, or at the least explain why you did not.” As a result, the individual may reason that if he/she cannot count on his/her organization to act upon collected data, there is little reason to engage in the extra-role behavior of completing an organizational attitude survey (Rogelberg et al., 2003). This notion is consistent with research suggesting that when an individual perceives a contract to be broken or violated, he/she is less likely to be committed to the organization and less likely to engage in extra-role behavior (Dabos & Rousseau, 2004; Hui, Lee, & Rousseau, 2004) and contribute beyond that which is formally expected (Millward & Hopkins; 1998).

**Proposition 4.** Positive attitudes regarding how the survey sponsor has handled survey data in the past will be positively related to the intention to participate in a future online organizational survey.

**Organizational commitment, intent to quit, and satisfaction.** Consistent with research and theorizing on organizational citizenship behavior, individuals who feel that their organization has been “good to them” (e.g., the individual is satisfied with his/her organizational environment, fairness of decision making, etc.) and who are less likely to leave the organization may feel obligated to respond to the survey out of a norm of reciprocity or a social exchange relationship (Spitzmueller et al., 2006). Furthermore, individuals whose personal identities are tied to the goals of the organization are more likely to take the time to respond to a survey that theoretically helps the organization to function. These notions are consistent with meta-analytic research suggesting that satisfaction, perceived fairness, organizational commitment, and leader supportiveness are robustly and positively related to OCBs (Organ & Ryan, 1995).

**Proposition 5.** Organizational commitment, intent to quit, and satisfaction with the survey sponsor will be positively related to the intention to participate in a future online organizational survey.

**Available time.** The available time factor represents individuals’ beliefs regarding present time constraints. The amount of perceived “free time” available should be predictive of individuals’ intentions to take on further responsibilities, such as the completion of organizational surveys. Individuals who feel as if they lack available time to use the Internet and
e-mail should be less able and, therefore, less willing to participate in survey requests. This is consistent with other work suggesting that engaging in organizational citizenship behaviors is related to time and other demands. For example, Motowidlo, Packard, and Manning (1986) found exposure to stressors to be predictive of individuals’ contextual performance. Likewise, demand-related organizational constraints negatively related to individuals’ voluntary helping behaviors (Anderson & Williams, 1996).

**Proposition 6.** Perceptions of available time to use the Internet/e-mail will be positively related to the intention to participate in a future online organizational survey.

**Organizational survey response norms.** Organizational survey response norms refer to a prevailing sense of what is “appropriate” survey behavior in the individual’s organization. In other words, norms may exist that create implicit expectations for the performance of certain OCBs like completing voluntary organizational surveys. Norms favorable to survey response should translate to a greater intention to comply. Research has long chronicled the powerful influence of norms on conformity, team decision making, and performance. Other more related work has found that perceived norms impact participation in marketing and political surveys (Bosnjak et al., 2005; Groves et al., 2000).

**Proposition 7.** Perceptions of survey response norms will be related to the intention to participate in a future online organizational survey such that when positive response norms are perceived, participants will express greater response intentions.

The Rogelberg et al. (2000) framework was designed to be most applicable to *paper-based* organizational surveys. Recent years have been marked by a surge of organizational surveys conducted over the Internet and intranet (Thompson et al., 2003; Vehoar, Batagelj, Manfreda, & Zaletel, 2002). Given these trends, in order to maximize practical relevance, an online modality was used in this study. As a result, we added to the Rogelberg et al. (2000) framework technological factors relevant to online administration, which were not specifically included in the original model given its paper-based orientation. The two factors of particular relevance to online surveys are (a) computer/Internet resources and (b) technology attitudes/confidence.

**Computer/Internet resources.** This factor suggests that intentions to complete an online survey are in part dependent on the reliability, availability, and speed of the computer and Web connection of a potential respondent. Individuals with an unreliable and slow Internet connection would be expected to express lower intentions to complete an online survey. Inadequate equipment makes the survey longer, unpleasant, difficult, and
even impossible (e.g., Sheehan & Hoy, 2000; Dillman, 2000). This factor is similar to the available time factor discussed above. Namely, it acknowledges the importance of situational constraints on response intentions. This notion is consistent with previous research demonstrating the impact of situational impediments on individuals’ likelihood to help others (Anderson & Williams, 1996; Motowidlo et al., 1986).

Proposition 8. Perceptions of computer/Internet resources will be positively related to the intention to participate in a future online organizational survey.

Technology attitudes/confidence. This factor has two highly related components: (a) the degree to which individuals like using e-mail and the Internet and (b) their confidence in using e-mail and the Internet to do survey tasks. Compatible with research and theory on self-efficacy across a wide range of tasks and activities (Bandura, 1986, 1997), liking of and confidence in using the survey modality in question should influence a participant’s thought patterns and emotional reactions to the survey request at hand. Those who lack confidence and do not like using e-mail and the Internet are more likely to approach online surveys with feelings of anxiety and uncertainty and, hence, would be expected to be less willing to participate in an Internet survey if asked to avoid such feelings. Furthermore, research on technology acceptance has demonstrated how technology attitudes can systematically impact technology acceptance and usage (Davis, 1993; Davis & Venkatesh, 1996; Venkatesh, Morris, Davis, & Davis, 2003).

Proposition 9. Technology attitudes and confidence will be positively related to intentions to participate in a future online organizational survey.

A final factor that we added to the Rogelberg et al. (2000) model was an individual’s specific level of satisfaction toward the topic of the survey to be administered. In contrast to overall satisfaction with the organization and survey sponsor, this represents a more targeted satisfaction with the topic under study and would appear only relevant for a special topics survey as opposed to a more general organizational survey. For example, satisfaction with benefits may be a predictor of response behavior to a benefits survey but not an employee attitudes survey. We expect that those most negative toward the survey topic in question will express the greatest intention to participate in a future survey on set topic. This expectation is consistent with previous research on consumer complaint behavior (Kolodinsky, 1995). Consumers appear to be likely to voice complaints publicly and privately if they are dissatisfied with products they receive. Organizational stakeholders, such as employees or students, tend to have few opportunities to voice their opinions or dissatisfaction and are
therefore likely to view survey participation as an opportunity to voice dissatisfaction with the topic of the survey.

*Proposition 10. Satisfaction with the survey topic will be negatively related to intentions to participate in a future online organizational survey on that topic.*

Propositions 1 through 10 are concerned with predictors of the survey response intention. Understanding factors related to the response intention is in and of itself quite important. A response intention represents what someone believes they will do in the future, when a particular situation arises. In many regards, this intention represents idealized response behavior—behavior that would occur if situational constraints and other emergent factors were not at play. The predictors provide insight into the nature of this idealized response behavior.

The second part of the Rogelberg et al. (2000) model concerns the link of response intentions with actual response behavior. Consistent with the Theory of Reasoned Action (Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975) and meta-analytic research demonstrating that in a wide variety of settings, intentions are valid and reliable predictors of actual behavior (Sheppard, Hartwick, & Warshaw, 1988), Rogelberg et al. (2000) proposed a mediated model. Namely, response intentions, not the individual factors mentioned above, predict actual response behavior (to the extent that situational constraints such as losing the survey, forgetting the survey, having a crisis at work, or going on vacation do not materialize).

*Proposition 11. A response intention toward a future online organizational survey will relate positively to actual response to that survey.*

Taken together, this study attempts to provide insights into the factors underlying the survey participation decision and actual behavior that helps build/refine theory and has direct implications for practice.

**Methods**

**Participants and Procedure**

Students (394, 50% men, average age was 20 years) from several courses at a large state university in the midwest participated in the study. Researchers requested that instructors allow the first 10 minutes of their class time to administer a survey. This paper-based survey was not framed as an academic research project. Instead, it was framed as being part of an annual student satisfaction survey process performed by the university administration (the university regularly surveys its students). In fact, the research team partnered with the university’s Office of Institutional
Research (the survey group linked to the Office of the President) to conduct this research. The project was still reviewed and approved by the Institutional Review Board.

The survey was administered during class time, and a consent form was attached to the survey. Participants were told that their survey responses were confidential and that the final data set will contain no identifying information. Given the “captive” nature of our population, we achieved a 99% response rate. This group served as our population.

An e-mail address was obtained for each member of the population through university IT services. Approximately 2 weeks after the in-class population survey, an e-mail was sent to each member of the population requesting participation to a new survey. The e-mail contained a survey hyperlink connected to a URL that was unique to each recipient (in other words, we created a survey Web site for each member of the population). As a result, when our server recorded a response from a specific URL, we were able to clearly identify the respondent (and by extension who did not respond) and link this information back to the population data. Again, the follow-up survey was framed as being sponsored by the Office of Institutional Research and the e-mail invitation to participate in the survey was sent from an Office of Institutional Research account. Participants were led to believe that this survey was completely anonymous.

The follow-up survey assessed satisfaction with student parking on campus, a topic with considerable dissatisfaction at this particular university. This is analogous to the special topic surveys periodically administered by organizations geared toward evaluating and monitoring programs and initiatives (e.g., benefits, retirement system, new telephone system, new email system, etc.). To assure face validity, an existing university parking survey was modified for Internet use and edited to take no more than 15 minutes.

**Measures**

The in-class survey included the response intention predictors and the intention itself to complete a future parking survey to be conducted by the university. Unless specified otherwise, all survey items were answered on a 5-point scale ranging a value of 1 = *strongly disagree* to a value of 5 = *strongly agree*. Given that respondents completed a questionnaire during class time, efforts were made to restrict the number of items used (e.g., shortened versions of scales were used along with single-item indicators when appropriate). This was particularly relevant in that a large number of variables needed assessing.

*Individual traits.* A part of the Mini-Markers Big Five personality measure (Saucier, 1994) was administered to assess Conscientiousness
and Agreeableness. The Mini-Markers is a brief and validated version of Goldberg’s (1992) commonly used set of unipolar Big Five markers. Mini-Markers contains adjectives rated on 9-point scales ranging from extremely inaccurate to extremely accurate. Given that our hypotheses involved only Conscientiousness ($\alpha = .81$) and Agreeableness ($\alpha = .82$), other subscales on this measure were not administered (e.g., Neuroticism). Each subscale was assessed with eight adjectives.

**Attitudes toward surveys.** Four items (slightly adapted for this study’s survey context) from Rogelberg et al. (2001) attitudes toward survey scale were used. This scale assesses two dimensions: attitudes toward the value of surveys (two items; $\alpha = .70$; e.g., “Universities can benefit from student satisfaction surveys”) and attitudes toward the actual act of filling out the survey (two items; $\alpha = .92$; e.g., “I like filling out student satisfaction surveys”).

**Anonymity.** A general anonymity perception was assessed via two items ($\alpha = .75$): “I feel Internet surveys hosted by the university would be completely anonymous”; “I feel the process of submitting answers to Internet surveys is generally safe and secure.”

**Data usage.** Three items (slightly adapted for this study’s survey context) from Rogelberg et al. (2003) measure of this construct were used to assess participant perceptions on how surveys are used at the particular organization; for example, “I think (the university) uses results of student satisfaction surveys to increase student satisfaction; (the university) makes good use of student survey information” ($\alpha = .87$).

**Organizational commitment.** The three items used to assess organizational commitment represented a subset of Allen and Meyer (1990) affective commitment subscale (e.g., “I feel emotionally attached to the university”).

**Intent to quit.** Three items assessing intentions to quit (Parra, 1995) were used (e.g., “I would like to leave the university”). The observed $\alpha$ was .75.

**Satisfaction with survey sponsor.** Four items assessed satisfaction with the survey sponsor ($\alpha = .71$). Items (e.g., satisfaction with university administration) were answered on a 5-point scale ranging from very dissatisfied to very satisfied.

**Available time to use Internet and e-mail.** Participants indicated their agreement/disagreement to two statements: “I have time to spend on the Internet on an average day” and “I have time to spend using e-mail on an average day.” The observed $\alpha$ was .85.

**Organizational survey response norms.** Three items ($\alpha = .82$) were used to measure organizational norms pertaining to survey response (e.g., “my friends think that students should, if asked, complete satisfaction surveys for the university”).
Computer/Internet resources. Five items were used to assess computer/Internet reliability, availability, and speed of the computer principally used by the participant (e.g., “the Internet connection I use most is fast”; “the computer I use most is readily available to me”). An average score was computed across the five items ($\alpha = .80$).

Technology confidence. Confidence doing online survey tasks was assessed via two items ($\alpha = .68$): “I am confident in my ability to complete an Internet survey” and “From my e-mail account, I am comfortable accessing Web sites through hyperlinks.” These items were adapted from Eastin and LaRose (2000) who proposed and validated an Internet self-efficacy scale.

Technology attitudes. This variable was assessed via two items ($\alpha = .73$): “I like using e-mail” and “I like navigating the Internet.”

Satisfaction with the survey topic in question (parking satisfaction). Because the follow-up survey was on parking, an item assessing satisfaction with parking was used. It was answered on a 5-point scale ranging from very dissatisfied to very satisfied.

Response intention. The behavioral intention item for the present study was developed according to the strategy described by Ajzen and Fishbein (1980); intentions items should contain time frame and information about the behaviors’ context. Accordingly, information pertaining to the parking survey’s length, how administered, how accessed, and so on was provided. Response intentions for the parking survey were generated using a four-point scale (1 = definitely would not complete Internet survey to 4 = definitely would complete Internet survey). Our response intentions item was designed and positioned to minimize potential method biases in that it was formatted differently than any of the predictors and the response choices were qualitatively different (they were behavioral) from any of the other predictors. Furthermore, cognitively, it was a different type of response task than the other survey items in that the participants read a detailed situation and responded to that specific situation in a very specific manner rather than just indicating a general attitude.

Results

Table 1 displays the descriptive statistics and intercorrelations among all the predictors, response intentions, and response behavior.

Response Intention

Participants were positively inclined, on average, to respond to the parking survey in question ($M = 3.22$ out of 4). However, there was considerable variance ($SD = .92$). As seen in Table 1, response intention
TABLE 1
Descriptive Statistics and Intercorrelation Matrix

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<tr>
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<th>M (SD)</th>
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<th>14</th>
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<th>17</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Survey response</td>
<td>19%</td>
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<td>1</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Survey intent</td>
<td>3.22 (1.92)</td>
<td>.14*</td>
<td>1.0</td>
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<tr>
<td>3. Satisfaction with parking</td>
<td>1.78 (1.02)</td>
<td>−.05</td>
<td>−.18*</td>
<td>1.0</td>
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<tr>
<td>4. Agreeableness</td>
<td>7.21 (1.13)</td>
<td>−.02</td>
<td>.11*</td>
<td>−.05</td>
<td>1.0</td>
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<tr>
<td>5. Conscientiousness</td>
<td>6.83 (1.14)</td>
<td>−.09</td>
<td>.07</td>
<td>−.01</td>
<td>.44*</td>
<td>1.0</td>
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<tr>
<td>6. Value of surveys</td>
<td>3.95 (.75)</td>
<td>.13*</td>
<td>.28*</td>
<td>.00</td>
<td>.15*</td>
<td>.11*</td>
<td>1.0</td>
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<tr>
<td>7. Like filling out surveys</td>
<td>2.53 (1.03)</td>
<td>.13*</td>
<td>.24*</td>
<td>.15*</td>
<td>.09</td>
<td>.03</td>
<td>.41*</td>
<td>1.0</td>
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<tr>
<td>8. Survey anonymity</td>
<td>3.55 (.86)</td>
<td>.01</td>
<td>.26*</td>
<td>.01</td>
<td>.09</td>
<td>.12*</td>
<td>.36*</td>
<td>.19*</td>
<td>1.0</td>
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<tr>
<td>9. Good use of surveys</td>
<td>2.85 (.77)</td>
<td>.03</td>
<td>.06</td>
<td>.27*</td>
<td>−.02</td>
<td>.05</td>
<td>.24*</td>
<td>.30*</td>
<td>.22*</td>
<td>1.0</td>
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<tr>
<td>10. Org commitment</td>
<td>3.09 (.84)</td>
<td>−.03</td>
<td>.06</td>
<td>.12*</td>
<td>.19*</td>
<td>.16*</td>
<td>.29*</td>
<td>.28*</td>
<td>.23*</td>
<td>.25*</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>11. Intent to leave</td>
<td>2.19 (.87)</td>
<td>.01</td>
<td>−.06</td>
<td>.02</td>
<td>−.18*</td>
<td>−.15*</td>
<td>−.16*</td>
<td>−.09</td>
<td>−.19*</td>
<td>−.10</td>
<td>−.30*</td>
<td>1.0</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. Satisfaction with survey sponsor</td>
<td>3.47 (.60)</td>
<td>.10</td>
<td>.07</td>
<td>.20*</td>
<td>.19*</td>
<td>.11*</td>
<td>.27*</td>
<td>.24*</td>
<td>.24*</td>
<td>.41*</td>
<td>.43*</td>
<td>−.13*</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. Free time for Internet use</td>
<td>3.80 (.95)</td>
<td>.06</td>
<td>.13*</td>
<td>−.04</td>
<td>.10</td>
<td>.08</td>
<td>.21*</td>
<td>.12*</td>
<td>.20*</td>
<td>.15*</td>
<td>.24*</td>
<td>−.14*</td>
<td>.14*</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. Survey completion norms</td>
<td>3.22 (.75)</td>
<td>.12*</td>
<td>.26*</td>
<td>.12*</td>
<td>.16*</td>
<td>.07</td>
<td>.51*</td>
<td>.50*</td>
<td>.29*</td>
<td>.41*</td>
<td>.30*</td>
<td>−.16*</td>
<td>.30*</td>
<td>.15*</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. Computer resources</td>
<td>3.94 (.69)</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td>.11*</td>
<td>−.02</td>
<td>.08</td>
<td>.20*</td>
<td>.29*</td>
<td>.13*</td>
<td>.34*</td>
<td>.15*</td>
<td>.20*</td>
<td>−.17*</td>
<td>.25*</td>
<td>.35*</td>
<td>.15*</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16. Tech confidence</td>
<td>4.18 (.77)</td>
<td>.06</td>
<td>.18*</td>
<td>.02</td>
<td>.06</td>
<td>.14*</td>
<td>.30*</td>
<td>.22*</td>
<td>.30*</td>
<td>.10</td>
<td>.10</td>
<td>−.06</td>
<td>.12*</td>
<td>.39*</td>
<td>.20*</td>
<td>.36*</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17. Tech liking</td>
<td>4.15 (.79)</td>
<td>.10*</td>
<td>.18*</td>
<td>−.01</td>
<td>.02</td>
<td>.18*</td>
<td>.23*</td>
<td>.19*</td>
<td>.24*</td>
<td>.06</td>
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<td>.03</td>
<td>.55*</td>
<td>.18*</td>
<td>.35*</td>
<td>.57*</td>
<td>1.0</td>
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</tbody>
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*Note. Significant correlation (p < .05) indicated by *. 
was significantly \((p < .05)\) correlated (in the hypothesized direction) with Agreeableness, attitudes toward the value of surveys in general, attitudes toward filling out surveys in general, perceptions of online survey anonymity, free time for the Internet and e-mail, perceived survey response norms, parking satisfaction, computer/technology resources, technology confidence, and technology attitudes. Contrary to expectations, response intentions were not related to Conscientiousness, satisfaction with the survey sponsor, perceptions of how the university has used survey data in the past, organizational commitment, and intention to leave the university. It should also be noted that women possessed greater response intentions than men \((t = 2.27, p < .05)\).

In examining the significant predictors, there is conceptual similarity among a number of them as well as some meaningful intercorrelations. Given this, we next examined how the significant correlates of response intention could be reduced into coherent subsets of predictors. Principal components analyses, reliability analyses, and a Q-sort suggested the existence of four relatively orthogonal predictors of response intention: (a) Agreeableness; (b) an attitudes toward surveys in general composite (composed of attitudes toward the value of surveys, attitudes toward filling out surveys, and perceptions of survey completion norms); (c) a technology resources/favorability composite (composed of perceptions of Internet anonymity, free time for Internet/e-mail activities, computer/technology resources, technology confidence, and technology attitudes); and (d) parking satisfaction. Response intention was regressed simultaneously on these four predictors. All but Agreeableness emerged with a significant beta weight \((p < .05)\). For the sake of parsimony, the model was rerun removing Agreeableness. The final response intention model using the three robust predictors can be found in Table 2. Overall, we found that parking satisfaction, the attitudes toward surveys in general composite, and technology resources/favorability composite were robustly related to parking survey response intention \((R^2 = .17, \text{adj } R^2 = .16)\). After controlling for gender, each predictor remained significant (the beta weight associated with gender itself was not significant, \(p > .05)\).

**Survey Completion**

There were 75 respondents (19%) and 316 nonrespondents (81%) to the parking survey. Women responded more readily than men \((t = 2.39, p < .05)\). In examining Table 1, as hypothesized, response intention was related to survey completion. Surprisingly, additional factors were also correlated with survey completion. They were technology attitudes, attitudes toward the value of surveys, attitudes toward filling out surveys, and perceived
survey response norms. We tested each of these factors independently to determine if their relationship with survey completion was mediated by response intention. To do so, a series of logistic regression analyses was conducted. After controlling for gender and response intention, each predictor’s previously significant relationship to survey completion washed out (e.g., the Wald statistic was no longer significant; \( p > .05 \)). Importantly, in each of these analyses, response intention remained a significant predictor of survey completion; this suggests, consistent with the Rogelberg et al. model (2000), that response intention served as a mediating variable. The final model composed of both gender (Wald = 4.19, \( p = .04 \)) and response intention (\( B = .56, \text{ Wald} = 6.39, \ p = .01 \)) accounted for a fairly meaningful amount of variance in survey completion (Nagelkerke \( R^2 = .056 \)).

**Discussion**

In this study we sought to better understand response intentions and response behavior to an online special topics university satisfaction survey. Using the Rogelberg et al. (2000) model, our data supported most of the framework’s major assertions, supported our proposed extensions, and resulted in a few unexpected findings. Intentions to complete a future survey were related to attitudes toward the value of surveys, attitudes toward filling out surveys, perceptions of online survey anonymity, available free time to use computers and Internet, perceived survey response norms, dissatisfaction with the follow-up surveys’ topic, technological resources, technology confidence, technology attitudes, and perceived organizational norms pertaining to survey response. Response intentions, in turn, were related to response behavior as proposed. It served as the mediating variable.
Figure 1 summarizes the above findings—for the sake of parsimony we use the broader constructs to represent the overlapping individual predictors. Overall, to understand response behavior to an online special topics organizational survey, one must take into consideration factors related to technology, attitudes toward surveys in general, satisfaction with the topic in question, and response intentions.

Contrary to our hypotheses and the model itself, Conscientiousness was not related to response intentions and the observed relationship between Agreeableness and response intentions washed out after accounting for other significant predictors in the regression analysis. Our null findings may be due in part to the follow-up survey modality. As mentioned earlier, previously detected effects of Conscientiousness and Agreeableness on response intentions and behavior were found for paper-based follow-up surveys (Rogelberg et al., 2003). Paper-based surveys require a sequence of diligent behaviors for survey completion and return (e.g., get mail, open mail, put survey in location you will remember it, remember to do it, fill out survey, remember to take survey to post office or mailbox, mail survey). In contrast, online survey completion requires less work (e.g., the survey is residing in your inbox; to return it you just click on “submit”), and therefore, Conscientiousness may not factor into response behavior for this modality type. Most likely, however, for both Agreeableness and Conscientiousness, it may simply be the case that predicting a specific behavior at a specific time using a general trait indicator is unlikely. This is consistent with evidence that personality best predicts aggregated behavior—behavioral
tendencies over time (Heggestad, 2006). Consequently, although Agreeableness and to a lesser extent Conscientiousness may be useful predictors of survey response behavior, their effect can only be determined by tracking participant response patterns over an extended period of time.

We also found that satisfaction with the survey sponsor, perceptions of how the university has used survey data in the past, organizational commitment, and intention to leave the university were not related to response intentions or response behavior. This is generally consistent with literature that emerged after the model was proposed. Namely, Rogelberg et al. (2003) created attitudinal profiles of nonrespondents (passive and active) and of respondents. Overall, they did not find respondents to differ from nonrespondents on these dimensions. They speculated that this was due to the fact that most nonresponse is not driven by dissatisfaction with the survey sponsor. In fact, dissatisfaction with the sponsor is only relevant for understanding the small minority of nonrespondents who are active (purposeful nonresponse upon the initial receipt of the survey) in their nonresponse. With regard to the particular variable concerning how survey data were used in the past, we suggest that future research may benefit from a more targeted and specific assessment of this construct (e.g., how were the data used on past special topics surveys administered by this sponsor). Namely, over the course of a year or two, employees may receive surveys from multiple sponsors. Sponsors may vary dramatically on what they communicated and how they acted on the survey data, in which case an overall assessment of a survey action track record will be potentially misleading and inconclusive.

Roughly 6% of variance in survey response behavior was accounted for by the extended version of Rogelberg et al.’s (2000) survey response behavior model, and nearly 20% of the variance in response intentions was accounted for. Although these effect sizes are notable, they are probably conservative estimates of the magnitude of our findings due to a restriction in range (most participants were nonrespondents). In addition, our dependent measures were assessed with either a single item (response intentions) or a single occurrence (response behavior).

The use of the single item to assess response intentions was deemed necessary for two reasons. First, the use of a single item helps guard against overly sensitizing and cueing the respondent to the assessment, thus potentially allaying demand characteristics and sense making associated with same-source measurement of predictors and criterion indices. Second, given that the survey was administered during a classroom period, survey time, and therefore survey space, was at a premium. Despite these advantages, we speculate that a more fleshed out index of survey response intentions would decrease error variance (increased reliability) and further promote the predictive power of the model (increase effect sizes).
As for response behavior, as noted, we relied on a single occurrence of the behavior. Given this, we would suggest that variance accounted for was quite impressive. Namely, our study predicts a very specific behavior using general traits and attitudes that are designed to predict broad categories of behavioral responses over time. As a result, moderate or large effect sizes are extremely difficult to obtain despite the importance of the predictors. This is similar to what is found in the turnover literature. Dozens of demographic variables, work attitudes, intentions/cognitions related to quitting, and job search activities have been examined as predictors of turnover. Meta-analysis results reveal modest effects. In absolute terms, very few relationships exceed .30 and most are less than .20. This in no way diminishes the importance of these predictors; it just reinforces the difficulty of predicting a specific incidence of behavior. Therefore, despite the fact that we assessed survey response behavior objectively and at a different time from our predictors, future research examining aggregated survey behavior across multiple surveys would be expected to maximize the predictive power of the model. Ideally, the surveys would contain a mixture of special topics surveys (as was studied here) and general opinion surveys (this would allow us to determine whether are findings extend to this survey type).

Given time and space constraints, we did not assess all key indicators within each dimension of the Rogelberg et al. model. A notable target for future research concerns survey-specific impressions, namely assessing participants’ general interest in the survey topic itself. The supposition is that greater interest in the topic would lead to greater intentions to participate (e.g., Groves, Presser, & Dipko, 2004). An additional variable that needs further exploration concerns anonymity perceptions. Although we did find evidence of the importance of this factor in understanding response intentions, future work needs to delineate perceptions of confidentiality (survey researchers know who respondents are but won’t reveal that information) from perceptions of anonymity (survey researchers don’t know who respondents are). Do these two facets, which are often grouped together in extant work, differentially relate to survey response intentions and behavior? In a related manner, can respondents themselves differentiate the two concepts and articulate their perceptions of the importance of each? Furthermore, as many organizations move to an online modality, they can often track who does not respond to a survey. This lends itself to two important research initiatives: (a) under what circumstances do participants expect retribution for not responding to a survey? and (b) how does this perception of retribution factor into their response decision and the quantity and quality of data provided? Finally, future work would also benefit from the more thorough examination of situational constraints (e.g., available time, conflicting demands, and the receipt of multiple surveys).
on survey response behavior—assessed as close as possible or during the survey return window.

This study investigated the survey response behaviors of students. Although students are significant organizational stakeholders, their relationships with universities are likely to differ from the relationships of employees with organizations. For instance, they usually are not closely supervised or paid. At the same time, student samples do have some similarities with a more typical employee sample. Like employees, students appear to have exchange relationships (LaMastro, 2001), students’ opinions are highly relevant for the development of organizational policies in university settings, students quit (leave the university) when highly dissatisfied, students rely on and work readily with their colleagues, and students often form a close connection with and well-formed opinion of the survey sponsor. Although future work examining the response model with other organizational populations is warranted, it is noteworthy that the findings in the study are indeed consistent with related past research on response and nonresponse. For example, our findings demonstrating that women returned the follow-up survey more readily than men are consistent with work by Gannon, Northern, and Carroll (1971), among others.

Overall, the Rogelberg et al. (2000) model, with the proposed extensions, appears to be a viable model for the prediction of survey response intentions and response behavior. As such, it has a number of more obvious and subtle implications for the practice of organizational science. First, to promote online survey response, organizations must assure that potential respondents have appropriate and working technological resources. If such resources are not available, or employees are not comfortable using them, alternative modalities should be made available to prospective respondents. Given research that generally demonstrates online and paper survey equivalence (see Stanton & Rogelberg, 2000 for a review), there appears to be little substantive downside (other than pragmatic issues) to this effort.

Attitudes toward surveys in general appear to be an important factor in understanding survey response. These data, along with past research showing that these attitudes relate to response quality (Rogelberg, et al. 2001), suggest that employee attitudes toward surveys need monitoring and managing. Rogelberg et al. (2001) suggest that a key way of doing this is by preventing oversurveying. Some organizations do this by creating an internal registry or consulting group that coordinates all organizational survey activities. This group evaluates the need to actually conduct the survey, determines when it should be administered given time sensitivity and the present queue of surveys, and assures survey quality (e.g., well-constructed, clear items; manageable length, etc.). Finally, after the survey is completed, it is generally critical to “close the loop” with
respondents. One way in which this can be accomplished is by providing general feedback regarding the survey findings. This type of communication, especially if it addresses how the data are being acted upon, may serve to actually reinforce the act of survey participation for the employee and, with it, attitudes toward surveys.

This study provides insight into nonresponse bias. Nonresponse bias occurs when the respondent data sample is not representative of the population on survey relevant dimensions (Rogelberg & Luong, 1998). For organizational surveys, the survey-relevant dimensions typically concern attitudes toward the organization and management. Data from this study, consistent with other research (e.g., Rogelberg et al., 2003), suggest that whereas respondents and nonrespondents differ on certain factors, most are not organization- and management-focused and therefore not apt to create bias for most survey purposes. Importantly, we did find that satisfaction with the focal topic of the special topics survey was indeed related to survey response. This certainly raises concern over the representativeness of the data collected in special topics surveys. However, from a practical significance perspective, this predictor accounted for just a little variance in response intentions (and not actual behavior)—probably not enough to substantively concern an organizational survey researcher.

REFERENCES


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