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DOC 2014-02 Proposal for a New Student Evaluation of Teaching Instrument and Delivery Method

University of Dayton. Academic Policies Committee

University of Dayton. Faculty Affairs Committee

University of Dayton. Student Academic Policies Committee

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Proposal to the Academic Senate

Title: Proposal for a New Student Evaluation of Teaching Instrument and Delivery Method

Submitted by: Academic Policies Committee, Faculty Affairs Committee, and Student Academic Policies Committee

Date: Approved February 14, 2014

Action: Legislative Authority

Reference: Constitution of the Academic Senate, Art. II. B. 1

Proposed that the current student evaluation of teaching instrument be replaced with a new student teaching evaluation (SET) instrument, as supported in this document. This proposal has been developed in collaboration with each Senate committee and the SET committee.

Background:

In 2012, the Academic Senate voted to accept document 2012-03: *Recommendations for Revision to the Process for Student Evaluation of Teaching*. Upon approval of this document and according to its recommendations, a SET committee was established in April 2012 and began their work in May 2012. The SET committee provided regular reports and updates to the Senate and Provost during each subsequent term through Fall 2013 (see appendices). In September 2013 the Executive Council for the Academic Senate assigned specific questions to each of the Academic Senate committees to address issues of SET that needed to be resolved which were beyond the SET committee's responsibilities, including SET administration, policy, privacy, and whether or not the proposed new instrument should be adopted. Representatives from each of the Senate committees reported their findings to the full Senate in December 2013, and collaborated to create this SET proposal.

Administrative Recommendations:

1. The new SET instrument should be delivered online.

Rationale: The advantage of the online delivery is that students have a larger window to complete the survey, which may help some students to formulate thoughtful responses to the open-ended questions.

Some faculty may wish to set aside class time to complete the survey in order to maximize the response rate. Should faculty decide to use class time for SET, they should, as in current practice, not be present in the room when students are completing the survey.

2. The SET survey will be made available to students ten calendar days prior to the last day of classes each semester. The survey will be closed to student access on the last day of classes for that semester. Where appropriate, department chairs may request a variation of SET open dates to match the delivery of specific courses.

Rationale: The completion window for SET needs to close on the last day of classes rather than on the last day of finals because Banner will allow students to see their final grades as soon as they are entered. Closing student access on the last day of class will avoid the clear conflict that such a process would create—students possibly waiting to see their final grade before completing the SET survey. Further rationale is provided in DOC 2012-03 and the August 2013 SET committee report.

3. Incentives will not be used to enhance response rate.

Rationale: Based on the pilot data, it is believed that incentives to improve response rates are not necessary at this time. Response rates will be monitored by Deans and Department chairs and considered again if the response rate across the University falls below an acceptable standard.

4. The new SET instrument proposed by the SET committee should be adopted.

Rationale: The survey developed by the SET committee has been assessed for validity and reliability, has been vetted by leading experts in the field of student evaluation of teaching, and it represents a considerable advance over the current instrument. While individual units or departments may add questions, the 8 closed and 4 open questions will be kept as written since these questions have been derived from analysis of the research and a pilot process. Further background and rationale is provided in August 2013 SET committee report.

The following instructions will be provided to students and viewed before the student can access the SET survey. During the initial launch of the new SET, instructions will be provided in optional multi-modal formats.

Dear [student name],

The University of Dayton is committed to developing and maintaining excellence in teaching. Your anonymous feedback regarding instruction is an essential part of this process. Results of these evaluations are reviewed by instructors, department chairs, and other administrators. Instructors use the feedback to improve their teaching, and administrators use it as one source of information for merit, retention, promotion, tenure, and other administrative decisions. Your candid, respectful opinions and constructive suggestions have an impact.

Please complete the following evaluation which contains items with both numerical ratings and open ended questions. While we hope you will answer all questions, your responses will be included in the instructor's feedback even if some items are not completed.

We remain committed to ensuring your privacy. For ~~the~~ online surveys, we require that you log in before submitting your responses. Logging in is used strictly for two purposes:

- 1) To ensure you are responding to the right class survey.
- 2) To ensure that your response is recorded only once.

The University deletes the identifying information from the survey database after the completion of the survey collection period. Once this information is deleted it is impossible to connect a response or comment to any student. Prior to deletion, the identifying information is handled with the same security standards and safeguards as other confidential student information.

The LTC reports the *anonymous* aggregate data and comments to the academic departments and individual instructors 24 hours after the final grade entry is closed. Academic departments and instructors never have access to any identifying information.

We sincerely thank you for your time and effort in this important process.

Core items, with space for optional student comments below each item:

- 1) The instructor seemed organized.
- 2) I knew what I was expected to accomplish in this course.
- 3) The instructor presented the subject matter clearly.
- 4) The instructor created an environment that supported my learning.
- 5) The instructor demonstrated a genuine interest in my success.
- 6) The feedback I received from the instructor improved my learning.
- 7) This course stimulated my interest in the subject.
- 8) This course increased my understanding of the subject.

Open-ended questions:

- 1) If you could take the course over again, is there anything YOU could have done differently in your role AS A STUDENT to improve your learning?
- 2) What aspects of this course did you find MOST EFFECTIVE in helping you to learn?
- 3) What aspects of this course did you find LEAST EFFECTIVE in helping you to learn, and how do you suggest they should be changed?

- 4) Please provide any additional comments you may have.
5. The Learning Teaching Center (LTC), under the leadership of the Associate Provost for Academic Affairs and Learning Initiatives, will provide administrative support, to include:
 - a) Creating specific guidelines for the administration of SET.
 - b) Providing a central location for student, faculty, and administrators to seek assistance regarding the SET.
 - c) Providing faculty and administrators assistance for the use and interpretation of SET data for both formative and summative purposes.
 - d) Providing faculty assistance for the formative development of teaching through resources directly linked to the SET instrument's items.
 - e) Providing leadership in coordinating with Udit and academic units and departments the online delivery of SET.
 - f) Assurance of appropriate anonymity of SET results.

Implementation:

1. SET results will be made available to the individual faculty member, his or her department chair, his or her dean, and other administrators (e.g. provost, LTC staff) who need such information as part of their job functions. This report will be made available 24 hours after the grading window has closed. The Instructor SET report will be made available for T&P and merit review purposes based upon Unit/Department approved policy, procedures, and bylaws.
2. Unit and Department policies, procedures, and bylaws will be utilized to address how the scores and written responses will be reported and used.
3. A two-year phase-in period will be used whereby all faculty will use the new SET instrument in addition to a small selected number of items from the previous SET which are typically used for evaluative purposes (these items could vary per unit, but should not exceed 8 additional items). All faculty will use the new SET upon unit roll out. The previous SET items will be deleted from the new SET instrument after a two-year phase-in period. Until the two-year phase-in period is completed, no customized SET items may be used per unit or department.

Rationale: The inclusion of select items from the previous SET during a two-year phase-in period will allow faculty to continue to compile comparative data on items used for administrative review of teaching, while establishing a new evaluation record and comparison trends using the new online SET.

4. The Academic Senate will review all aspects of the SET after the completion of the two-year phase-in period for all units. Thereafter, the Associate Provost for Academic Affairs and Learning Initiatives will initiate a review of the SET in conjunction with the Academic Senate, which shall be held at least every three years.
5. Review Academic Senate documents and the Faculty Handbook to ensure that policy and procedures in SET administration are consistent.

Note:

DOC 2004-08 – *Use of Student Evaluations in Judging Teaching Effectiveness* still remains valid.

http://ecommons.udayton.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1036&context=senate_docs

Reference:

Senate Document 2012-03: *Recommendations for Revision to the Process for Student Evaluation of Teaching*.

http://ecommons.udayton.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1201&context=senate_docs

Appendices

Student Evaluation of Teaching (SET) Committee: Final Report to the Academic Senate (August 22, 2013) (to be attached)

Student Evaluation of Teaching (SET) Committee: Addendum to the August 22, 2013 report (additional information provided to standing committees during SET discussions in Fall 2013) (to be attached)