

Ad Hoc Committee on Faculty Evaluation  
End of the Year Report to Faculty Senate

May 7, 2015

Charge:

The ad hoc committee needs to reconvene with the primary charge to work with the Center for Extended Learning office to have the revised student evaluations available online for a trial-run for summer classes, with full implementation taking place in the Fall 2015 semester. The committee is asked to develop consensus about the best way to insure a high percentage of participation online. In addition, the committee is asked to investigate current best practices for evaluation of teaching at the university level.

Background

The Ad Hoc Committee on Faculty Evaluation was first charged in the fall of 2013 and given the primary purpose of creating a new student evaluation form for MSU courses. The committee presented a new form (the Student Perceptions of Learning form) to Faculty Senate in the spring of 2014 following a pilot that established the form as a sound measure of student perceptions of learning. Faculty Senate approved the form at that time. The committee had also considered the issue of electronic delivery of the forms but recommended not moving in that direction until we had established multiple ways of evaluating teaching on campus due to the likely reduction in quantity and possibly quality of responses on the survey. During the summer and fall the administration made a decision to move ahead with electronic delivery of the surveys citing a cost of \$14,600.69 for new scantrons. The Ad Hoc committee was given the above-mentioned charge by the Faculty Senate Executive committee in January of 2015.

Recommendations

1. Approve the policies and procedures as outlined in the document "MSU Policies and Procedures for Electronic delivery of the Student Perceptions of Learning form"
2. Approve the "Course Evaluation Timeline and Process" document
3. Approve the document "Response Rates and Electronic Evaluations"
4. When the full fledged pilot occurs in the fall of 2015, the Ad Hoc committee should collect data on the technology needed to conduct the electronic evaluations in class with available devices and make recommendations regarding the need (or not) to invest in additional devices for that purpose
5. Do not dismiss the Ad Hoc Committee until next year, which will enable the committee to start work immediately in the fall on the second half of our charge without waiting for re-activation

## MSU Policies and Practices for Electronic Student Evaluations

- I. Relevant Background: Article IV, Section 1, Bylaws of the Faculty Senate
  - a. The purpose of evaluation at Minot State University shall be to foster continuous improvement. The University holds that two particular responsibilities lie at the heart of any effective faculty evaluation system:
    - i. The responsibility of every faculty member to seek continuous self-improvement.
    - ii. The responsibility of evaluators to methodically accumulate information that permits intelligent and objective judgment concerning a faculty member's performance in the areas of teaching, service, and research, with respect to goals set by the faculty member, the department/division, the college, and the University.

Evaluation is thus conceived, above all, as a constructive, collegial process involving all members of the academic community.

- b. Objectives of the Evaluation Process
    - i. To provide each faculty member with information for the purpose of continuous professional improvement.
    - ii. To provide the University with consistent, relevant, and objective information for the purposes of: 1) assessing continuous improvement; and 2) informing the processes of reappointment, promotion, tenure, and merit recognition.

## II. Policies

- a. All courses taught by a faculty member, including those taught by adjuncts, will be evaluated by students enrolled in the respective class using the Student Perception of Learning form, delivered electronically using the MSU Class Climate Assessment tool. The following courses are excluded from that requirement:
  - i. Courses involving individual instruction such as independent study, internship, and practicums, or thesis supervision;
  - ii. Courses or class sections involving types of instruction that occur outside of the traditional classroom and/or laboratory setting for which the assessment questions would not be appropriate;
- b. For multiple instructor courses each instructor's work must be evaluated separately. Otherwise, unless the course falls under one of the excluded areas above, it will be evaluated.
- c. The Student Perceptions of Learning form will be used for all student evaluations, with slightly different wording for online courses.
- d. The electronic Student Perceptions of Learning form will include the directions approved by Faculty Senate in Spring of 2014.

- e. Each respective faculty member will be emailed a summarized PDF report for each of her/his evaluated course(s). The summary will include a basic outline with the average, standard deviation, response rate for each question, as well as a verbatim write up of any comments appearing in the write-in portions of the evaluation.
- f. Summarized PDF reports will not be sent to departmental chairs and Deans. Instead, it will be the responsibility of the faculty member to comply with college policy and procedures and forward the results required within that college to the chair of the department and the Dean of the college.
- g. No data and/or information acquired as part of the Student Perceptions of Learning evaluation may be released to anyone other than the faculty member without the express approval of that faculty member except in instances in which that data is related to an open records request.

### III. Administrative Procedures

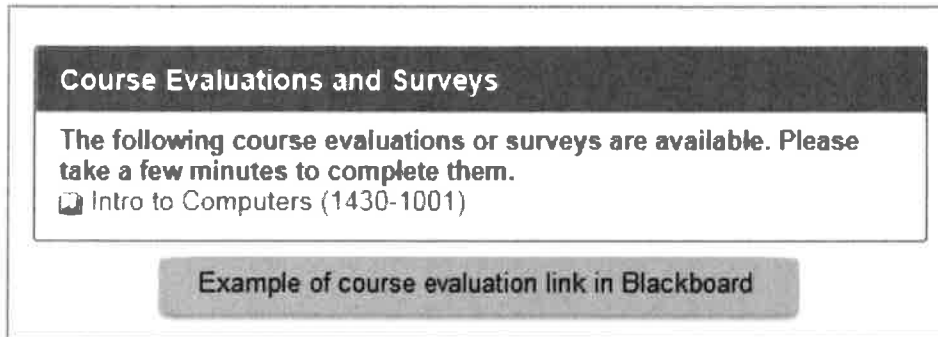
- a. There will be standardized dates utilized for the initial setup of electronic delivery of the Student Perception of Learning forms. Those dates will be:
  - i. Opening Dates: Student Perceptions of Learning forms will be made available to students two weeks in advance of the last day of classes. Courses utilizing a non-standard calendar will have opening dates based on a ratio of approximately two weeks prior to the last day of classes.
  - ii. Closing Dates: Evaluations will close on the Sunday following the last day of class, just prior to finals. In summer session, for which there are three dates for grade postings, the closing date will correspond to the closest Sunday before grades are due for the course.
  - iii. Faculty Result Availability Date: One week after grades are due, results will be emailed to faculty members for all courses
- b. The most effective way to assure high response rates in electronic delivery of the Student Perceptions of Learning form, is to provide the opportunity for students to complete the evaluation in class at a time scheduled in the syllabus in advance.
  - i. If a faculty member chooses to provide class time for students to complete the evaluation using laptops or other electronic devices the evaluation is to be administered during a class session in which no examination is scheduled and during which the students are given sufficient time (no fewer than 15 minutes) for completion of the electronic form. **The instructor is not to be present while the evaluation is being administered.**
  - ii. Institutional support will be provided in the form of access to laptops or other appropriate devices when computer labs are not available or accessible for those faculty wanting to administer the survey electronically in class.

## II. Incentives for Response Rates

- a. Clearly, higher response rates will increase the validity and reliability of electronic evaluations, thereby providing faculty with better feedback from students. Research suggests that electronic evaluations have been associated with lower response rates and care should be taken to address response rates; however, response rates themselves will in no way be admissible data for annual evaluations, tenure, or promotion. In addition, incentives for completion have unknown consequences and therefore should be carefully considered. More specifically:
  - i. Faculty will not have the ability to know which students completed or did not complete their course evaluations. Response rate notification will be sent the final week of classes.
  - ii. Only incentives administered at the institutional level are allowable and these incentives may not be related to individual courses or course grades.

## Course Evaluation Process and Timeline

- Three weeks before the last day of classes, an announcement will be placed in Student Announcements explaining the importance of the upcoming evaluations.
- Two weeks before the last day of classes, students will be sent an invitation to complete evaluations. This email will be sent to their MSU email and a link made available in Blackboard.



- These emails will be combined into one email for each evaluation form: campus evaluation form and online evaluation form.
- An announcement that evaluations are now available for students will be placed in Public Information so faculty are aware.
- Faculty members should make an announcement during class or within their online course that evaluations are available and that it is important to provide feedback.
- Faculty members wishing to conduct the electronic survey in class will notify the IT department of required resources (number of students who do not have phones with which to complete the evaluations) at the beginning of the semester to enable IT to plan.
- Students will be sent reminders twice during the final week of classes.
- Response Rate Notifications will be sent to instructors the final week of classes.
- Course evaluations will remain open to students until the Sunday following the last day of classes for the semester.
- One week after grades are due, evaluation results will be emailed to faculty members who will then forward the required evaluations to the departmental chair and College Dean.
- Timelines for Eight Week sessions and dynamic dated courses will be shortened.
- Evaluations are completely anonymous and responses cannot be tied back to individual students.

## Electronic Course Evaluation Increasing Response Rates

Minot State University has moved all course evaluation (online and on campus) to an electronic delivery format. A successful implementation of the electronic Student Perceptions of Learning form requires engagement and participation by all parties. Response rates and quality of outcomes can be improved. Below is a synopsis of the recommendations for increasing response rates:

### Campus-wide Strategies:

- Advertise the importance of course evaluations
  - Electronic Message boards
  - Blackboard
  - Computer lab screens
  - Signage
  - Student Information Postings
  - Red & Green
  - Email messages from university administration
- Automatic email reminders sent to students who have yet to complete evaluations
- Create a Pop-up window within PeopleSoft/Blackboard when student login reminding them to complete course evaluations
- Create a logo to appear on college's homepage during evaluation period
- Scrolling announcement on college homepage and/or other college webpages
- Post announcement on Facebook/Instagram (any social networking website) during the main evaluation period from student's society/clubs to campus page
- Create a webpage dedicated to information on Course Evaluations, to include: a sample of the evaluation and instructions for both students and faculty.

### Chairs, Deans, Administration:

- Department chairs should communicate the value of course evaluations to all their faculty members
- Departments can post a message on their website and/or office bulletin
- Administration should ensure adequate technological resources to enable any faculty member who desires to administer the evaluations in class using the electronic survey the ability to do so without denying access, in the class, to any student without adequate technology.

### Faculty:

- Articulate to students the value of course evaluations and explain how the data supplied are used by faculty, the department, and the institution overall.
- Invite students to bring computers/smartphones to complete the evaluation during class
- Reserve a computer lab during the evaluation period for students to go and fill out the survey
- Request access to laptops and other devices to bring to class to enable students to complete the electronic evaluations in class
- Include the evaluation period dates in the syllabus
- Provide a "live" demonstration of how to submit an online response, to reduce any computer-related questions.

- Remind students of the deadline date of the evaluation and the importance of results. Do so multiple times throughout the survey period.
- Inform students that their responses will be used. Students should believe that their responses will be taken seriously and specific actions will be taken to resolve any issues identified.
- Help students understand how to give constructive criticism in order for student to provide valuable feedback
  - Encourage students to focus feedback on behavior rather than the person.
  - Encourage students to focus on observation rather than inferences.
  - Encourage students to focus on description rather than judgement.
  - Encourage students to focus on the value it may have to the recipient rather than on the emotional release that it provides.