

Online student evaluation of instruction/courses
Interim Report of the Teaching Effectiveness Committee

Background

- The Provost's Office will no longer support the use of the University of Washington course evaluation product.
- Need to replace UW survey instrument.
- Online evaluation process vs traditional paper & pencil process discussed.
- Committee voted to move to an online evaluation process.

Purpose of student evaluations

- To assist individual instructors in improving their own teaching.
- To assist academic administrators in counseling instructors about their teaching.
- To assist faculty in reviewing the overall educational value and effectiveness of the course.
- To provide input in judging the teaching component in tenure, promotion and salary determinations.

Advantages of online evaluations

Time

- Frees up class time
- Students can complete survey more quickly
- Improved quality and quantity of written responses
- Fast processing and reporting of results
- Frees up staff time in distributing and processing forms

Flexibility

- Survey instrument can be easily customized for colleges, departments and faculty.
- Adding, removing or changing questions easy
- Generating and designing comparative reports easy
- Controlling access to data

Costs

- Eliminates cost of forms and scan sheets
- Costs of administering reduced even with purchase of software
- Increased use of evaluations free
- Sustainability
- Marginal costs associated with tailoring surveys to individual needs

Challenges for online evaluations

Response rates

- Tend to be lower
- Can be improved by reminders, incentives, and better communication and education by faculty

Response bias

- Mixed but recent results suggest online evaluations are representative

Change of Culture

- Colleges, departments and students need to adjust to make effective use of online evaluations

Current status

- Online student evaluations currently used in Vet Med, Pharmacy, and Nursing
- As of 2008 23% of colleges use online surveys
- Identified potential software products
 - CoursEval –Academic Management Systems
http://www.academicmanagement.com/products/course_eval.php
 - Digital Measures <http://www.digitalmeasures.com/CourseResponse/>

References

- James Groccia – Report to Academic Affairs Committee, July 7, 2004
- Online Evaluations: Fewer of them but same results, Chronicle of Higher Education, 5/21/2010 v56 issue 36
- <http://www.memphis.edu/sete/pdfs/fresno.pdf>
- <http://www.connectedu.com/courseval/helpcenter/HelpCenter.htm>