

Student Rating of Faculty Instruction Committee Report 2006-07

Rybolt, Tom CHEM, Chair
Guinn, Cherry NURS
Guess, Pam GSD
Kizza, Joseph CPSC
Meagher, Eileen ENGL
Nixon, Judy BMGT
Ribeiro, Brian PHIL
Shaheen, Aaron ENGL
White, Cindy BMGT
Gruetzemacher, Richard Dir. of OPEIR
Adsit, Karen Dir., Walker TRC

Tom Rybolt Chair reporting 3/29/07

In summary our committee dealt with two items and took two actions:

1) Added 6 questions to faculty evaluations for UTC online courses (about 25 courses at this time). These are only for courses that are taught completely online and these additional questions are needed to deal with aspects not found in traditional classes. This action will not affect questions in regular classroom course evaluations at UTC.

Questions to ADD for online classes (includes current questions on the rating form).

1. The online components of the course were organized in an understandable way.
2. The instructor for this course responded to my questions and e-mail messages within the agreed upon timeframe.
3. I was advised about the expectations for online courses before I enrolled.
4. The quality of this course was equal to traditional face-to-face courses that I have taken at UTC.
5. Given the right circumstances, I would take an online course again.
6. The course requirements for this specific course were clear to me.

Scale to be used is: Strongly Agree, Moderately Agree, Slightly Agree, Slightly Disagree, Moderately Disagree, Strongly Disagree, Unable to Judge

2) Initiated a small pilot program to test and evaluate effectiveness of course evaluations administered remotely via computer instead of by paper in class.

Richard Gruetzemacher's (Director Planning Evaluation Institutional Research) office that administers the current paper faculty evaluation system will solicit a small number of volunteer faculty to have their summer course evaluations completed online by students in their classes. These evaluation results will be made available to individual faculty and their Department Head and Dean analogous to current paper system. The response statistics (such as percent of response, number with written comments, etc) will be shared with the Student Rating of Faculty Instruction Committee in fall 2007; but, of course, not the specific evaluations.

In the fall of 2007 Richard Gruetzemacher's office will seek tenured faculty volunteers representing a representative range of disciplines to have courses evaluated by an on-line instrument in the spring 2008 semester. Gruetzemacher (OPEIR) and Karen Adsit (director Walker Teaching Resource Center) will work together to implement evaluations using blackboard software. The online evaluation will be identical to current paper version, will be anonymous for students, will be available so only students in course can respond, and will accept written comments. Students will be encouraged to respond but not required or forced to do so.

Statistical response data from these evaluations will be made available to the Faculty Rating Committee to consider whether to expand, eliminate, or continue testing the on-line evaluation option. Improved software capabilities at UTC will be considered in deciding how to best implement any on-line evaluations. Next year's committee will be charged with follow up of these pilot test results, recommendation of how to proceed with on-line evaluations, and report to Faculty Senate.

Additional details are given below:

The Student Rating of Faculty Committee met on 11/2/06 with the following members present:

Rybolt, Tom CHEM, Chair

Kizza, Joseph CPSC

Meagher, Eileen ENGL

Ribeiro, Brian PHIL

Shaheen, Aaron ENGL

White, Cindy BMGT

Gruetzemacher, Richard (Dick) Dir. of OPEIR (non-voting member)

Adsit, Karen Dir., Walker TRC (non-voting member)

and visitor

David Pittenger Acting Associate Provost for Academic Administration

ITEM 1

We considered and discussed the recommendation of the "Distance Learning Council" to add five questions for student rating of faculty evaluations for all UTC on-line classes (about 25 courses at this time). Karen Adsit provided background on the need to have on-line specific questions. These would be anonymous, would be inserted into Blackboard for each on-line course, and would be provided to Richard Gruetzemacher for distribution after semester grades are completed.

The committee members discussed on-line courses and evaluations.

A motion was made by Tom Rybolt and seconded by Eileen Meagher to develop a course evaluation form for use with on-line courses by adding the following questions:

1. The on-line parts of the course were organized in an understandable way.

2. The instructor for this course responded to my questions and e-mail messages in a timely manner.
3. I was advised about the expectations for on-line courses before I enrolled.
4. The course requirements for this specific course were clear to me.
5. The quality of this course was equal to traditional face-to-face courses that I have taken at UTC.

to the existing form, using the same range of responses as the current form, removing any unnecessary or confusing items that do not fit with the nature of an on-line course, and evaluating all on-line courses. Karen Adsit and Dick Gruetzemacher's offices will handle the implementation.

The motion was amended to slightly modify question 2 and one additional question was added

Motion was passed 6-0

It was agreed Karen Adsit would make changes which include the modified question 2 and new question 6 and distribute the modified form to the committee members. Committee members are asked to send any corrections back to Karen. The on-line form will include the discussion questions on the back of the current paper form.

ITEM 2

Tom Rybolt introduced a request from David Pittenger that the members of the Student Rating of Faculty committee consider University policies for the student evaluation of faculty and possible changes using either currently available SNAP software or the future student information system using new BANNER software. These software packages provide the option to allow students to complete faculty evaluations on-line, compile the data, and provide reports to specific individuals. Any recommendations from the committee would go to the Faculty Senate and ones that the Faculty Senate affirm will guide the implementation team in programming the new student information system and/or in utilizing the current SNAP software.

David J. Pittenger provided additional background information about advantages of on-line systems and a discussion followed.

The following points were made:

- a) Currently available software SNAP is suitable for secure, anonymous evaluations or surveys. The new BANNER software will not be available until at least 18 months after purchase.
- b) The current system requires about 40,000 pieces of paper each semester, about \$4000 for paper, and several work-study students to handle the paper flow. The current system

is not truly secure and it is expected an on-line system would be more secure than current paper version.

c) A computer system could provide quicker feedback.

d) Students are quite familiar with on-line activities.

e) One member expressed support for a paper system so that students are together and complete the activity at that time. Other members expressed support for on-line evaluations.

f) Reservations were expressed about requiring all students to fill out forms (for example before they could see their grades) and generally a system whereby students voluntarily do evaluations was favored.

g) A window of time for students to do forms would be offered toward end of semester.

h) Do we know the response rate or satisfaction at other schools?

In a nonbinding vote just to get a sense of the committee, the question “would you favor an on-line system?” was asked and the response was 4 for, 1 opposed, and 1 abstain.

To address some of the issues raised, it was agreed that Dick Gruetzemacher, Adsit, Karen, and David Pittenger would try to gather information on other schools that use on-line evaluation to determine their experiences, their level of satisfaction, and what percent of student response they received. In addition, information on the response rate of UTC on-line courses which are evaluated through Blackboard software will be determined. All information gathered will be provided to this committee by email prior to our next meeting to be held in January (day and time to be determined).

In the intervening time committee members were asked to consider for themselves and seek feedback from other faculty and students regarding the questions that David Pittenger brought to committee which were:

1. Should the University replace the current manual course evaluation process with on-line system?
2. Should all students be required to submit a course evaluation?
3. Should all courses offered in a term be evaluated?
4. May departments or colleges add course-, departmental-, or college-specific questions to the questionnaire?
5. Who should receive summaries of course evaluations?
6. What information should the summaries contain?

Pilot program of on-line course evaluation recommended by Student Rating of Faculty Instruction Committee

In response to request from David Pittenger (Acting Associate Provost for Academic Administration) our committee considered online evaluation of courses.

Present on 1/31/07

Rybolt, Tom CHEM, Chair

Guinn, Cherry NURS

Nixon, Judy BMGT

Ribeiro, Brian PHIL

White, Cindy BMGT

Gruetzemacher, Richard (Dick) Dir. of OPEIR

Adsit, Karen Dir., Walker TRC

and voting by email

Guess, Pam GSD

Shaheen, Aaron ENGL

Meagher, Eileen ENGL

The Student Rating of Faculty Committee voted 9-1-0 (3 by email vote) to modify faculty evaluation system to allow for on-line evaluation for a small portion of volunteer faculty to provide data to compare to our present paper system.

Those present at meeting (1/31/07) finalized details of this pilot program that we recommend would function as follows:

Pilot Program

Richard Gruetzemacher's (Director Planning Evaluation Institutional Research) office that administers the current paper faculty evaluation system will solicit a small number of volunteer faculty to have their summer course evaluations completed online by students in their classes. These evaluation results will be made available to individual faculty and their Department Head and Dean analogous to current paper system. The response statistics (such as percent of response, number with written comments, etc) will be shared with the Student Rating of Faculty Instruction Committee in fall 2007; but, of course, not the specific evaluations.

In the fall of 2007 Richard Gruetzemacher's office will seek tenured faculty volunteers representing a representative range of disciplines to have courses evaluated by

an on-line instrument in the spring 2008 semester. Gruetzemacher (OPEIR) and Karen Adsit (director Walker Teaching Resource Center) will work together to implement evaluations using blackboard software. The online evaluation will be identical to current paper version, will be anonymous for students, will be available so only students in course can respond, and will accept written comments. Students will be encouraged to respond but not required or forced to do so.

Statistical response data from these evaluations will be made available to the Faculty Rating Committee to consider whether to expand, eliminate, or continue testing the on-line evaluation option. Improved software capabilities at UTC will be considered in deciding how to best implement any on-line evaluations.

Next year's committee will be charged with follow up of these pilot test results, recommendation of how to proceed with on-line evaluations, and report to Faculty Senate.

Questions

Responses to questions presented by David Pittenger (Acting Associate Provost for Academic Administration) to Committee are listed below:

1) Should the University replace the current manual course evaluation process with processes afforded by the new student information system?

Will test for a limited number of faculty in the summer 2007 and the spring 2008. A representative range of disciplines and limited to tenured faculty will be solicited in the fall 2007 for spring 2008 evaluation test.

2) Should all students be required to submit a course evaluation?

No.

3) Should all courses offered in a term be evaluated?

No, will do a limited test of on-line courses at this time.

4) May departments or colleges add course-, departmental-, or college-specific questions to the questionnaire?

That capability is present.

5) Who should receive summaries of course evaluations?

Make as similar to present paper system functioning as possible.

6) What information should summaries contain?

Statistical results of responses as is done for paper and also available will be student comments.

Additional Information

R. Gruetzemacher polled 12 "peer" institutes and got the responses shown below

My institution is:

- 1 (9%) conducting all course evaluations electronically (NCA&T)
- 3 (27%) conducting some course evaluations electronically (UNF, UWF, SHSU)
- 5 (45%) not currently conducting course evaluations electronically, but considering doing so in the future. (ASU, FAMU, Morgan, Murray, WCU)
- 2 (18%) not currently conducting course evaluations electronically and not presently considering this option.
- 1 No response (LA Tech)

Pros and Cons from Literature reported by R. Gruetzemacher:

Pros: cheaper, process simpler—less work intensive, rapid feedback, no paper, does not require use of class time, quality of response superior

Cons: faculty buy in, response rate lower

The following information is a summary of a longer report provided by the Dean of Arts and Sciences at the University of Richmond to Tom Rybolt. They prepared a report to analyze their experience in switching from paper to online course evaluations.

Analysis of Online Fall 2006 Course Evaluations

Matthew Levy and Jennifer Fife (University of Richmond)

January 15, 2007

Summary of Findings

Completion rate for typical A&S courses: 73%

80% of students completed at least one evaluation.

Students do not complete evaluations during “party” hours.

Students write longer responses online than on paper.

The data are not polarized by student motivation.

82% of A&S courses were evaluated, despite the departmental rotation system.

There were no technical problems with the revamped online system.

Tenure-track faculty must be evaluated every semester, but could opt for paper evaluations in Fall 2006.