POLICY RECOMMENDATION
Adopting New SOTE and SOLATE Instruments

Resolved: That the attached documents following be adopted as the text for revised Student Opinion of Teaching Effectiveness (SOTE) and Student Opinion of Laboratory Teaching Effectiveness (SOLATE) questionnaires; be it further

Resolved: That this become effective for the administration of Fall 2016 SOTEs and SOLATEs.

Rationale: F12-6, Evaluation in Effectiveness in Teaching for all Faculty, states:

SERB shall prepare the specific questions and survey instrument to be used to measure student opinions of teaching effectiveness. It shall decide the scale, format, and layout of the instrument, and determine the information that is provided in the reports generated by the surveys. The instrument shall be approved by the Senate upon recommendation of SERB and the Professional Standards Committee, and may only be amended by SERB.

SERB has worked diligently over the course of two years to amend the existing SOTE and SOLATE survey instrument. The last time the instruments were changed was in 2004.

A draft was prepared too late last year (AY 2014-15) to be reviewed by the Senate, and Professional Standards reviewed a draft on August 31 provided by SERB. Professional Standards provided advice which resulted in some additional changes over the course of the year and the receipt of this draft in April.

SERB is a board specifically appointed for expertise on survey research and contains the AVP for IEA as an advisor. Professional Standards and the Senate may accept or reject the survey instruments provided by SERB, but may not amend the text of the survey instrument they have provided.

One major change is the addition of the free-response section to the SOLATE instrument. Giving students the opportunity to go beyond the numerical ratings and write a free response is required by our policy but has inexplicably only been part of the SOTE instrument and not the SOLATE instrument. This will bring our laboratory evaluations into conformity with policy and allow students in lab courses the same opportunity to respond as students in other courses.

SERB added an informational question about how many hours students devote to course-related activities. The Chair of SERB indicated that this was intended "to facilitate evaluation of course workload relative to Carnegie units (Question 18 on the SOTE;
Question 14 on the SOLATE)" and that it "was added after discussions with department chairs and curriculum committees tasked with the duty of evaluating course workload." Members of the Professional Standards Committee are of mixed opinions about this rationale for a question on hours of student work.

Questions 14 and up on the SOTE and 10 and higher on the SOLATE are informational items and are not “normed” and compared between departments.

Approved: April 18, 2016
Vote: 8-0-0
Present: Peter, Green, White, Lee, Virick, Kauppila, Sandoval-Rios, Hamedi-Hagh
Absent: Riley
Financial Impact: No changes over the previous policy.
Workload Impact: Institutional Effectiveness and Analytics (IEA) will need to update the online questionnaires.
This instrument is designed to be a professional evaluation of your instructor’s teaching performance. It is NOT designed to measure your reaction to the subject, the facilities (such as the physical conditions of the classroom), or your instructor’s physical appearance. Your individual ratings will be anonymous and a summary of items 1-20 will be available to your instructor after grades are turned in. This summary may enhance your instructor’s teaching. It will also be used in the evaluation of your instructor for personnel matters such as retention, tenure and promotion. If the question does not apply to your course, please select “not applicable/no opportunity to observe”.

The instructor:

1. Demonstrated relevance of the course content:
   - 5. Strongly Agree
   - 4. Agree
   - 3. Neutral
   - 2. Disagree
   - 1. Strongly Disagree
   - Not applicable/no opportunity to observe

2. Used assignments that enhanced learning:
   - 5. Strongly Agree
   - 4. Agree
   - 3. Neutral
   - 2. Disagree
   - 1. Strongly Disagree
   - Not applicable/no opportunity to observe

3. Summarized/emphasized important points:
   - 5. Strongly Agree
   - 4. Agree
   - 3. Neutral
   - 2. Disagree
   - 1. Strongly Disagree
   - Not applicable/no opportunity to observe

4. Was responsive to questions and comments from students:
   - 5. Strongly Agree
   - 4. Agree
   - 3. Neutral
   - 2. Disagree
   - 1. Strongly Disagree
   - Not applicable/no opportunity to observe

5. Established an atmosphere that facilitated learning:
   - 5. Strongly Agree
   - 4. Agree
   - 3. Neutral
   - 2. Disagree
   - 1. Strongly Disagree
6. Was approachable for assistance:
   5. Strongly Agree
   4. Agree
   3. Neutral
   2. Disagree
   1. Strongly Disagree
   Not applicable/no opportunity to observe

7. Was respectful of the diversity of students in this class:
   5. Strongly Agree
   4. Agree
   3. Neutral
   2. Disagree
   1. Strongly Disagree
   Not applicable/no opportunity to observe

8. Showed strong interest in teaching this class:
   5. Strongly Agree
   4. Agree
   3. Neutral
   2. Disagree
   1. Strongly Disagree
   Not applicable/no opportunity to observe

9. Used teaching methods that helped students learn important concepts:
   5. Strongly Agree
   4. Agree
   3. Neutral
   2. Disagree
   1. Strongly Disagree
   Not applicable/no opportunity to observe

10. Used grading criteria that were clear:
    5. Strongly Agree
    4. Agree
    3. Neutral
    2. Disagree
    1. Strongly Disagree
    Not applicable/no opportunity to observe

11. Helped students analyze complex/abstract ideas:
    5. Strongly Agree
    4. Agree
    3. Neutral
    2. Disagree
    1. Strongly Disagree
    Not applicable/no opportunity to observe
12. Provided meaningful feedback about student work:
   5. Strongly Agree
   4. Agree
   3. Neutral
   2. Disagree
   1. Strongly Disagree
   Not applicable/no opportunity to observe

13. Overall, this instructor's teaching was effective:
   5. Strongly Agree
   4. Agree
   3. Neutral
   2. Disagree
   1. Strongly Disagree
   Not applicable/no opportunity to observe

Please answer the following informational items:

14. How would you describe your efforts in this course?
   Extraordinary
   High
   Average
   Low
   Minimal

15. How often did you attend class?
   Almost always
   Often
   Occasionally
   Seldom
   Almost never

16. What is your current estimate of your expected overall grade in this course?
   A
   B
   C
   D or F
   Other (Credit/No Credit, Incomplete, etc.)

17. You are a:
   Freshman
   Sophomore
   Junior
   Senior
   Graduate Student
   Credential Only
   Other (e.g. Open University)

18. During a typical week in this course, how many hours did you spend outside of class
on course-related activities (such as reading, completing assignments, studying, service learning, field work, group work, etc.)?

(NOTE: This will be programmed to be answered as a number field, and the course units will be added to the report, allowing users to easily divide the answer by the actual course units to generate Carnegie Units.

19. Did any other student attempt to influence your answers on this survey?
   Yes
   No

20. Did your instructor attempt to influence your answers on this survey?
   Yes
   No

Free-Response Questions:

What do you think are the strengths of this instructor’s teaching?

What suggestions, if any, do you have to further improve the instructor’s teaching?

If you like, please use this space to elaborate on your responses to the multiple choice questions above.
This instrument is designed to be a professional evaluation of your instructor’s teaching performance. It is NOT designed to measure your reaction to the subject, the facilities (such as the physical conditions of the classroom), or your instructor’s physical appearance. Your individual ratings will be anonymous and a summary of items 1-15 will be available to your instructor after grades are turned in. This summary may enhance your instructor’s teaching. It will also be used in the evaluation of your instructor for personnel matters such as retention, tenure and promotion. If the question does not apply to your course, please select “not applicable/no opportunity to observe”.

The lab or activity instructor:

1: made course requirements clear.
   5. Strongly Agree
      4. Agree
      3. Neutral
      2. Disagree
      1. Strongly Disagree
      Not applicable/no opportunity to observe

2: used grading criteria that were clear.
   5. Strongly Agree
      4. Agree
      3. Neutral
      2. Disagree
      1. Strongly Disagree
      Not applicable/no opportunity to observe

3: was well prepared for class or activity.
   5. Strongly Agree
      4. Agree
      3. Neutral
      2. Disagree
      1. Strongly Disagree
      Not applicable/no opportunity to observe

4: showed concern for student success in the course, and was accessible and responsive to students
   5. Strongly Agree
      4. Agree
      3. Neutral
      2. Disagree
      1. Strongly Disagree
      Not applicable/no opportunity to observe

5: made the class environment safe for students, including demonstration of the proper use of any equipment and techniques.
   5. Strongly Agree
6: helped me integrate the lecture concepts with the class/activity.

7: increased my understanding of the subject.

8: stimulated my interest in the subject.

9: Overall, this instructor’s teaching was effective.

Please answer the following informational items:

10. How often did you attend class?

11. What is your current estimate of your expected overall grade in this course?
12. You are a:
   Freshman
   Sophomore
   Junior
   Senior
   Graduate Student
   Credential Only
   Other (e.g. Open University)

13: During a typical week in this course, how many hours did you spend outside of class on course-related activities (such as reading, completing assignments, studying, service learning, field work, group work, etc.)?

(NOTE: This will be programmed to be answered as a number field, and the course units will be added to the report, allowing users to easily divide the answer by the actual course units to generate Carnegie Units.)

14. Did any other student attempt to influence your answers on this survey?
   Yes
   No

15. Did your instructor attempt to influence your answers on this survey?
   Yes
   No

Free-Response Questions:

What do you think are the strengths of this instructor’s teaching?

What suggestions, if any, do you have to further improve the instructor’s teaching?

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