



San José State
UNIVERSITY

A campus of The California State University

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SS-S05-6

At its meeting of April 25, 2005, the Academic Senate passed the following Sense of the Senate Resolution presented by Senator Bros for the Professional Standards Committee.

SENSE OF THE SENATE RESOLUTION

ADOPTION OF PRELIMINARY PLAN TO CONVERT THE CURRENT SOTE PAPER-BASED PROCESS TO AN ONLINE (WEB-BASED) COLLECTION SYSTEM

- Whereas S03-3 delineates “that SERB continue to evaluate the efficacy of online SOTES, including administration subsequent to final exams”; and
- Whereas implementation of F02-2 and S03-3 procedures have placed an extreme burden on University resources; and
- Whereas the current technological infrastructure and operational capacity of the Oracle (PeopleSoft™) computing system on this campus, coupled with the requirement for students to access and conduct various transactions on this system, provides SJSU with an ideal opportunity to develop a fully integrated online student rating system at a relatively low cost; and
- Whereas such a system would reverse the increased costs and alleviate paper storage issues associated with the paper-based system; and
- Whereas the online system would provide an opportunity to introduce significant enhancements not previously feasible (e.g., mid-semester formative evaluations to be used for improving teaching effectiveness and providing a more efficient way of collecting and summarizing qualitative information); and
- Whereas the few institutions currently utilizing an online rating system have shown them to be a viable alternative to the traditional paper-based mode; and
- Whereas all SJSU students are now required to access and conduct business with the University via their MySJSU accounts; and
- Whereas SERB and the Institutional Research Office have developed the attached Preliminary Project Plan for converting the current paper-based SOTE system to an online student rating system; and
- Whereas the Executive Committee has discussed SERB’s proposal for developing and administering online SOTES and has urged SERB and Professional

Standards to move forward to allow implementation within two years; now be it therefore

- Resolved that the attached plan be adopted by the University; be it further
- Resolved that we urge the Provost to authorize funding for moving toward the ability to test and implement online SOTEs; be it further
- Resolved that we urge the Provost to continue exploring methods to reduce the costs of the paper method of collecting SOTEs should the online collection not be feasible, be it further
- Resolved that we urge SERB to continue exploring how to test the online system for effectiveness, maintain participation rates, ensure the secure administration along with identifying any changes in the SOTE form needed for administration online; be it further
- Resolved that SERB monitor the development of the online system by the Institutional Research Office (Academic Planning & Budgets) and provide annual progress reports to the Professional Standards Committee, which will in turn report to the Academic Senate; be it further
- Resolved that the Chair of Professional Standards, the Chair of the Academic Senate, the Vice President of Associated Students and the Chair of SERB will work with the student orientation committee to help inform students of the importance and responsibility they have for completing SOTEs, be it further
- Resolved that we urge SERB to explore the recurring costs in implementing this project.

Financial Impact: The bulk of expenditures are for retaining external programming consultants to develop the system. The estimated cost to develop the basic system is \$28,000 (160 hours x \$175). Additional programming costs will be needed depending upon the enhancements made to the basic system. Funds should also be made available to cover travel expenses to other campuses to research existing online systems.

The estimated savings for the University with the complete implementation of the online system is more than \$60,000 per yr.

San José State University

Conversion of SOTE to an Online (Web-based) Collection System

Preliminary Project Plan

Implementation of Academic Senate policies F02-2 and S03-3 in the Fall 2003 semester imposed significant changes to the SOTE process. Policy F02-2 called for deployment of the new standardized SOTE rating instrument that solicits both quantitative (ratings) and qualitative (written comments) data. A major provision of S03-3 requires that all classes be evaluated every semester. Aside from significant cost increases because of the larger volume (see table below), these changes also had unintended consequences. For example, since written comments collected on the SOTE rating form are considered germane to the evaluation, it was necessary to make them part of the official record. This is achieved by creating a duplicate set of all written comments so a set is available to both the instructor and the academic department. The cumulative storage of these materials in the PAF has become a formidable task.

	Classes Evaluated	Forms Processed
FALL 2002	2978	65280
SPRING 2003	2724	62116
FALL 2003	3645	80441
SPRING 2004	3543	76567
FALL 2004	3653	79489

The current technological infrastructure and operational capacity of the Oracle (PeopleSoft) computing system on this campus, coupled with the requirement for students to access and conduct various transactions on this system, provides SJSU with an ideal opportunity to develop a fully integrated online student rating system at a relatively low cost. Such a system would reverse the increased costs and alleviate paper storage issues associated with the paper-based system. Furthermore, it provides an opportunity to introduce significant enhancements not previously feasible (e.g., formative evaluations). Although online rating systems are still considered 'cutting-edge,' the few institutions currently utilizing such a system have shown them to be a viable alternative to the traditional paper-based mode.

The following pages provide a tentative overview for developing and implementing an online student rating system on this campus.

PROJECT SCOPE

Development of system

Campuses that already have an established online system (e.g., BYU, Yale, Berkeley) will be studied. Locally, feedback will be solicited from various constituencies including UCCD, Council of Deans, CFA, Faculty Affairs, CFDS, and selected student groups. Additionally, an online survey will be administered to all faculty. The survey will address key issues associated with an online collection system such as security and response rates. Following an analysis of the input gathered from both external and internal sources, the system specifications will be formalized and programming can move forward. Institutional Research staff will work closely with the Director of Administrative Applications (Computing) and programming consultants during the entire development, testing, and implementation process.

Policy recommendations

As the system is developed, it will become necessary for the Academic Senate to consider policy recommendations that will allow for proper implementation. For example, to counteract student non-participation, it may become necessary to invoke holds on grades/registration until evaluations are completed. The majority of these policy recommendations will emanate from SERB and its parent committee Professional Standards.

Tentative Timeline

Collect feedback: Fall 2005 - Administer online surveys to faculty and administrators; contacts and visitations to other institutions.

Analysis of feedback: Jan.-Mar. 2006

Develop basic system: Apr. – Jul. 2006

System testing: Initial testing of the new system will be conducted during the Fall 2006 rating collection period. This testing will be conducted with Library & Information Sciences department courses since this department is currently burdened with a cumbersome process of collecting SOTE ratings from a large percentage of distance learning courses. Additional testing during the Spring 2007 rating collection period will encompass a broader spectrum of courses, possibly entire colleges. The testing process will be closely monitored to detect deficiencies and make necessary changes.

Full implementation: Conversion to an online rating system by the entire campus is anticipated in the Fall 2007 rating collection period.

Development Costs

- **Equipment:** To ensure the highest level of security, the system will utilize it's own secure server housed and maintained in UCAT (cost to be determined).
- **Programming:** Initial estimates to develop the basic system is 160 hours of programming time at \$175/hour (\$28,000). Additional enhancements will require additional programming time (e.g., electronic imaging of reports and written comments, formative evaluation process, use of department-specific rating items). Once the online system becomes operational, the Administrative Applications group will assume responsibility for maintenance of the system.

Summary of cost savings

The table below displays several direct costs associated with implementation of the current paper-based system by the Institutional Research Office along with the same estimated costs for operating an online system that features electronic reporting of results. Over a five-year period, the cost savings for these four specific items amounts to over \$316,000. Since these direct costs would be virtually eliminated by converting to an online collection system, development costs would be recovered in the first semester the online system is fully operational. There is a possibility that some minor costs will be shifted to department (e.g., local printing of electronic reports). Indirect costs such as 'lost' class time for administering paper-based SOTE evaluations would also be eliminated. For example, using the figure from the chart above of 3653 classes evaluated in Fall 2004, and assuming an average time of 20 minutes to administer an evaluation in class, this amount to over 1200 hours of 'lost' instructional time.

	PAPER-BASED	ONLINE
Materials	\$2,800	\$0
Student Support	\$38,664	\$1000
Forms Printing	\$22,000	\$0
Services	\$900	\$0
Total:	\$64,364	\$1000
Annual savings:		\$63,364