Joint Provost-Senate-AFT Student Online Evaluations Taskforce
Recommendations & Implementation Strategy
June 10, 2016

Charge

- create a process and instrument to complete peer observations in online courses
- create guidelines for the use of online teaching evaluations
- develop recommendations for revising Rowan Global’s student survey of teaching effectiveness for online courses
- revisit the research on response rates and policy for optimum length of time the teaching effectiveness survey is available for 16-week courses

Recommendations

1. Pilot newly created peer observation instrument for online teaching (including procedures) fall 2016
   a. Continue working with Rowan Online in creating the best access, usability and support possible for the instrument to function fully online.
2. Adopt final version of peer observation instrument for all online courses fall 2017
   a. One instrument and set of procedures for all online peer observation. Rowan Global does not have the capacity to accommodate multiple instruments with varying processes and procedures.
   b. Assemble committee spring 2018 to solicit feedback and make revisions to observation procedures and instrument.
3. Adopt committee revisions to MoA T&R (Appendix B and Role of Departmental Chair (2.651)) by fall 2016
   a. Revised to improve clarity/redundancy and to spell out roles and responsibilities for instructor, survey administrator, and departmental T&R chair.
   b. Reference to sign-in sheet eliminated from both online and paper surveys.
4. Include Note to Instructors and Packet Reviewers in MoA and in training materials
   a. The purpose is to de-emphasize the numerical scores in an effort to make the survey less contentious (high stakes). Many factors and data sources are called upon to create the narrative of successful teaching.
5. Rowan Global’s newly revised student survey of teaching effectiveness instrument is already in effect for summer 2016 courses
   a. Revision aligns more closely with MoA Characteristics of Teaching Effectiveness and MoA policies and procedures for administering student surveys of teaching.
6. One year following implementation (summer 2017) Faculty Center and Rowan Global will revisit the instrument with the intention of assessing for increased validity and usability.
7. Keep in place the 5-week window of availability for online surveys, to include finals week, for 16-week courses
a. Research suggests that our 55% response rate for the online instrument is actually above national response rates (33%) for online instruments, and in-line with the national average (56%) for paper-based instruments, (Nulty, 2008).

b. Qualitative and quantitative data on Rowan student usage and preferences suggest students are more likely to complete survey if it is available up to and including finals week; students support keeping the instrument open during finals or lengthening the time to complete the survey beyond what is currently available.
APPENDIX B (of MoA)
Student Evaluation of Teaching Effectiveness

Instructor Guidelines

- It is the instructor’s responsibility to ensure that the survey used has been approved by the department.
- The instructor should coordinate with the departmental recontracting committee chair in determining who is to administer the survey and when (see Administration of Electronic Surveys below for exception).
- Surveys of teaching effectiveness should be administered during the last five (5) weeks of the semester, including the week of final exams. All surveys will close at 5 PM on the last day of final examinations.
- It is the instructor’s responsibility to ensure that the students are aware of the following:
  - (1) participation is voluntary
  - (2) responses will be anonymous
  - (3) results will not be made available to the instructor until the semester is over and final grades have been submitted
- It is a violation of best practices in evaluation to offer incentives for students to complete surveys. Thus, faculty may not do so, even if it means a reduction in response rate.

Administration of Paper-Based Surveys

- Upon arriving at the classroom, the administrator will ask the instructor to leave the room. The administrator may then read the recommended script to the class prior to distributing the surveys.
- As students complete their forms, they should return them to the administrator who will, without reading them, place them inside an envelope that bears the name of the faculty member being evaluated, the class, date, number of students enrolled and number of students completing the survey.
- The administrator will deliver the student surveys to the chairperson of the departmental recontracting committee.

Administration of Electronic Surveys

- The instructor may choose whether to have the students complete the electronic survey outside of class or during class time using either classroom computers, student-owned laptops or mobile devices.
- If class time is used, the instructor must leave the room while the students complete the electronic survey. He or she should designate a student to notify him/her when the surveys are completed.
- If an administrator is present to oversee the electronic survey, this individual begins by reading the recommended script to the class prior to the start of the survey.
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MoA p.21

2.65 Student Responses

2.651 Department Tenure and Recontracting Committee Chairperson’s Responsibilities and Procedures

- **The chairperson of the departmental recontracting committee** works with the instructor to schedule the administration of student surveys. Members of the instructor’s departmental recontracting committee or their designees may administer the survey.

- **The chairperson of the departmental recontracting committee** will either complete or oversee the compilation and analysis of the survey data and preparation of the report. The report must include all of the following: (a) name of the candidate, (b) class in which the evaluation was conducted, (c) date of administration, (d) name of the survey administrator, (e) number of students enrolled in the class, (f) number of students completing the evaluation forms, (g) mean and frequency distribution for each structured-response item on the evaluation form, (h) all verbatim narrative responses by students to all open-ended questions.

- **The chairperson of the departmental recontracting committee** will retain the report and raw data until the deadline for submitting term grades has passed. Thereupon, the chairperson will, in a timely manner, give the report to the instructor. At such time, the chairperson of the departmental recontracting committee will seal the envelope containing the completed student evaluation forms and ask the instructor to sign his/her name across the seal. The sealed envelope should then be sent to the Human Resources Office, where it will be kept for a period of five (5) years and then be discarded.
Script to guide candidates and evaluators. To be included in training materials and the MoA for T&R and Promotion.

Note to instructors and packet reviewers:

Student feedback is valuable. However, the survey of student responses to teaching is but one dimension in an overall holistic framework for assessment that includes peer observation, instructor reflection and demonstrated growth and improvement. We recognize the meta-analysis of student evaluations has shown that there are external factors which can influence how students evaluate their professors, including but not limited to race, gender, and student expected grades (H. Laube, et al, 2007; L. MacNell, et al, 2014; J. Sprague & K. Massoni, 2005). Additionally, numerical variations, e.g. 4.3 to 3.7, are not statistically significant when small class size or low response rates are involved, which suggest valid assessments de-emphasize individual numbers in favor of recognizing trends and confirmation between data sources. More important consideration should be given to things that are under the control of the professor (P. Mason, et al, 1995; R. Sproule, 2000).
## Implementation Strategy

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| Summer 2016 | Meeting to discuss the Taskforce report                   | • Provost James Newell  
• Taskforce chair Deb Martin  
• AFT President Joe Basso  
• Senate President Bill Freind  
• Others named at the discretion of the Provost |
| Fall 2016  | Small pilot of online peer observation instrument               | • Director of the Faculty Center  
• Faculty volunteers (about 5) |
|           | Revise instrument based on data from pilot                     | • Director of the Faculty Center  
• Rowan Global’s assigned technician  
• Faculty representatives  
• AFT Rep |
| Spring 2017 | Second, larger pilot performed completely online               | • Director of the Faculty Center  
• Rowan Global’s assigned technician  
• Faculty representatives  
• AFT Rep |
|           | Open forum for faculty comments                                 | • Director of the Faculty Center  
• Rowan Global’s assigned technician  
• Faculty representatives  
• AFT Rep |
| Summer 2017 | Submit instrument and procedures for fall 2017 MoA adoption       | • Director of the Faculty Center  
• Deb Martin  
• AFT |
|           | Final upload for Fall 2017 implementation                        | • Faculty Center  
• Rowan Global |

Respectfully submitted

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