AD HOC USAT COMMITTEE
FINAL REPORT

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Senate Ad-Hoc Student Evaluation of Teaching Committee Charge

Purpose: To review the content and administration of the student evaluation of teaching forms and their application.

Membership: Faculty, at least one of whom has experience teaching online courses, representatives from the Provost's Office, the Office of Institutional Research, and the ES Committee or the Director of ES. A student representative.

Terms: 5/1/2014—12/31/2014

Selection: Appointed by the Senate Executive Committee.

Functions and Responsibilities:

1. To review the current administration of the student evaluation of teaching forms in all settings and courses – on campus, in hybrid courses, in online courses and in graduate, undergraduate and professional courses; this would include issues related to the possibility of paperless evaluations for all courses, both on campus and online;
2. To review the effectiveness of the current situation relative to evaluation of Essential Studies courses, and, if warranted, to recommend changes to how student evaluation of teaching forms could be constructed and used to assess Essential Studies goal achievement.
3. To review the current application of summary and written results from student evaluation of teaching forms in annual review, promotion and tenure decisions;
4. To review the current research literature on student evaluation of teaching; to review the best practices in the administration of student evaluation of teaching in all settings; to review the best practices in the use of the summary results of student evaluation of teaching in annual review, promotion and tenure decisions; and to develop, if necessary, a new student evaluation of teaching form for use in all settings;
5. To propose procedures for uniform administration of student evaluation of teaching forms in all settings;
6. To propose policies for the use of data obtained from student evaluation of teaching forms in decisions regarding annual review, promotion and tenure;
7. To develop recommendations to the University Senate for policies regarding the application of and use of data obtained from student evaluation of teaching forms.

Guiding Principles:
Input from all affected parties including lecturers, non-tenured and tenured faculty;
Use of most recent research on student evaluation of teaching;
Development of valid and reliable student evaluation of teaching questions;
Consistency in use of the student evaluation of teaching forms;
Consistency in the application of student evaluation of teaching results.

Reporting: To the University Senate Executive Committee and to the University Senate

Source of Information: Bylaws: Committees -- 2. Permanent and ad hoc committees
Senate Executive Committee minutes, February 21, 2014 and March 25, 2014.

Key Topics and Questions Related to Student Evaluation of Teaching

Based on completion of the study prescribed by the charge, ***a list of topics was developed for consideration and discussion when framing recommendations***:

- Transparency of evaluation processes and results
- The feasibility of a paperless student evaluation of teaching system
- Appropriateness of the current student evaluation of teaching tool (the USAT)
- Options for adapting the current USAT form vs. adopting/adapting a new tool
- Options for flexibility according to course type
- Use of open vs. closed questions (or a combination)
- Desire/need to quantitative and/or qualitative data
- Consideration of piloting, if a new form were to be recommended
- Guidelines for campus/colleges/departments when using student evaluation of teaching information
- How student evaluations should fit as part of the information mix in personnel processes (e.g., T&P, merit raises)
- Midterm course evaluations
- Communication (with students, faculty, other) around student evaluation of teaching processes and use
- Appropriateness of using "cut scores" for personnel process decisions
- The need for improved student evaluation information related to ES learning outcomes
- Options for presenting findings/recommendations and regarding soliciting campus-wide input prior to a campus decision-making processes

These topics were subdivided and organized. Subcommittees formed for further study and development of possible recommendations for consideration by the full committee. Subcommittees organized the larger committee's research/findings around the ***following questions and concerns***:

1. Should UND adopt a different "student evaluation of teaching (SET)" form? If yes, what should the new SET form be, an established form in use elsewhere or create/adopt to a new form?
2. If a new SET form is adopted, how many quantitative (closed, Likert style) vs. qualitative (open-ended, written) questions should be included? How should the qualitative data be used?
3. If a new SET form is adopted, what options can be provided to offer more flexibility for course type?
4. If a new SET form is adopted, how will it be pilot-tested and ultimately "rolled out" for use in all UND courses?
5. What SET methods could generate more useful (and trustworthy) information from students?
6. Student perception that feedback they provide on the USAT doesn't make a difference have been documented, and those perceptions likely contribute to the very low response rates that are currently seen in cases where a SET form is not administered during class time (typically in paper form). Can we address those perceptions (a) to improve response rates in online and hybrid courses and (b) to make it plausible to consider a paperless SET process?
7. There seems to be little clarity (and virtually no cross-campus consistency) regarding the meaning, value, and use of student evaluation information. How can that be addressed?
8. A review of the literature suggests that best practices and cautions regarding the use of SET information are not fully reflected in UND's current use of the results. How can UND personnel practices be brought more in line with best practices?

Ad Hoc USAT Committee List of Recommendations

1. UND should adopt a new set of quantitative (closed, Likert style) questions for a portion of the UND student evaluation of teaching (SET) form. These questions should be derived from an existing, publicly available SET form such as the Students' Evaluation of Educational Quality (SEEQ). The current open-ended questions used in UND's USAT should be retained on any new form.
2. Instructors and departments that complete SETs online should be provided the opportunity to include unique questions (drawn from a question bank or written by a department) in the online form. Questions should be used consistently by departments over time. If a paper-and-pencil SET form is used, the evaluation packet should include a "supplemental questions" section, such that departments could include a separate leaflet of questions for students to complete.
3. UND should adopt a small set (5-6 questions) of quantitative (closed, Likert style) questions for students to use to inform other students of their perceptions of the course. The responses to these questions should then be made publicly available.
4. UND should implement a paperless version of its new SET form, available to all UND faculty, conducted using an online survey. The overall aim is to begin a gradual transition to online student evaluations.
5. UND is strongly encouraged to pilot a new SET form (if use of a new form is approved).
    a. A pilot of a new instrument should involve testing the form in a variety of disciplines and course types, as well as on-campus and online. Instructors should be asked to volunteer to use the new form in their courses, and it might be wise to involve only tenured faculty in an initial pilot. One strategy that could be used in large classes it to give the new form to one half of the class and the current (USAT) form to the other half.
    b. Data analysis should follow the steps utilized in the USAT Data Analysis Report.
6. Response rates typically drop with a paperless evaluation process, which appears to be related to expecting completion of the SET to occur outside of class. Intentional and systematic communication with students about the importance of and use of the student evaluation process is essential. Such communication should be rooted in careful strategizing, potentially including incentives, to ensure maximum response rates.
    a. Whenever possible, student evaluations of teaching should be completed during the class period to maximize return rates.
    b. Departments and colleges should be encouraged to adopt policies governing any possible use of bonus point incentives for maximizing student participation.
7. UND should establish a website that provides transparency about student evaluations. The site should include scores from the subset of questions written to allow students to provide information for use by other students (see recommendation #2, above). This section of the website should be interactive, allowing students to search by course and instructor. But it should also include information about how SET information is used by the university, individual colleges/departments, and faculty themselves (via links where appropriate).
8. Use of midterm student evaluations should be strongly recommended but optional. UND should support use of formative midterm evaluations by providing a subset of student evaluation questions for use as a midterm evaluation and/or by publicizing other methods of completing such an evaluation. Information from such evaluations would (if implemented) be collected and analyzed by the instructor for use in improving teaching rather than for use in personnel actions.

9. Specific questions on the SET that are most appropriate for use in personnel processes, such as tenure and promotion, should be identified for departmental and college consideration for use.
10. In no case should SET scores serve as the sole meaningful measure of teaching quality. This principle is applicable regardless of the specific form used or the specific subset of questions considered. Numerical teaching scores should be triangulated with other indicators of teaching practices and quality. Examples of other indicators may include works related to scholarship of teaching and learning, presentations on classroom teaching methods, documentation of successful advising, materials supporting use of innovative teaching methods, midterm student evaluation of teaching reports (excluding SGIDs), substantive peer evaluations constructed according to departmental standards, teaching portfolios scored using a rubric, teaching proposals, etc.
    a. When student evaluation-of-teaching scores are included in personnel processes, it makes sense that standards for scores may vary depending on college, department, and type of class.
    b. The use of "cut scores" for delineation of merit categories is not optimal. When scores are incorporated into departmental or college personnel processes, conclusions should be supported through additional documentation of successful teaching practices.
    c. Good practice with data includes triangulation of findings so that no particular measure dominates the definition.
11. Guidelines for documentation of teaching evaluation materials associated with personnel processes should be developed institutionally and used as the basis for policies or guidelines developed by individual colleges and departments.
    a. Summaries of teaching merit are written by deans, chairs, and faculty committees as part of personnel processes. Guidelines for writing those summaries should be provided so that portfolio reviewers forward information in ways that can reasonably be evaluated at the institution level.
    b. Guidelines for writing the faculty-generated portions of teaching effectiveness documentation that are prepared for use in personnel actions should be provided; this will enable faculty to appropriately contextualize SET results for consideration by reviewers.
12. The institutionally-generated SET results are officially public documents at UND given the state's laws. Although the *Faculty Handbook* discourages the use of students' written comments in personnel actions or for other administrative purposes, those documents can legally be used at the discretion of the appropriate supervisor or administrator. Faculty should be made aware of this since state law means that those documents will continue to remain available. On the other hand, faculty have a genuine need to solicit student input for formative use (i.e., use in improving their teaching and the course). Given the importance of student perspectives in determining course design, curriculum, and pedagogy, faculty should be encouraged to explore other means of soliciting informal student feedback. The regular use of Classroom Assessment Techniques (which can be done anonymously and thus can function in ways similar to the written section of the current USAT form) is one such strategy. However, there may be other means of encouraging systematic input from students as well, and soliciting such input should be strongly encouraged. (In fact, faculty commitment to collecting and benefiting from student perspectives may be one meaningful indicator of teaching quality.)

Summary of Key Research Findings and Sources

Recommendations listed on the previous pages were derived from review of a number of studies and documents. Examples include policies for use of USAT information in various departments/colleges at UND, a factor analysis of the USAT, a best practices report compiled by the Educational Advisory Board, practices for use of SET information on other campuses, examples of SET forms in use at other institutions where SET practices are considered exemplary, and various research articles and studies. Subcommittee reports found on the following pages identify the issues each group was studying, materials subcommittee members considered in drafting recommendations for whole-group discussion, and summaries of the findings that informed their reports to the ad hoc committee. All three subcommittee reports are included in their entirety.

For more information and background regarding individual recommendations, please refer to Subcommittee Reports as listed below.

Recommendation 1: See Subcommittee One Report
Recommendations 2: See Subcommittee One Report
Recommendation 3: See Subcommittee Two Report; (see Subcommittee One Report for information on closed Likert questions)
Recommendation 4: See Subcommittee Two Report
Recommendation 5: See Subcommittee One Report
Recommendation 6: See Subcommittee Two Report
Recommendation 7: See Subcommittee Two Report
Recommendation 8: See Subcommittee Two and Three Reports
Recommendation 9: See Subcommittee Three Report
Recommendation 10: See Subcommittee Three Report
Recommendation 11: See Subcommittee Three Report
Recommendation 12: See Subcommittee Three Report

Subcommittee One Report of
Issues, Findings, Recommendations, Sources

Summary of Issues

Should UND adopt a different "student evaluation of teaching (SET)" form? If yes, what should the new SET form be (i.e., an established form or create/adapt to a new form)? If a new SET form is adopted, what options can be provided to offer more flexibility such as for course type?

The current SET (USAT) has been in use since approximately 2011, yet has not been empirically validated. An analysis of the USAT data from Spring 2013 indicates the current SET form is limited/poor psychometrically (see University Student Assessment of Teaching (USAT):
Data Analysis Report report). Other SET forms have been developed, empirically tested, and found to be valid and reliable instrument for assessing teaching effectiveness, such as the Student Evaluation of Educational Quality (SEEQ, Marsh 1982). There are discipline and course differences that would be greatly assisted by having unique questions on the SET that address specific aspects; however, the current SET does not allow for such variations.

Research Examined

- As an example of a potential other SET form, Marsh and Roche (1997) demonstrated that an existing, publically available SET form called the Students' Evaluation of Educational Quality (SEEQ, see Appendix for items)
    - Developed from variety of sources (e.g., other instruments, interviews with teachers & students, psychometric analyses), the SEEQ form has been studied among "50,000 classes (representing responses to nearly one million SEEQ responses)" (p. 1187-1188), and is utilized internationally.
    - The SEEQ assesses educational quality in 9 categories that consistently separate with factor analysis: Learning/Value, Organization/Clarity, Breadth of Coverage, Examinations/Grading, Enthusiasm, Group interaction, Individual rapport, Assignments/Readings, Workload/Difficulty
    - In terms of reliability, the subscales have been found to have strong internal consistency (Cronbach's alpha ≈ .95), and a 13-year longitudinal study found ratings of instructors to be remarkably consistent.
    - In terms of validity, the SEEQ significantly correlated with faculty evaluations of own teaching, student performance on exams, and trained external observers.

-In a "Tuesday Two's" survey of UND students (May 6 2014) "Do you think the responses you provide on the USAT form make a difference?", 69.8% of students said no.

- The Educational Advisory Board (EAB, 2014) report states "One critique of university-wide evaluations is that they cannot assess the unique circumstances of a variety of disciplines and/or departments... (customizing questions) provides the departments with a sense of ownership over the assessments, and it also allows departments to glean information that may not be gathered by the university-wide assessment… these questions should also remain stable over time to provide consistency of responses." (p. 8)
    - As an example of flexibility, the University of Iowa has a question bank as an example of course specific questions (see Appendix)

If a new SET form is adopted, how many quantitative (closed, Likert style) versus qualitative (open-ended, written) questions should be included? How should the qualitative question data be used?

Issue described:

The current qualitative questions on the UND USAT form are useful and helpful for informing teaching quality. However, open-ended data is difficult to share with others (faculty members, students) publically due to fear of confidentiality, inappropriate responses, etc. Thus they are not shared openly and this leads to issues of transparency. There is inconsistency in how the qualitative data are being used, such as in tenure and promotion materials

Research Examined:

- An Educational Advisory Board (EAB, 2014) report called "Student Evaluation of Faculty: Purpose, Design, and Implementation" touted the benefits of open-ended responses. The report says "Open-ended questions provide strong formative data for professional development as faculty prepare for future semesters." (p. 8).
- We also discussed the following sentence from the EAB report, "all contacts recommend designing an instrument with half Likert scale questions and half open-ended questions." The subcommittee agreed that this is best interpreted as half the space on the form (not number of questions), and thus the current three qualitative USAT questions would be approximately equivalent to the proposed set of quantitative questions.

References

Educational Advisory Board (2014). *Student evaluation of faculty: Purpose, design, and implementation*. Retrieved from http://www.eab.com/

Marsh, H. W. (1982). SEEQ: A reliable, valid, and useful instrument for collecting students' evaluations of university teaching. *British Journal of Educational Psychology, 52*(1), 77-95.

Marsh, H., & Roche, L. (1997). Making students' evaluations of teaching effectiveness effective: The critical issues of validity, bias, and utility. *American Psychologist, 52*(11), 1187-1197.

Subcommittee One Appendixes

Student Evaluation of Educational Quality (SEEQ)

First 29 statements: (Strongly Disagree, Disagree, Neutral, Agree, Strongly Agree)

Learning:

1. I have found the course intellectually challenging and stimulating.
2. I have learned something which I consider valuable.
3. My interest in the subject has increased as a consequence of this course.
4. I have learned and understood the subject materials of this course.

Enthusiasm:

5. Instructor was enthusiastic about teaching the course.
6. Instructor was dynamic and energetic in conducting the course.
7. Instructor enhanced presentations with the use of humor.
8. Instructor's style of presentation held my interest during class.

Organization:

9. Instructor's explanations were clear.
10. Course materials were well prepared and carefully explained.
11. Proposed objectives agreed with those actually taught so I knew where course was going.
12. Instructor gave lectures that facilitated taking notes.

Group Interaction:

13. Students were encouraged to participate in class discussions.
14. Students were invited to share their ideas and knowledge.
15. Students were encouraged to ask questions and were given meaningful answers.
16. Students were encouraged to express their own ideas and/or question the instructor.

Individual Rapport:

17. Instructor was friendly towards individual students.
18. Instructor made students feel welcome in seeking help/advice in or outside of class.
19. Instructor had a genuine interest in individual students.
20. Instructor was adequately accessible to students during office hours or after class.

Breadth:

21. Instructor contrasted the implications of various theories.
22. Instructor presented the background or origin of ideas/concepts developed in class.
23. Instructor presented points of view other than his/her own when appropriate.
24. Instructor adequately discussed current developments in the field.

Examinations:

25. Feedback on examinations/graded materials was valuable.
26. Methods of evaluating student work were fair and appropriate.
27. Examinations/graded materials tested course content as emphasized by the instructor.

Assignments:

28. Required readings/texts were valuable.
29. Readings, homework, laboratories contributed to appreciation and understanding of subject.

Overall: (N/A, Very Poor, Poor, Average, Good, Very Good)

30. Compared with other courses I have had at the UND, I would say this course is:
31. Compared with other instructors I have had at the UND, I would say this instructor is:
32. As an overall rating, I would say this instructor is:

University of Iowa "Student Core Questions"

The student core is automatically printed on the back of ACE answer sheets (for instructors selecting this option) as a block of six items. Results from the student core are given to the University of Iowa Student Government to distributed on campus.

210. This course requires an appropriate amount of work for the credit earned.
901. This instructor increased my interest in the course material.
902. This instructor clearly communicated class material.
903. Exams in this course were fair.
904. The syllabus was an accurate guide to course requirements.
104. Overall, this is an excellent course.

Retrieved from http://www.uiowa.edu/~examserv/index.html

University of Iowa "Example Test Bank of Course Specific Questions"

Lab Courses and Sections

801. This instructor almost always speaks to me individually about experiments in progress.
802. This instructor is able to explain the procedures involved in the experiments.
803. Lab time is scheduled so that experiments can be finished.
804. I am able to complete the lab activities in the time allotted.
805. Safety regulations (safety glasses, no eating in lab, etc.) are strictly enforced.
806. This instructor is able to answer my questions about what I should be doing in the lab.
807. My lab reports are graded fairly.
808. My lab reports are returned in a reasonable amount of time.
809. Lab techniques I am expected to develop are clearly demonstrated.
810. Expectations about specific lab procedures are clearly stated in advance.
811. Lab experiences clarify the lecture material.
812. Organization of the lab activities assists me in learning.
813. Lab experiences assist me in learning concepts.
814. I would recommend this lab instructor to a friend planning to take this course.
844. Prelab lectures are helpful in my understanding of the laboratory experiments.
845. The teaching assistant(s) were helpful to me in the laboratory.
846. The oral communication skills of the teaching assistant(s) are adequate for this lab.

Clinical Courses

815. Specific problems with my clinical technique are identified by this instructor.
816. Prescribed criteria is used in evaluating my performance.
817. I receive constructive criticism of written reports.
818. This instructor clearly demonstrates the clinical techniques I am expected to develop.
819. This instructor helps me correct problems in my clinical technique.
820. Frequent feedback on my performance is provided.
821. Timely feedback on the adequacy of specific skills is provided.
822. Both appropriate and inappropriate clinical behaviors are clearly identified.
823. An adequate amount of observation and supervision is provided.
824. Considering client availability, required clinical experiences are realistic.
825. Client availability is adequate to achieve course objectives.
826. I am given responsibility for patients commensurate with my abilities.

827. Clinical cases provide an adequate breadth of experience.
828. Prior course work adequately prepared me to handle clinical tasks.
829. Group meetings are helpful in increasing my knowledge and skills.
830. I have improved my ability to present and discuss case problems effectively and concisely.
831. Clinical experiences illustrate guidelines for ethical and professional behavior.

Production Courses
832. The demands made upon my talents are exciting and challenging.
833. My individual artistic gifts have developed because of this course.
834. Time spent in rehearsal is well used.
835. Rehearsal time is used effectively.
836. Performance requirements represent outcomes which I can achieve in the time allotted.
837. Performances provide me an opportunity to demonstrate my learning.
838. Rehearsal experiences will be helpful to me in my future profession.
839. The conductor helps me feel confident in performing music new to me.
840. Directions given by the conductor in rehearsal are presented clearly.
841. This instructor attempts to relate my present learning to work in my future profession.
842. This instructor values my creativity and/or originality.
843. There is an appropriate balance between artistic philosophy and craft taught in this course.
Retrieved from http://www.uiowa.edu/~examserv/index.html

Subcommittee Two Report of
Issues, Findings, Recommendations, Sources

Problems

I. Students appear to inflate their scores on the existing SET form (for example, SET questions about the instructor uniformly average 4.1–4.4). citation: http://und.edu/research/institutional-research/_files/docs/usat/und-summary.pdf; accessed 2014-11-13

II. 70% of students believe their SET feedback does not make a difference. citation: "Tuesday Two's" 2014-05-06

III. The current form is time consuming to process and error prone (2.5% have an invalid course ID number; 12% answer multiple essential studies questions). citation: committee evaluation of spring 2013 USAT data

Recommendations

A. Transparency. Promote transparency of the SET process and results, by creating a website reporting SET scores. The website would also report how the scores are used at the university, college, department, and professor level. The website would be interactive, allowing students to filter the results based on college, department, course, and instructor, displaying all or select questions from the SET survey. Several universities and colleges offer examples of a SET website, see appendix. This addresses problem II. We believe more transparent use of SET and providing results to students will also address problem I.

B. Midterm SETs. Recommend that instructors utilize midterm SETs in their classes. A midterm SET is optional, not required. It would have the same format as the end of term SET, and possibly use a subset of those questions. Midterm results would not appear on the website (see A) and would not be considered for Tenure and Promotion; they would only be for improving the course in progress. Faculty would not be allowed to use midterm results in annual evaluations, but would be allowed to reflect on how those results affected their teaching (similar to SGIDs). Literature indicates this leads students to believe their end of term SET is more highly valued, addressing problems I and II.

C. Paperless SETs. Offer SETs in an online, paperless format. An online, paperless format may offer customization for courses by including questions related to college/department goals, type of course (i.e. lab, online), or instructor interest. Each student and course would have a unique url, optimally; alternatively, students would access the unique course URL with their UND login and password. Historically, asynchronous SETs generally have poor completion rates.To increase completion rates, several strategies may be applied:

i. An asynchronous professor could set a class goal for completion percentage.
ii. Meeting the goal would mean the entire class earns some points in the course.
iii. The online survey would be configured to send a confirmation email with each completed survey (identifying only the student's course) so that reminders can be activated.
iv. Synchronous courses would not need the incentive, as instructors can provide class time to complete the surveys.

Literature indicates 0.25% course credit is sufficient to increase completion rates (Dommeyer et al 2004. Gathering faculty teaching evaluations by in-class and online surveys: Their effects on response rates and evaluations. *Assessment & Evaluation in Higher Education*, 29(5), 611-623.)

Participation rates can be collected and displayed on a website, and several vendors offer real-time reporting of SET participation and results. This information may be viewed using the application site, imported into iDashboards, or integrated with Predictive Analytics Reporting (PAR) data for use in student retention efforts. See appendix for vendor list.

This addresses problem III. It is also necessary in order to implement recommendation B, and would allow recommendation A to occur before the subsequent semester begins.

D. Communication of SETs and recommendations to UND users. We should communicate the process and recommendations to faculty, soliciting feedback. Options include:

a. Present to a department chairs meeting.

b. Present to a faculty forum in January, asking:

i. "Should the website (see A) provide filtering by individual instructor?"

ii. "Should students possibly be rewarded for completing the survey?"

c. After (or preceding?) the forum, send an email to faculty.

We should also communicate the process and recommendations to students, soliciting feedback.

a. Present to the Student Senate at its January meeting.

b. Possibly present to a student forum.

There are several options for communicating the importance of the SET to students, including:

a. The university would create a video featuring President Kelley or Provost DiLorenzo with the student body president.

b. The Dakota Student would have an article the week before the survey. It could include a testimonial from a young professor saying what it means to them.

c. The university could place advertisements in the Dakota Student.

d. The university offers a campaign similar to a "Get Out the Vote" drive.

This addresses problem II.

Appendix

SET Transparency/Information Websites:

Clayton State University: http://www.clayton.edu/provost/Other/Evaluation-FAQ
Stanford University: https://studentaffairs.stanford.edu/registrar/students/course-evals-faq
Ball State University:
http://cms.bsu.edu/about/administrativeoffices/provost/facresources/crseresponsefaqs
Boston College: http://www.bc.edu/offices/stserv/academic/online_course_evals.html
Class Climate information from YouTube videos:
https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PL513A7AD8482330A6
Harvard Kennedy School http://www.hks.harvard.edu/degrees/teaching-courses/course-evaluations
...includes a mid-term evaluation sample
University of Denver http://www.du.edu/ir/evaluations/
Arizona State University https://uoeee.asu.edu/online-course-evaluation-faqs
Penn State https://evaluation.isc-seo.upenn.edu/blue/files/OnlineCourseEvaluation-faq.htm
...references Penn Course Review to help students choose classes; students who have not completed their evaluations are prompted to do so before checking their grades—there is an opt-out option though;
Yale University http://www.yale.edu/sfas/registrar/oce_faqs_faculty.html
University of Alabama http://oira.ua.edu/soi/soi_info.html and http://oira.ua.edu/soi/soi_info.html
since spring 2010. References pilot projects since fall 2008, with doubled participation rates for online, while campus rates held steady; student participation campaign: Your Opinion Matters

Factors to Increase Student Use of SETs

Beran, T., Violato, C., Kline, D., Frideres, J. (2009). "What do students consider useful about student ratings?" ***Assessment & Evaluation in Higher Education.*** **34(5)**

In a Canadian university study, three factors explain 64% of variance: instructor characteristics, course characteristics, and instructor's relative ranking. Primary use of student ratings is to select courses. Information relevant to that decision is:
Year: First and second year students: instructor characteristics and relative ranking; third and fourth year students: course materials
Gender: More females than males valued instructor characteristics and course materials
Enrollment Status: Part-time students valued course materials more than full-time students
Frequent users of SET data valued instructor characteristics and ranking more than course materials

Berk, R. A. (2012). Top 20 strategies to increase the online response rates of student rating scales. ***International Journal of Technology in Teaching and Learning*****, 8(2)**

Online response rates in the 50s (percent) compared to 70s-80s for paper-based. Reasons for low response rates include: apathy, technical problems, perceived lack of anonymity, lack of importance, inconvenience, inaccessibility, and time for completion. Author compiled a list of top 20 strategies, grouped by person responsible for executing the strategy:

Coordinator of online system.
1. Independent of faculty to monitor the process.
2. Specifies purpose of ratings in the survey directions.
3. Assures ease of access and navigation.
4. Monitors use of devices and procedures for in-class completion
5. Assures anonymity and confidentiality.
6. Provides instructions on how to use the system.
7. Maintains a convenient, user-friendly system.
8. Sends reminders to students before and during survey window.
9. Plans ad campaigns to students
10. Provides school-wide incentives, such as lottery for mobile devices, bookstore items, food coupons
11. Acknowledges and rewards faculty and/or departments that meet target response rates.
12. Promotes donor/alumni contributions of a dollar amount to a charity for every form completed.
13. Communicates that feedback is student culture and responsibility
**14. Permits students' early access to final grades ASAP after course ends

Faculty and Administrators
15. Dean, dept chairs and faculty communicate to students the importance of their input
16. Faculty emphasize the intended purpose(s) of the ratings.
17. Faculty strongly encourage students and remind them to complete forms.
18. Faculty "assign" student to complete forms as part of course grade.
19. Faculty provide positive incentives, such as extra credit points or dropping a low grade on an assignment or quiz; movie or restaurant vouchers
20. Faculty set an in-class time to complete the SETs, with laptops and mobile devices.

**Strategy 14 is the most successful, but dependent on grade-posting schedule.

Two key factors to ensure response rates are managing students expectations of the process and system accountability to the results. Expectations: 1) improvements in teaching; 2) improvements in course content and format; 3) faculty personnel decisions. Accountability: effort to make change/close the loop.

Recommendations: Need a balance of strategies, commitment of all stakeholders, and follow up with system accountability.

Online SET Vendor Summary

	Blackboard course survey	Blackboard enterprise survey	Qualtrics	Class Climate (Scantron)	Evaluation Kit	What Do You Think (College Net)
Users				300	200	
Cost	$0	$0	$0	$46k+ $9k/yr	$15-$20k/yr	$40k+ $24k/yr
Pilot cost	$0	$0	$0	$2.6k	$0	$40k?
Mobile	yes	yes	$3k	yes	Yes	yes
Customiz-able	with work	no	with work	yes	yes	yes
Co-instructor	with work	no	with work	yes	with work	with work
BB integration	yes	yes	no	yes	yes	yes
preliminary data	yes	yes	with work	yes	Yes	yes
single sign-on	yes	yes	unique email	yes	Yes	Shibboleth.
reminder email	no	no	yes	yes	Yes	yes

Key:
Customizable: can we define questions based on college, department, course, Essential Studies, etc?
Preliminary data: can the instructor find out how many surveys were completed before receiving the final results?
Single sign-on: Is the survey accessible via UND's IDM?
"with work": this can be done, but will require someone at UND to preprocess the information, possibly with the use of a UND created graphical front end

Notes:
*Class Climate can generate paper surveys unique to each course with a bar code identifying the course information. This would require a new scantron machine.
* All surveys are ADA compatible.
* Most surveys are not truly anonymous to someone with administrative rights to the survey. In particular, students should not believe that a Blackboard course survey guarantees anonymity.

Subcommittee Three Report
Issues, Findings, Recommendations, Sources

Issue/Problem:

Personnel processes at UND (i.e., tenure, promotion, merit pay, retention of pre-tenure and non-tenure track faculty) use student evaluation of teaching results in widely disparate ways. This includes differences in how the forms are administered, what students are told prior to administration, how results are fed into personnel processes, which portions of the form are used, whether or not a "cut score" for teaching excellence is identified, etc. Although there is probably good reason for some degree of variability, the tremendous degree of variation suggests that there is a little clarity across campus about the meaning, value, and use of student evaluation information. In addition, a review of the research suggests that there are best practices (and cautions) regarding the use of such information, and those do not appear to be fully reflected in UND's current use of student evaluation results.

Findings from Research that Support Recommendations:

- A report from the Educational Advisory Board (EAB) concludes that best practice with student evaluation of teaching includes use of the findings longitudinally, i.e, to indicate trends in the performance of an individual faculty member, and then to conduct follow-up as a means of continual attention to growth in teaching quality. Use of student evaluation findings in this way requires that results be disaggregated according to factors so that faculty can dedicate their efforts to improving in specific areas of need.
- The EAB finds that student evaluations of teaching should be only a single component of a teaching review, without disproportionate emphasis.
- The EAB report also supports the use of faculty workshops to help faculty understand student evaluations and their use. In addition to helping faculty make good use of the data they receive from student evaluations, it enhances transparency regarding use of data from those evaluations.
- An analysis of course evaluation use (Philip B. Stark, "An Evaluation of Course Evaluations," September 2014) finds that there are a number of problems with typical uses of student evaluation of teaching data. Among their conclusions:
    - Student response rates "say little about teaching effectiveness" but, when a low response rate exists, the resulting data "should not be considered representative of the class as a whole."
    - Cross-department or cross-college comparisons of average scores "make no sense" because such comparisons involve averaging ordinal data (i.e., "labels" rather than real numbers). This is a misuse of the data in a number of ways, but, most basically, a faculty member receiving a score of 1 from student A and a score of 5 from student B is receiving quite a different message than a faculty member receiving scores of 3 from both students – although the averages will come out the same.
    - The spread of scores in generally more meaningful than the average in terms of understanding the teaching occurring in a given class.
    - If an acceptable score average is set based on some meaningful indicator (e.g., a departmental mean), then by definition, some percentage of future scores must be below that average. If an acceptable score is set without a meaningful indicator, if may be viewed as arbitrary.

    - Typical student evaluation of teaching scores tend to vary significantly depending on student level, reason for taking the course, style of course (e.g., lab vs. lecture), and other variables – meaning that it's difficult to identify an acceptable score for faculty even within a single department.
    - Student evaluations of teaching can be excellent indicators of factors such as teacher clarity, pace, legibility, audibility, and student engagement.
- A *Chronicle of Higher Education* blog post summarizing best practices in student evaluation use points out that scores from those evaluations should be used in context with other indicators of teaching effectiveness, including, perhaps, success in subsequent courses, substantive classroom visits by peers, review of assignments, review of the teacher's responses on student papers, etc.
- A review of policies guiding personnel processes at UND (primarily T&P policies within different colleges) indicates fairly substantive disparities in how faculty are instructed to use information from student evaluations of teaching, including the identification of different question subsets for inclusion in faculty reviews and the identification of different "cut scores" as indicators of appropriate levels of quality.

General principle: ***Guidelines regarding administration and use of student evaluations of teaching (at UND, known as USATs) should be provided. "Guidelines" are not intended to be requirements, but providing best practice information regarding USAT use should result in more limited variability and better choices.***

Specific Recommendations:

1. Any form used for student evaluation of teaching is likely to include a number of questions, not all of which are meaningful indicators of teaching quality. ***Specific questions that are most appropriate for use in personnel processes should be identified*** for departmental and college consideration for use.

2. ***In no case should student evaluation of teaching scores serve as the sole meaningful measure of teaching quality.*** This principle is applicable regardless of the specific form used or the specific subset of questions considered. Numerical teaching scores should be triangulated with other indicators of teaching practices and quality. Examples of other indicators may include works related to scholarship of teaching and learning, presentations on classroom teaching methods, documentation of successful advising, materials supporting use of innovative teaching methods, midterm student evaluation of teaching reports (excluding SGIDs), substantive peer evaluations constructed according to departmental standards, teaching portfolios scored using a rubric, teaching proposals, etc.

    a. ***Good practice with qualitative data includes triangulation of findings so that no particular measure dominates the definition.***

    b. ***The use of "cut scores" for delineation of merit categories is not optimal.*** When such cut scores are incorporated into departmental or college personnel processes, conclusions should be supported through additional documentation of successful teaching practices.

3. When student evaluation of teaching scores are included in personnel processes, ***it makes sense that standards for scores may vary depending on college, department, and* type *of class.*** Scores received in general education classes, for example, are typically lower than those received in classes that students take out of interest. One result of this is that departments may want to recognize that "excellent teaching" scores in an ES course may be quite different than scores in an upper division or graduate course in the major. Excellent scores in labs may differ in systematic ways from those in lecture sections. Scores in theoretical or methods courses may differ from those in practice courses.

4. ***Guidelines for documents associated with personnel processes should be developed and used***.

    a. Summaries of teaching merit are written by deans, chairs, and faculty committee as part of personnel processes. Guidelines for writing those summaries should be provided so that portfolio reviewers forward information in ways that can reasonably be evaluated (i.e., providing information that goes beyond a numeric summary) at the institution level.

    b. Guidelines for writing the teaching portion of a portfolio to be used in personnel actions should be provided as a strategy for enabling faculty to appropriately contextualize student evaluation of teaching results for consideration by reviewers.

5. ***Student evaluations of teaching are officially public documents at UND given the state's laws.*** Although the Faculty Handbook discourages the use of students' written comments in personnel actions or for other administrative purposes, those documents can legally be used at the discretion of the appropriate supervisor or administrator. Faculty should be made aware of this since state law means that those documents will continue to remain available. On the other hand, faculty have a genuine need to solicit student input for formative use (i.e., use in improving their teaching and the course). Given the importance of student perspectives in determining course design, curriculum, and pedagogy, faculty should be encouraged to explore other means of soliciting informal student feedback. The regular use of Classroom Assessment Techniques (which can be done anonymously and thus can function in ways similar to the written section of the current USAT form) is one such strategy. However, there may be other means of encouraging systematic input from students as well, and solicitation such input should be strongly encouraged. (In fact, faculty commitment to collecting and benefiting from student perspectives may be one meaningful indicator of teaching quality.)

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8. “Student Evaluation of Faculty: Purpose, Design, and Implementation (Profiles of Public Research Universities)”, A. Wilson and J. Tannous, Education Advisory Board: Academic Affairs Forum (2014).
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APPENDICES

University Student Assessment of Teaching (USAT): Data Analysis Report

Data was provided by Carmen Williams, UND Institutional Research.
Data was transformed to analyzable format by Tim Prescott.
Data analysis conducted by and report written by Rob Stupnisky.

OBJECTIVE & DATA SET

The objective of the current analyses was to explore the psychometric quality of the USAT form by conducting statistical tests on actual student responses. Data analysis was conducted in October 2014 on Spring 2013 USAT data. The dataset included 32,648 responses to the USAT. Missing responses were excluded using pairwise deletion (i.e., on a question by question basis). Missing responses ranged from 4783 for pre-assessment information (e.g., reason for taking course) to 700-800 for the main assessment questions (1-22). The main analyses involve USAT items 1-22, which are those labeled on the USAT form as “Questions about yourself” (i.e., the student, 1-4), “about the course” (5-8), “about the instructor” (9-19), and “Summary questions” (20-22).

DESCRIPTION OF SAMPLE

The largest group of students was freshmen. Most students were taking the course because it was required for the major or minor. Most students expected to get an A in their course.

student_year Student's year in college

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1 Freshman	7771	23.8	25.9	25.9
	2 Sophmore	6110	18.7	20.4	46.2
	3 Junior	6147	18.8	20.5	66.7
	4 Senior	6283	19.2	20.9	87.7
	5 Graduate/Professional	3706	11.4	12.3	100.0
	Total	30017	91.9	100.0	
Missing	System	2631	8.1		
Total		32648	100.0		

reason_taking_course Reason for taking course

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1 Interest	3582	11.0	12.6	12.6
	2 Major/minor requirement	20836	63.8	73.3	85.9
	3 Essential studies/Gen Ed requirement	3764	11.5	13.2	99.2
	4 Reputation of course	58	.2	.2	99.4
	5 Reputation of instructor	150	.5	.5	99.9
	6 Other (Don't know)	21	.1	.1	100.0
	Total	28411	87.0	100.0	
Missing	System	4237	13.0		
Total		32648	100.0		

expected_grade expected grade

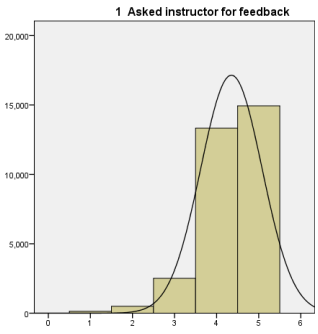
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1 A	16122	49.4	57.9	57.9
	2 B	8190	25.1	29.4	87.2
	3 C	1965	6.0	7.1	94.3
	4 D	143	.4	.5	94.8
	5 F	21	.1	.1	94.9
	6 Audit	15	.0	.1	94.9
	7 Satisfactory	386	1.2	1.4	96.3
	8 Unsatisfactory	11	.0	.0	96.4
	9 Don't know	1012	3.1	3.6	100.0
	Total	27865	85.3	100.0	
Missing	System	4783	14.7		
Total		32648	100.0		

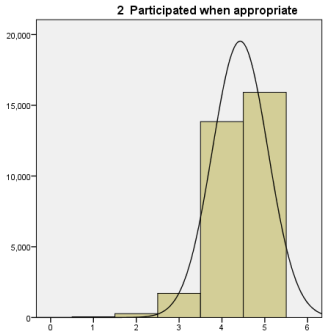
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS

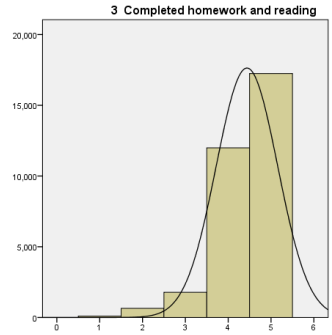
General patterns in responses to each individual question (1-22) indicates a full range of responses are being provided from 1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree. For each question, however, the data was negatively skewed (i.e., many more positive responses than negative). A more desirable distribution of responses would be a normal or bell-shaped pattern with equal positive and negative responses.

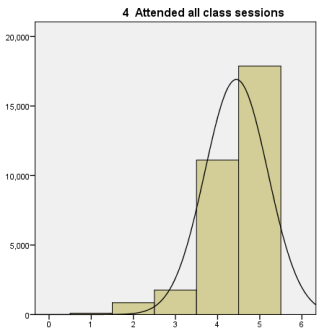
Questions about yourself: (i.e., the student)

		QY1_Asked_Instructor_feedback 1 Asked instructor for feedback	QY2_Participated_when_appropriate 2 Participated when appropriate	QY3_Completed_homework_reading 3 Completed homework and reading	QY4_Attended_all_class_sessions 4 Attended all class sessions
N	Valid	31417	31777	31754	31711
	Missing	1231	871	894	937
Mean		4.35	4.43	4.44	4.44
Std. Deviation		.731	.649	.718	.748
Skewness		-1.160	-1.012	-1.395	-1.502
Kurtosis		1.844	1.476	2.418	2.525



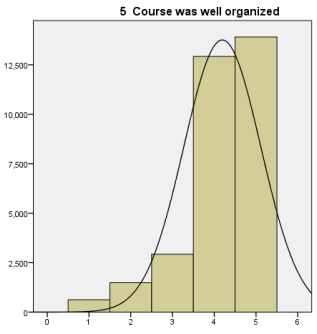


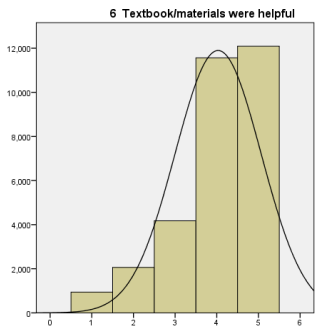


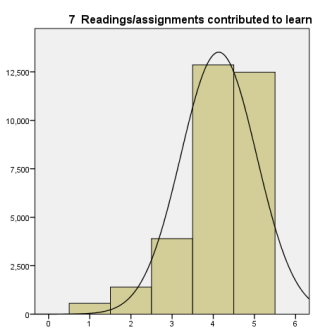


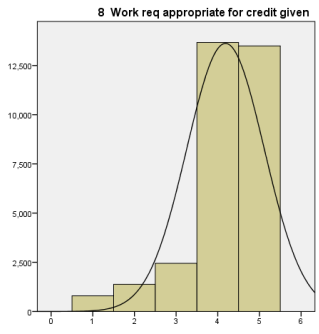
Questions about the course:

		QC5_Course_well_organized 5 Course was well organized	QC6_Textbook_materials_helpful 6 Textbook/materials were helpful	QC7_Readings_contributed_learning 7 Readings/assignments contributed to learning	QC8_Work_appropriate_credit 8 Work req appropriate for credit given
N	Valid	31864	30825	31186	31794
	Missing	784	1823	1462	854
Mean		4.19	4.03	4.13	4.19
Std. Deviation		.924	1.034	.920	.931
Skewness		-1.340	-1.089	-1.159	-1.445
Kurtosis		1.778	.690	1.287	2.210





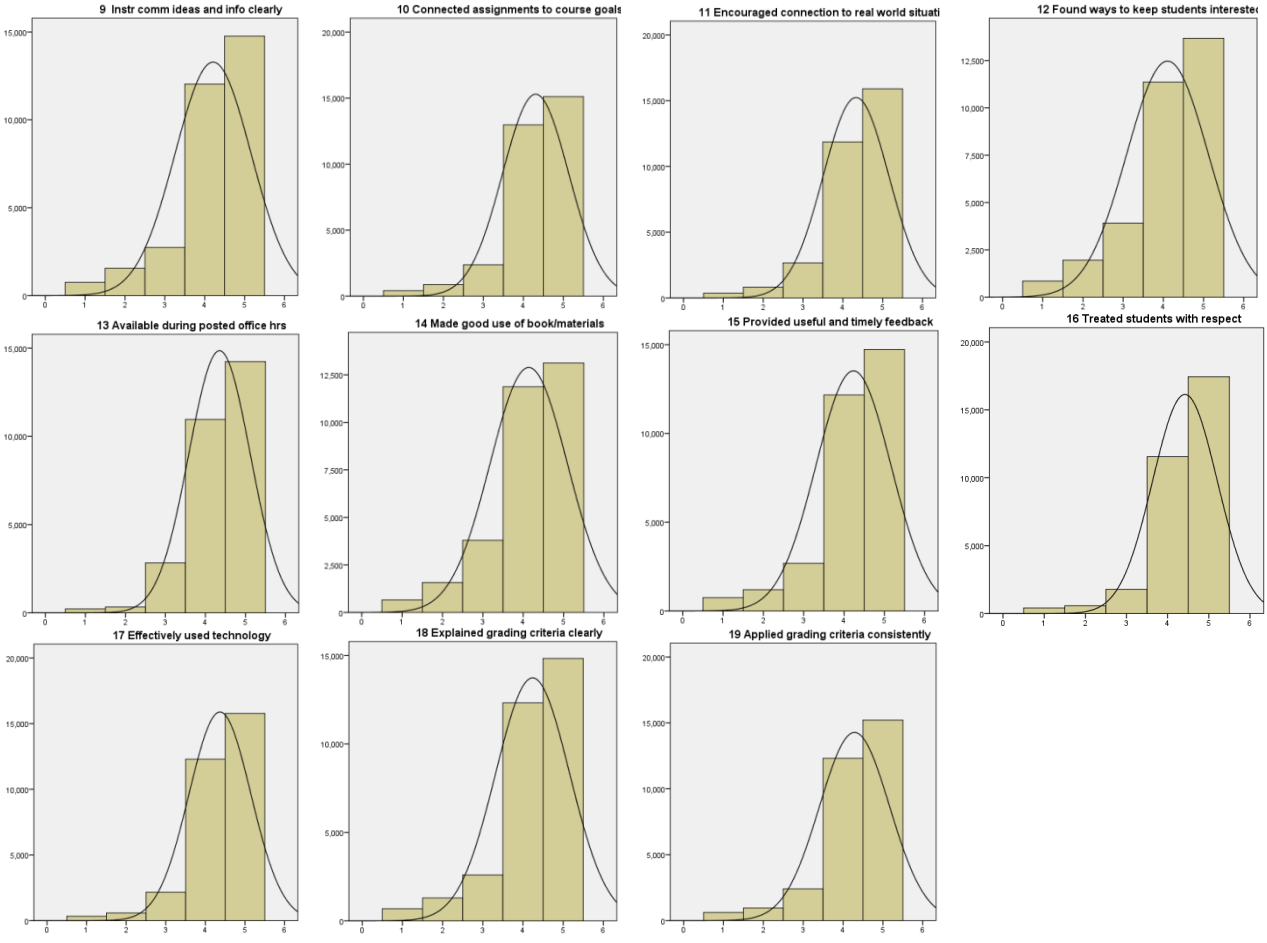




Questions about the instructor:

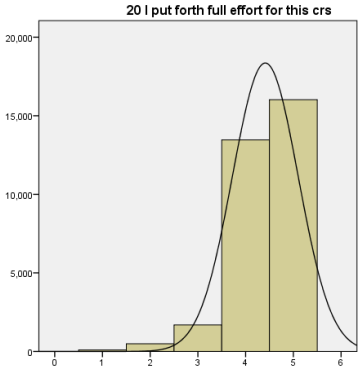
		QI9_Instr_comm_info_clearly 9 Instr comm ideas and info clearly	QI10_Connected_assigns_coursegoals 10 Connected assignments to course goals	QI11_Connection_realworld_situations 11 Encouraged connection to real world situations	QI12_Keep_students_interested 12 Found ways to keep students interested	QI13_Available_office_hours 13 Available during posted office hrs	Q14_Good_use_book 14 Made good use of book/materials
N	Valid	31836	31746	31635	31757	28587	31013
	Missing	812	902	1013	891	4061	1635
Mean		4.21	4.31	4.33	4.10	4.35	4.14
Std. Deviation		.956	.828	.828	1.016	.768	.960
Skewness		-1.411	-1.468	-1.445	-1.177	-1.262	-1.194
Kurtosis		1.827	2.706	2.452	.912	2.076	1.182

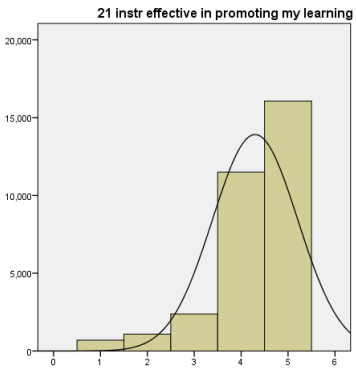
		QI15_Useful_timely_feedback 15 Provided useful and timely feedback	QI16_Treated_students_respect 16 Treated students with respect	QI17_Effectively_used_technology 17 Effectively used technology	QI18_Explained_grading_criteria 18 Explained grading criteria clearly	QI19_Applied_grading_consistently 19 Applied grading criteria consistently
N	Valid	31532	31736	31145	31723	31500
	Missing	1116	912	1503	925	1148
Mean		4.23	4.42	4.37	4.24	4.29
Std. Deviation		.930	.785	.782	.921	.880
Skewness		-1.476	-1.744	-1.515	-1.464	-1.549
Kurtosis		2.241	4.006	3.122	2.197	2.758

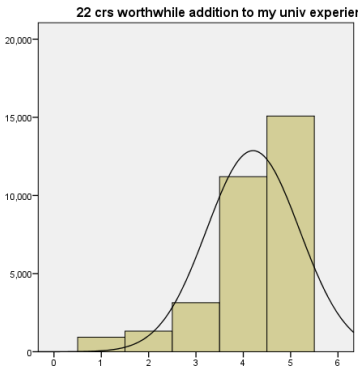


Summary Questions:

		SQ20_I_put_forth_full_effort 20 I put forth full effort for this crs	SQ21_instr_effective_promoting_learning 21 instr effective in promoting my learning	SQ22_course_worthwhile_univ_experience 22 crs worthwhile addition to my univ experience
N	Valid	31755	31718	31666
	Missing	893	930	982
Mean		4.41	4.30	4.21
Std. Deviation		.690	.909	.982
Skewness		-1.245	-1.593	-1.429
Kurtosis		2.302	2.679	1.829





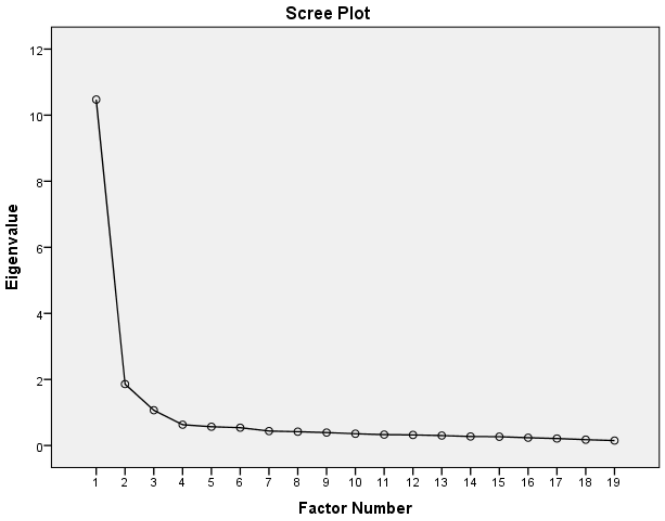


EXPLORATORY FACTOR ANALYSIS (EFA)

Several exploratory factor analysis were conducted to determine how USAT items may be combined based on similarity of responses by participants (SPSS Principle Axis Factoring, extracted factors with eigenvalues greater than 1.00 and using scree plot, direct oblimin [oblique] rotation, only loadings > .30 displayed). The results below are from an EFA using items 1-19. Additional analyses with other combinations of items were also conducted, although the results pointed to the same conclusions. The summary questions were excluded as they represented an "Overall…" perspective; however, inclusion of these items in subsequent analyses yielded very similar findings.

The results suggested 3 factors: (1) instructor/course quality (items 5, 8-13, 15-19), (2) student effort/participation (items 1-4), and (3) readings (items 6, 7, 14). The factor explaining the most variance in students responses was the first factor, student effort/participation (53%), and the scree plot suggests this might even be the only factor. Generally speaking, this pattern of results could be considered problematic because it suggests the USAT instrument does not identify several dimensions of teaching quality, but instead that the majority of the items (expect those regarding course readings) provide the same information about teaching quality. In other words, students are generally not distinguishing differences among the items when they are assessing their instructors teaching.

	Initial Eigenvalues			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings			Rotation Sums of Squared Loadings[a]
Factor	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total
1	10.471	55.113	55.113	10.137	53.355	53.355	9.764
2	1.859	9.786	64.899	1.439	7.573	60.928	4.890
3	1.067	5.617	70.516	.812	4.274	65.202	6.046
4	.629	3.312	73.828				



Pattern Matrix[a]

	Factor		
	1	2	3
QY1_Asked_instructor_feedback 1 Asked instructor for feedback		.635	
QY2_Participated_when_appropriate 2 Participated when appropriate		.777	
QY3_Completed_homework_reading 3 Completed homework and reading		.758	
QY4_Attended_all_class_sessions 4 Attended all class sessions		.751	
QC5_Course_well_organized 5 Course was well organized	.661		
QC6_Textbook_materials_helpful 6 Textbook/materials were helpful			.938
QC7_Readings_contributed_learning 7 Readings/assignments contributed to learning			.691
QC8_Work_appropriate_credit 8 Work req appropriate for credit given	.528		
QI9_Instr_comm_info_clearly 9 Instr comm ideas and info clearly	.867		
QI10_Connected_assigns_coursegoals 10 Connected assignments to course goals	.827		
QI11_Connection_realworld_situations 11 Encouraged connection to real world situations	.754		
QI12_Keep_students_interested 12 Found ways to keep students interested	.776		
QI13_Available_office_hours 13 Available during posted office hrs	.674		
Q14_Good_use_book 14 Made good use of book/materials	.391		.492
QI15_Useful_timely_feedback 15 Provided useful and timely feedback	.843		
QI16_Treated_students_respect 16 Treated students with respect	.824		
QI17_Effectively_used_technology 17 Effectively used technology	.757		
QI18_Explained_grading_criteria 18 Explained grading criteria clearly	.900		
QI19_Applied_grading_consistently 19 Applied grading criteria consistently	.897		

RELIABILITY

The three factors were tested for their internal reliability (i.e., high positive intercorrelations) and indeed found to be internally consistent based on Cronbach alpha's greater than .80: instructor/course quality = .96, student effort/participation = .82, readings = .87. The very high alpha reliability for the instructor/course quality suggests many of the items are so highly intercorrelated that they may be redundant.

CORRELATIONS

Items based on the EFA were added together to create total scores for each factor (instructor/course quality, student effort/participation, readings). These items were then correlated with each other, as well as the questions regarding students' year in college and expected grade (recoded such that 1=F… 5=A). Note that although all of the correlations were statistically significant, this is the result of the high sample size; thus, the actual size of the correlation should be the focus of any interpretations.

Many positive, significant correlations were found, such as among the 3 factors. Instructor quality was particularly highly correlated with the readings factor, suggesting students who more highly rated their instructor/course also found the readings to be more valuable. Small to moderate positive correlations were found between expected grade and the three factors, particularly student self-reported effort. Student year in college (1=Fresman…5=Graduate/Professional) did not have noteworthy sized correlations with any of the 3 factors.

		instr_crs_quality	student_eff_part	readings	student_year	expected_grade_r
instr_crs_quality	Pearson Correlation	1	.495**	.722**	.048**	.251**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.000	.000	.000
	N	27470	27118	26522	25702	22642
student_eff_part	Pearson Correlation	.495**	1	.403**	.083**	.345**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		.000	.000	.000
	N	27118	31055	29644	29063	25621
readings	Pearson Correlation	.722**	.403**	1	.035**	.157**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000		.000	.000
	N	26522	29644	30306	28347	24986
student_year	Pearson Correlation	.048**	.083**	.035**	1	.091**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000		.000
	N	25702	29063	28347	30017	26115
expected_grade_r	Pearson Correlation	.251**	.345**	.157**	.091**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000	
	N	22642	25621	24986	26115	26441

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

GROUP COMPARISONS

Students were grouped based on the reasons why students reported being enrolled in that course (1 = interest, 2 = major/minor requirement, 3 = essential studies/general education requirement) and compared on the 3 factors using one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA). Note that student responses to several options of the USAT form were too small to be included in the analyses (4 = reputation of course, 5 = reputation of instructor, 6 = Other (don't know)). Significant ANOVAs were followed up with pairwise comparisons (Tukey tests) to explore where the difference among the 3 groups existed.

The results yielded a statically significant ANOVA for each of the 3 factors; in other words, the reasons students were enrolled in the course resulted in a difference in how they rated instructor/course quality, student participant/effort, and readings. Further tests revealed students taking the course for interest yielded the most positive USAT scores, followed by major/minor requirement, and essential studies/gen. ed. requirement was least. However, taking into account the large sample size, the actual effect sizes (partial eta squared, R^2) was very small; as such, they should not be viewed as practically important.

<u>IV = Reason taking course, DV = Instructor/course quality</u>:

Dependent Variable: instr_crs_quality

reason_taking_course_r	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
1.00	53.7481	7.03395	3009
2.00	51.3759	8.57774	17885
3.00	50.2964	8.97222	3205
Total	51.5285	8.50399	24099

Dependent Variable: instr_crs_quality

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared
Corrected Model	20105.863[a]	2	10052.932	140.621	.000	.012
Intercept	34494968.99	1	34494968.99	482517.899	.000	.952
reason_taking_course_r	20105.863	2	10052.932	140.621	.000	.012
Error	1722611.274	24096	71.490			
Total	65730122.00	24099				
Corrected Total	1742717.137	24098				

a. R Squared = .012 (Adjusted R Squared = .011)

IV = Reason taking course, DV = Student effort/participation:

Dependent Variable: student_eff_part

reason_taking_course_r	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
1.00	17.7359	2.28618	3446
2.00	17.7391	2.22720	20225
3.00	17.2478	2.44808	3632
Total	17.6734	2.27130	27303

Dependent Variable: student_eff_part

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared
Corrected Model	758.757[a]	2	379.379	73.933	.000	.005
Intercept	4520089.206	1	4520089.206	880874.087	.000	.970
reason_taking_course_r	758.757	2	379.379	73.933	.000	.005
Error	140086.350	27300	5.131			
Total	8668882.000	27303				
Corrected Total	140845.107	27302				

a. R Squared = .005 (Adjusted R Squared = .005)

IV = Reason taking course, DV = Readings:

Dependent Variable: readings

reason_taking_course_r	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
1.00	12.9455	2.30486	3283
2.00	12.2569	2.58575	19759
3.00	11.8781	2.81296	3592
Total	12.2907	2.59969	26634

Dependent Variable: readings

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared
Corrected Model	2041.650[a]	2	1020.825	152.767	.000	.011
Intercept	2170059.876	1	2170059.876	324751.127	.000	.924
reason_taking_course_r	2041.650	2	1020.825	152.767	.000	.011
Error	177954.316	26631	6.682			
Total	4203375.000	26634				
Corrected Total	179995.966	26633				

a. R Squared = .011 (Adjusted R Squared = .011)

SUMMARY

The objective of the current analyses was to explore the psychometric quality of the USAT form by conducting statistical tests on actual student responses. Overall, the results revealed a number of issues with the USAT form: non-normal distributions, a lack of multi-dimensionality, and evidence of repetitive/redundant questions. The most troubling result was that the instructor/course quality items did not combine into meaningful subgroups that represent high quality teaching. The USAT did have some significant effects when compared with student characteristics, such as expected grade and reasons for taking the course; however, beyond statistical significance that was inflated by a large sample, the practical strength of any associations was limited. With these results in mind, the psychometric quality of the USAT form is best described as poor or unsatisfactory.

A Summary of North Dakota's

(2014)

OPEN RECORDS AND MEETINGS LAW

Office of Attorney General, 600 E. Boulevard Avenue, Bismarck, ND 58505

Tel: (701) 328-2210. Website: www.ag.nd.gov

All public entities in North Dakota are subject to open records and open meetings law. "Public entity" includes state and local government agencies, rural fire and ambulance districts, public schools, private businesses or non-profit organizations that are supported by or expending public funds, and contractors, if the contractor is providing services in place of a public entity. The courts are not subject to open records and open meetings law.

MEETINGS

All meetings of a public entity are open unless a specific exception applies to permit the entity to close a portion of the meeting or hold an executive session. *Anyone*, regardless of where they live, has the right to attend and record meetings of a public entity. A member of the public does not have the right to *speak* at an open meeting. As a general rule, there is *no* minimum or mandatory advance notice period for public meetings.

MEETINGS

A "meeting" means *any* gathering of a quorum of the members of a governing body of a public entity regarding public business, and includes: committees and subcommittees, informal gatherings or work sessions, and discussions where a quorum of members are participating by phone, e-mail or other electronic format (either at the same time or in a series of individual contacts). Even e-mails or text messages between members of a committee or subcommittee regarding public business may constitute a meeting.

- A gathering of a quorum of members is not a meeting is if it is a purely social gathering, or if the members are present but are not discussing public business; however, as soon *any* as public business is discussed, it is a "meeting."
- Before a governing body can close a portion of its meeting, it first must convene in a properly noticed open meeting. Next, it has to announce the legal authority to close the meeting and the topics to be considered during the closed portion of the meeting. Unless the law requires a closed meeting, the governing body must vote on whether to close the meeting. Any executive session must be tape recorded.
- All substantive votes must be recorded by roll call.

COMMITTEES

If a governing body delegates any authority to two or more people, the newly formed committee is subject to the open meetings law, even if the committee does not have final authority or is just fact-finding. What it is called does not matter, it is still a committee. Committee and subcommittee meetings must be noticed.

- Portfolios are a committee of the governing body if more than one commissioner holds the portfolio.

NOTICES

Prior written notice is required for all meetings, including committee and sub-committee meetings.

- The notice must include, at a minimum, the date, time and location of the meeting and the agenda topics the governing body expects to address during the meeting. Regular meeting agendas may be altered or added to at the time of the meeting. For special or emergency meetings, *only* the specific topics included in the notice may be discussed.
- If an executive session is anticipated, the meeting notice also must include the executive session as an agenda item, along with the subject matter and the legal authority for the executive session.
- Meeting schedules and notices must be filed with the Secretary of State (for state agencies), the City Auditor (city level entities), or the County Auditor (all other entities); *alternatively*, the public entity may choose to post the meeting schedules and meeting notices on its official website.
- The notice must be posted in the entity's main office, if it has one, and at the location of the meeting (if the meeting is held elsewhere), filed at the appropriate central location (or the entity's website), and given to anyone who has requested it—at the same time the governing body is notified of the meeting.
- Notice of special or emergency meetings also must be given to the entity's official newspaper, as well as to any media representatives or members of the public who have asked to be notified of meetings.

MINUTES

The minutes of meetings are public records and must be provided to anyone upon request. Draft minutes should be made available to the public even if the minutes have not been approved. Some public entities are required by law to provide minutes to the official newspaper.

- Minutes must include, at a minimum, the names of the members attending the meeting; the date and time the meeting was called to order and adjourned; a list of topics discussed regarding public business; a description of each motion made at the meeting and whether the motion was seconded; the results of every vote taken at the meeting; and the vote of each member on every recorded roll call vote. This requirement applies to all governing bodies, including committees and subcommittees.

Continued on page 2 (OPEN RECORDS SUMMARY)

ALL records of a public entity regarding public business are open unless a specific statute makes a record or part of a record confidential or exempt. Everyone has the right to access and obtain copies of public records. A public entity cannot require a request be made in writing, ask the requester's identity, or inquire about the reason for the request. An entity must provide reasonable public access to electronically stored records. If requested, *electronic* records must be provided in electronic format. The entity does not have to respond to questions about public records, create records that do not exist, or convert records to a different format. A public entity cannot refuse to provide an otherwise open record simply because it contains confidential or exempt information; instead, that information must be redacted and the record provided within a reasonable time (generally a few hours or days). An entity must provide the statutory authority for denying all or part of a record, and, if requested, put the denial in writing.

RECORDS

OPEN Records
(**MUST** be released)

Any communication with a public entity or official relating to public business, including minutes, memos, reports, outlines, notes, and other information kept for or relating to official business or public funds, regardless of format or location, including video & audiotape, computer data, e-mails, and photographs, employee salary and job performance records, financial records, telephone records, and travel vouchers.

EXEMPT Records
(**MAY** be withheld at the discretion of the public entity)

- Address, home/cell phone number, employee identification number, driver's license number, dependent information and emergency contact of public employees (§ 44-04-18.1(2)) or individuals licensed by a state occupational/professional board, association, agency, or commission (§ 44-04-18.1(4));
- Personal financial information of public employees used for payroll purposes (§ 44-04-18.1);
- The work schedule of employees of a law enforcement agency (44-04-18.3(3));
- Active criminal intelligence, criminal investigative information, officer training materials and other information that may impact officer safety (§ 44-04-18.7);
- Homicide or sex crime scene images or any image of a minor victim of a crime (§ 44-04-18.7(8));
- Attorney work product (§ 44-04-19.1(1));
- Financial account numbers (§ 44-04-18.9);
- Security system plans (§ 44-04-24) and public health & security response plans (§ 44-04-24, § 44-04-25);
- Critical infrastructure information vital to maintaining public safety, security, or health (§ 44-04-24);
- Bids/proposals in response to an RFP, but once all proposals opened/presentations heard, it is open (§ 44-04-18.4(6));
- Identifying information that could be used to find a victim of domestic violence (§ 44-04-18.20);
- Personal information of applicants/recipients of economic assistance programs administered under division of community services or a community action agency (§ 44-04-18.19);
- Fire department/rural fire protection district operating procedures/infrastructure plans (§ 44-04-30(2));
- E-mail address/phone number of an individual provided for purposes of communicating with a public entity, except this exemption cannot be used to shield the person's identity (§ 44-04-18.21);
- Driver's license number, phone number, day/month of birth, and insurance information from a motor vehicle accident report form, except it is open to the parties involved in the accident or their insurers (§ 39-08-13(4));
- Risk Management records of claims against the state/employee (§ 32-12.2-11(1)) & state agency loss control committee records (§ 32-12.2-12);
- Records related to the name and medical condition of an individual and treatment provided by a public entity during an emergency medical response (§ 44-04-18.22).
- Recordings of 911 calls and related responses, except a person may listen to, or obtain written transcript of, the recordings (§ 57-40.6-07(4)).

CONFIDENTIAL Records
(**CANNOT** be released)

- Social Security numbers (§ 44-04-28);
- Address & home phone of an employee of a law enforcement agency (§ 44-04-18.3);
- Any information that would reveal the identity of an undercover law enforcement officer (§ 44-04-18.3);
- Public employee medical treatment records (§ 54-52.1-12, § 44-04-18.1(1), Ch. 23-01.3);*
- Employee Assistance program records (§ 44-04-18.1(1));
- Patient records at university system medical centers or public health authority* (§ 44-04-18.16);
- Criminal history records (§§ 12-60-16.5, 12-60-16.6);**
- Identifying information of a living child victim or witness of a crime, except in the case of traffic accident or victim of fire (§ 12.1-35-03);
- Names of persons injured or deceased, but only until law enforcement has notified the next of kin or for 24 hours, whichever occurs first; after that, the information is open (§ 39-08-10.1);
- Income tax and sales & use tax returns and information (§ 57-38-57), (§ 57-39.2-23);
- Autopsy photographs, images, audio/video recordings, working papers, notes except the final report of death, which is open (§ 44-04-18.18, § 23-01-05.5);
- Trade secret, proprietory, commercial & financial information, *if* it is of a privileged nature *and* has not yet been publicly disclosed (§ 44-04-18.4);
- Electronic (computer or telecommunication) security codes and/or passwords (§ 44-04-27);
- Fire investigations until the investigation is completed, then the information is open (§ 44-04-30(1));
- WSI employer files, except a Safety Grant recipient's name & amount awarded is open (§ 65-04-15);
- Foster care records (§ 50-11-05);
- Law enforcement & correctional facility records of delinquent, unruly, or deprived child (§ 27-20-52(1)). ❖

* Federal law (HIPAA) may prohibit release of health information from other sources.

** Criminal history records may be obtained only from the BCI. There is a statutory fee.

Committee Membership

Daba Gedafa, Civil Engineering
Surojit Gupta, Mechanical Engineering
Joan Hawthorne, Assessment/Academic Affairs
Alan Oberg, Studeny
Tom Petros, Psychology (partial term)
Timothy Prescott, Mathematics
Andrew Quinn, Social Work
Linda Ray, Medical Lab Science
Jane Sims, Grad Student/CILT
Robert Stupnisky, Educational Foundations & Research
Carmen Williams, Institutional Research
Deborah Worley, Educational Leadership