Proposal to Review and Revise Course Evaluation Questionnaire Content

Since the beginning of its exploration of online course evaluation, the Office of Institutional Research has been approached by both faculty and students about issues related to the content of existing course evaluation questionnaires. While the Office of Institutional Research, along with the Provost’s Office, is interested in this content, we do not determine it. The content of course evaluation questionnaires is determined by the Faculty Senate. Thus, any review and revision of this content must be a Senate undertaking.

The Office of Institutional Research is willing and prepared to support the Senate in this review and revision, and proposes the following steps in order to complete this task:

1) Ask a Senate group with faculty representatives from each school to investigate this issue.
2) This group discusses and comes to a consensus on the purposes of course evaluation, as these purposes should drive content.
3) eXplorance, the company we’ve partnered with to provide online course evaluation, demonstrates the new possibilities for course evaluation as a result of going online.
4) Review existing course evaluation questionnaires in light of these new possibilities, course evaluation’s purposes at SMC, the interests of faculty in each school, and the research-based “good practice” principles for questionnaire construction.
5) Complete revision of questionnaires and propose them to the Senate.

While reviewing this content, this group might also consider the “data fields” for course evaluation (e.g., students’ class standing, gender, or their cohort). Again, as a result of going online, there are new possibilities: Research on course evaluation results is potentially less cumbersome and available to a wider range of individuals. Additionally, depending on the purposes of course evaluation, types of data collected might take into account integrating results from new (e.g., program and Core assessment) and existing (e.g., program review, strategic planning) processes.

The Office of Institutional Research is committed to supporting the Senate in reviewing and revising the content of course evaluation questionnaires and is prepared to begin this work when requested.

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1 The School of Economics and Business Administration has expressed interest in and given thought to these data fields. The group tasked with revising course evaluation content might contact SEBA as a means of beginning this conversation.