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AIRUM 2009: Doing more with less: The importance of IR

End of Term Student Ratings: A Case Study in How the University of Minnesota Handled Form Transition

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A Form In Transition

- The Old.
- The New.
- Change Process and Implementation.
- What's the Difference?



The Old Timeline

- Pre-1993: Student Opinion Survey (optional end of term feedback).
- Sep 1993: Faculty Senate Passed First Student Evaluation of Teaching (SET) Policy (each course/ instructor once/per year, tenure and tenure-track).
- Dec 1993: OMS processed first SET forms (3 forms active; short, long and extra items)



The Old Timeline

- Mar 1994: First custom local print form.
- Summer 1997: Law School major variation (demographics).
- Summer 1998: Student Release items added.
- Fall 1999: New Checklist Items for long form/ Semester Conversion (Y2K compliant from start).



The Old Timeline (continued)

- Spring 2003: Process first SETs from web data collection.
- Fall 2004: CSOM “N/A” response option.
- Fall 2005: Started sharing room info data.
- Spring 2007: Student Rating of Teaching (SRT) pilot/ instructor item bank choice form for web data collection (13 paper and 11 web (+ item bank) forms active, several others had obsolesced).



The Old Items

- How would you rate the instructor's overall teaching ability?
- How would you rate the instructor's knowledge of the subject matter?
- How would you rate the instructor's respect and concern for students?
- How would you rate the physical environment in which you take this class, especially the classroom facilities, including your ability to see, hear, concentrate, and participate?
- How much would you say you learned in this course?



The Old Items (continued)

- Seven point response scale.
- 1=Very poor, 4=Satisfactory, 7=Exceptional anchored (Almost nothing, Amount expected, An exceptional amount for item #5.)
- Room for up to six additional items.
- Checklist Items with Weakness/Strength responses.
- Student Release Items mostly “Yes/No” responses.



The Old Reporting and Data Management Process

- Many forms printed in pencil only ink.
- Mini computer mainframe processing.
- Indexed summary file database for archival lookup and retrieval.
- Lots of self reported class data points—limited access to this information at initial (1993) design time.



The Old Reporting and Data Management Process

- Back fill classroom and some enrollment information.
- Black and white reports requiring special fonts for printing frequency graphs—modified to use PostScript over the years—then to .pdf format.
- Limited to 999 class/instructor pairs per day.



The New Timeline

- Fall 2003/Spring 2005: Two different attempts to revise SET form ended with no changes being made.
- Fall 2006: Committee started work on revising SETs.
- Spring 2007: Items piloted with a select group of Professors.
- Summer-Fall 2007: Additional revisions made.



The New Timeline (continued)

- December 2007: Policy passed University Senate unanimously. (All instructional staff, each course, each term. Some units exempted for accreditation considerations.)
- Spring 2008: Processed first SRTs, web based administration for distance classes only.



The New Timeline (continued)

- Summer 2008: Extended web based administration to any instructor desiring it.
- Spring 2009: Policy revised.
- Summer 2009: Policy revised, again.
- Fall 2009: Extend web based administration to two coordinate campuses (Crookston, Rochester).
- Spring 2010 (tentative): Extend paper administration to Morris campus.



The New Items*

- The instructor was well prepared for class.
- The instructor presented the subject matter clearly.
- The instructor provided feedback intended to improve my course performance.
- The instructor treated me with respect.
- I have a deeper understanding of the subject matter as a result of this course.
- My interest in the subject matter was stimulated by this course.

* Items aligned to University Student Learning Outcomes



The New Items (continued)

- Six point response scale; Strongly Disagree, Disagree, Somewhat Disagree, Somewhat Agree, Agree, Strongly Agree.
- No additional items on the form.
- Formative items are on a separate “Early Semester” form (currently under revision).
- Student Release Items more varied in scale and content.



U of MN Undergraduate Learning Outcomes

Learning Outcome

At the time of receiving a bachelor's degree, students:

Elaboration

(Examples of related statements logically connected to each outcome; final statements undergoing development)

1. have mastered a body of knowledge and mode of inquiry

- a) know the facts, theories, and concepts that are central to a discipline
- b) understand the scientific method and other methodologies for developing knowledge

5. understand diverse philosophies and cultures within and among societies

- a) have insight into the beliefs, values, and attitudes of people from different cultures
- b) demonstrate tolerance and respect for individuals from diverse backgrounds, perspectives, and disciplines

7. have acquired skills for effective citizenship and life-long learning

- a) understand the nature and importance of responsible citizenship
- b) display intellectual curiosity and flexibility
- c) can reflect upon and articulate personal values
- d) understand and practice professional and ethical behavior



Core Items and Research Support

Core Item	Research Support	Undergraduate Learning Outcome
1. This instructor was well prepared for class. (<u>The instructor</u> was well prepared for class.)	Research has confirmed the high correlation between class preparation/organization and student achievement (Feldman, 1989; Weimer, 1991).	1
2. This instructor explained the subject matter clearly. (<u>The instructor</u> presented the subject matter clearly.)	Clarity in a teacher's instruction and explanations has a powerful impact on student understanding of content (Boex, 2000; Feldman, 1989).	1
3. I was able to effectively use teacher feedback to improve my class performance. (<u>The instructor</u> provided feedback intended to improve my course performance.)	Providing appropriate and timely feedback to students has a long tradition as a necessary teacher practice that impacts student learning (Brophy & Good, 1986; Light, 2001)	1
4. This instructor treated me with respect. (<u>The instructor</u> treated me with respect.)	Productive teacher/student relationships are vital for continued student growth as a learner (Baxter-Magolda, 2001; Palmer, 1998).	5
5. I have a deeper understanding of the subject matter as a result of this course.	Mastery of content allows students to transfer knowledge to new settings and to place knowledge in appropriate frameworks (Bransford, Brown, & Cocking, 2000).	1
6. My interest in the subject matter was stimulated by this course.	"Interest" (motivation) drives our desire to become competent when we approach new topics (Bain, 2004; Ryan & Deci, 2000).	7



Change Process

- Raise Awareness
- Be Engaged with the Discussions
- Help Set Boundaries
 - Range of what items should cover
 - Pilot instrument test framework
 - Provide process deadlines
 - Fiscal/Technical/Technological Constraints
- Implementation



Implementation

- Early in term mirror selected data fields from the central system for course information and instructor primary position and contact information for courses with non-zero enrollments.
- Separate emails to department heads, instructors and departmental contacts sent from the Vice Provost for Faculty and Academic Affairs.



Implementation (continued)

- ID Sheet information packets sent to departmental contacts for those courses not set up for online data collection.
- All paper forms allow for pencil or ink responses.
- Web interfaces for adding instructor and updating their information.
- Web interface for scanned data import and report generation.



Implementation (continued)

- Web interface for looking up results and reprinting individual reports or running composite data reports (either to .pdf or exporting as .csv).
- File portal for secure transfer of results.
- Command line script for adding in courses (mostly because of zero enrollments).



Implementation (continued)

- Command line scripts for processing web collected data.
- Unlimited daily class/instructor pair processing.
- Monthly multiunit implementation coordination meetings.



What's the Difference?

- Survey is aligned to University goals vs. Survey built on what “we should” measure.
- Response options are all fixed to text vs. Selected response options fixed to text.



What's the Difference? (continued)

- Ink vs. Pencil for paper collection of student responses.
- Color PostScript reports vs. Black and white custom font based reports.
- Limited web based report retrieval vs. Entirely paper based reporting.



What's the Difference? (continued)

- Class and instructor data fully integrated with central University information vs. Partial integration of data with central databases.
- Web based database interface vs. Terminal based database interface.
- Scalable to coordinate campuses.



Questions?



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Thank You!



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