

On-Line Evaluation of Teaching
Report of First Year Activity
October 15, 2003

The on-line evaluation system was successfully implemented during the 2002-2003 academic year. The faculty committee charged with design of the program continues to be involved with the implementation efforts. These efforts are focused on improvements in the evaluation tool and increasing student response rates.

Average response rates across the University were at or above those achieved in Spring 2002 with the paper-based system. A number of techniques were used to advertise and encourage student response this past year, and these will be continue in the future. The key factor in the response rate appears to be faculty encouragement within their classes. Early preparation of the evaluation form by the faculty is another key factor in both faculty awareness of the evaluation timeline and the subsequent student response. Additional contact and encouragement with the teaching faculty will be initiated early in the fall.

The response rate comparisons are shown in the table at the end of the report. During fall semester, the first semester of full implementation of the on-line evaluations, the overall average response increased 3.0% over the response for the paper-based evaluations conducted the previous spring. Most of the increase occurred in upper division courses. This response slipped during spring semester. The overall response for spring 2003 relative to spring 2002 was up slightly less than 1%. The response of graduate course evaluations showed the largest decrease, but the committee is also concerned with the slight decrease in response from students in lower division courses.

The individual student identities are separated from their responses as soon as an evaluation is submitted. This maintains the confidentiality of the students. The responses cannot be reconnected with the evaluation, but, given the record of students who submit evaluations, it is possible to conduct subsequent analysis on demographics of students who respond to the evaluations and those who do not. In an analysis conducted by the Office of Institutional Research and Assessment, they discovered an increasing response rate with increasing grade point average of the student. This is shown in the table below:

Cumulative GPA	Response Rate	GPA in Term	Response Rate
< 1.00	16%	< 1.00	19%
1.00 – 2.00	34%	1.00 – 2.00	40%
2.00 – 3.00	50%	2.00 – 3.00	52%
3.00 – 4.00	60%	3.00 – 4.00	61%

This pattern is consistent with the response rate as related to the reported mid term grades for students. Students with reported D's had a response rate of 49%, those with reported F's had a response rate of 29%. Students with a reported grade of C or better at mid term had average response rates of 56%.

The primary advertising and notification methods used last year included advertising in the Argonaut, direct email correspondence with students, encouragement by faculty and departmental administrators, advertising of drawings for Palm pilots to those who complete evaluations, banner ads on the log-in screens of computer labs, and general media displays in the Commons. In addition to advertising, several special areas for doing evaluations during dead week were set up in the Commons and in a computer classroom. A computer classroom in education was held open during dead week to allow instructors to reserve the room for a specific class. The setup in the Commons involved a number of laptop computers set up near the food court during lunch hour. Neither of these venues was utilized by faculty or students. This year there will be increased contact with faculty early in the semester and increased involvement of student government (ASUI) in helping encourage participation. There will also be immediate feedback on response rates provided to faculty and departmental administrators during the evaluation period so they can encourage greater participation where needed.

The other efforts associated with on-line evaluations involve improvement of the evaluation instrument and associated controls. Several enhancements were recommended to improve efficiency in the design of specific course evaluation forms and to help faculty and student understanding of the web-based instrument. One enhancement strongly suggested by faculty was the ability to save evaluation forms for editing and changes for future courses. These suggestions were prioritized and are being implemented.

The on-line system has provided greater opportunity for faculty to develop evaluation questions in areas that can lead to constructive changes and improvements in courses and in course delivery methods. The immediate feedback of evaluation results available to the faculty and administration is a significant improvement over the tedious process of analyzing the scantron sheets. It also represents a significant savings in staff time with respect to this effort. The other positive aspect is in the capability of providing additional analysis and correlation between student response and student demographics as was illustrated above.

We anticipate greater participation as the process becomes more familiar to both faculty and students, but this will also require continued efforts in advertising and encouragement. The faculty committee will continue to be engaged in this process.

Response Rate Comparison

	Paper	On Line		On Line		
	Spring 2002	Fall 2002	Difference	Spring 2003	Difference	Difference
			Fall Minus Spr 02		Spr 03 Minus Fall	Spr 03 Minus Spr 02
	Response Rate	Response Rate	Difference	Response Rate	Difference	Difference
Lower Division	60.1%	60.1%	0.0%	58.8%	-1.3%	-1.3%
Upper Division	51.7%	60.6%	8.9%	56.7%	-3.9%	5.0%
Graduate	62.8%	58.9%	-3.9%	56.6%	-2.3%	-6.2%
Overall	57.2%	60.2%	3.0%	57.9%	-2.3%	0.7%

	Spring 2002	Fall 2002	Fall 02 Minus Spr 02	Spring 2003	Spr 03 Minus Fall 02	Spr 03 Minus Spr 02
College Responses	Response Rate	Response Rate	Difference	Response Rate	Difference	Difference
Agricultural & Life Sciences	70.6%	68.9%	-1.7%	58.8%	-10.1%	-11.8%
Business & Economics	53.9%	63.7%	9.8%	56.8%	-6.9%	2.9%
Education	45.5%	51.6%	6.1%	55.7%	4.1%	10.2%
Engineering	59.2%	64.6%	5.4%	51.7%	-12.9%	-7.5%
Letters Arts & Social Science	55.7%	58.9%	3.2%	64.9%	6.0%	9.2%
Natural Resources	75.4%	57.0%	-18.4%	60.5%	3.5%	-14.9%
No College Designated	70.8%	66.4%	-4.4%	62.5%	-3.9%	-8.3%
Science	64.0%	63.8%	-0.3%	63.2%	-0.6%	-0.8%
Total	57.2%	60.3%	3.2%	57.9%	-2.5%	0.7%

Report and Data Prepared by:

Leonard R. Johnson, Academic and Student Affairs

Raymond Wallace, Office of Institutional Research and Assessment