

Lock Haven University of Pennsylvania
Student Evaluation Instrument Committee
MINUTES: February 6, 2009, 11:15 AM
310 Sullivan Hall

Members Present: T. Dermota, S. Guthrie, J. Easley, D. Shoemaker, A. Talbot, S. Rush
Members Absent: Student representative

- A. D.S. suggested an addition to the agenda—Report from D.S. and S.R. from a *Jenzabar* Webinar they attended on 2/4/09. A.T. suggested an addition to the agenda—Update on the literature review of material regarding online student evaluations.
- B. Motion to approve the agenda as modified by S.R.-- seconded by D.S.; Approved.
- C. The **approval of minutes from our last meeting** will be **postponed** to our 2/20/09 meeting.
- D. Reports and Updates
 - a. A.T. suggested finding out the official word from SCC for assistance in securing a reliable student member for this committee. T.D. will contact Dr. Koch for her assistance in securing this student representative. It was pointed out that #8 on the Board of Governor's document asks that there be student involvement with revisions to the student evaluation instrument.
 - b. D.S. and S.R. reported on a *Jenzabar* webinar that they attended on 2/4/09. The current version of this system is 1.2, but there is Version 1.3 due to be released soon. Particulars on the new version were not available.

It was shared that one of the features of *Jenzabar* is that student can be denied access to information from the university computer system such as grades until they fill out the required SOIS. The committee discussed this method of improving the response rate but thought denying access may not work for LHUP.

It was noted that most schools that use *Jenzabar* have a survey administrator assigned to the project. No costs are available at the present regarding this online program, but J.Easley said he would look into the potential cost, since this is important for the university to consider when looking at the possibility of switching to online student evaluations. There did seem to be a convenient method for faculty and departments to make revisions that make data more relevant for them. Discussion was held on some of the more effective ways to encourage our students to complete their evaluations each semester.

- c. A.T. reported that S.G. had reviewed the first portion of his literature review dealing with online student evaluation systems. D.T. is now putting the finishing touches to the second part of the review. He plans to share the first part of the document with our committee in several weeks. Appreciation was expressed to A.T. for this task he is working on.
- E. Old business
 - a. Discussion was held regarding the answer format for our potential revised student evaluation instrument. **The major question being considered** is whether each question should have its own unique answer set or should all questions be formatted to use a common answer set [Strongly agree – Strongly disagree].

Our committee **decided that we should look at rewriting the current question set to fit a format of “strongly agree to strongly disagree”** (the actual wording may vary). In particular, we will start putting questions into this format.

This method seems to have more positive factors associated with accurate student completion of the instrument such as...eliminating student fatigue since individual students may be completing four to six evaluations in a short period of time.

- b. **The committee feels that** we should look at a means to help eliminate student data that follows a unique pattern suggesting they really did not look at the individual questions. **As a committee, we will attempt to write the questions in a positive fashion, but possibly rewrite selected questions later with negative wording to help determine if a student did not really read the questions** and simply marked answers in a pattern such as “strongly agree.” For example, replace ‘the instructor did start class on time’ with “the instructor did not start class on time.”

However, TD feels that questions with negative wording may result in decreased meaning of the results since students may not notice the change from primarily positive wording to negative wording. [Note: in subsequent meetings, it was decided that Troy was right., and we would not attempt to rewrite selected patterns.]

- c. The remainder of the meeting (until 1:00 PM) was spent examining the rationale for removing/ revising instrument questions. T.D. kept records of this final part of the meeting on our committee document listing the potential revisions proposed by our committee.
- d. Our next meeting is scheduled for Friday, February 20, 2009 at 11:10 AM in Russell Conference Room (Russell 128).

The meeting adjourned at 1:00 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Steven Rush