

## **SACSCF Report to Academic Senate 2/11/19**

The Senate Advisory Committee on Student Course Feedback has met three times this year. The composition of the committee is: One tenured faculty member who chairs the committee, one tenure line faculty, two career-line faculty, one faculty representative of the Undergraduate Council, one faculty Representative of the Graduate Council, one graduate and three undergraduate student representatives. The Assistant Vice President for Undergraduate Studies serves as a voting member of the committee, and the CTLE Director and SCF administrator are non-voting members.

### **Committee Update**

The current committee has dedicated this year to fine-tuning an instrument that was developed through the input of student focus groups and faculty members. The exigency for a revised instrument was based on faculty and student dissatisfaction with the current instrument due to several reasons, primarily the length of the instrument, return rate, and use in RPT. For example, previous committees have found that as many as 80 questions have been posed on these instruments. Additionally, when online student feedback was introduced, response rate was high. Much of the early high response may have been due to the incentive that if students completed the SCF, they could receive their grade early. As we moved to more transparent online grading via Canvas, that incentive no longer has motivated students to complete the feedback instrument. Today response rates vary from 0-80%, with an average of 42%. The committee has worked toward receiving student feedback about their course experience, rather than assessing their learning, which is measured in other ways in the classroom over the term.

To address these challenges the committee has developed the proposed instrument that includes a small number of standard questions. The instrument addresses student experience that can help inform other students, as well as inform instructors and department to make curricular improvements. The instrument will also be more useful by providing more extensive feedback to instructors and their departments through the request for response explanations after each question rather than the one at the end of the instrument now (although that opportunity is still available). Additionally, the current number rating of a class and its instructor, which can be problematic in its interpretation and use, would be improved through the multiple questions and the percentages of unique responses rather than an overall single digit. Qualitative responses will also enhance feedback.

During academic year 2018-19, the SACSCF committee chair met with the chair of the Senate Faculty Review Standards Committee, who expressed few issues with the instrument. Those they did express were incorporated into the present version. To examine how the instrument would be received by departments, we disseminated the instrument to all department chairs, requesting they distribute it to their faculty for comment. Chairs and faculty members from fifteen departments responded. The chair of the committee also met face-to face with department chairs and associate chairs of large departments (Biology; Communication; Gender Studies; Psychology; Writing and Rhetoric Studies). All comments were supportive and helped us to further refine the instrument.

Questions that generally came up were about RPT and instructor effectiveness, and issues of bias for women and people of color. It is important to note that departments can add their own unique questions to suit their specific needs.

The committee's goal is to have the Senate Executive Committee approve the document to move further along in the process, and to come before the full Senate for a vote in March. As the attached article on student feedback demonstrates institutions of higher education are becoming increasingly dissatisfied with current instruments (The U of U document is now 15 years old) and are deciding to revise them. Our committee has been working on this for several years and feels the information gathering and feedback we have received has supported the revision, and improved upon it.

Respectfully Submitted,

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