SAN JOSE STATE UNIVERSITY
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F12-1, Policy Recommendation, Administration of Student Opinion of Teaching Effectiveness (SOTE) Evaluations Online

Legislative History:

It has been eight years since the first Senate Resolution related to online SOTEs (SS-S05-6) was passed on April 25, 2005 at SJSU. All SJSU School of Library and Information Science classes and most other online classes at SJSU have successfully administered online SOTEs. Based on the OIR's report in 2010, $55,000 per semester is required to conduct paper SOTEs, compared to only $1,000 for online SOTEs. This policy recommendation was brought to the Senate for a first reading last spring (4/16/12). The recent passage of the new California Faculty Association and CSU contract requests "all classes" to be evaluated (as default). The new contract also permits all campuses to administer online student evaluations and store results electronically. Therefore, at its meeting of September 24, 2012, the Academic Senate approved the following policy recommendation brought to the Senate by Senator Du for the Instruction and Student Affairs Committee.

Action by University President: Approved by President
Mohammad Qayoumi
September 27, 2012

Policy Recommendation

Administration of Student Opinion of Teaching Effectiveness (SOTE) Evaluations Online

WHEREAS: The Student Evaluation Review Board (SERB) was instructed by Sense of the Senate Resolution, SS-S05-6, to continue evaluating the efficacy of online SOTEs (SOTEs will be used to refer to SOTE/SOLATE); and

WHEREAS: S08-1 (amendment of S06-6) was adopted to administer online SOTEs for online courses; and

WHEREAS: Online SOTEs are now successfully administered in all School of Library and Information Science classes and most other online classes at SJSU; and

WHEREAS: SERB completed pilot testing of online SOTEs for onsite classes in AY2009-2010, including creating an online system for collecting SOTEs from onsite classes, and the current online SOTEs system was designed and implemented in CMS to accommodate the requirements of existing SOTE policy; and

WHEREAS: Analysis of data from the pilot testing and from online classes shows negligible differences from paper SOTEs in item ratings; and

WHEREAS: The results of the SJSU data are in agreement with the large body of similar assessments of online student evaluations at other Universities; and

WHEREAS: Online administration of SOTEs is sustainable, less expensive than paper alternatives, saves classroom instruction time, is prone to fewer errors, is easier to adapt and update, is more secure, provides faster feedback, and may provide a platform adaptable for other evaluations beyond the SOTEs; and

WHEREAS: San Diego State University (SDSU) has fully implemented online SOTES since Spring 2008 and has achieved response rates of 80% by requiring students to complete SOTES in order to obtain early access to their grades; and

WHEREAS: The new CFA-CSU Collective Bargaining Agreement removes any perceived barrier to electronic evaluations, and it makes possible that all classes be evaluated--which would significantly increase the number of paper SOTES if no further action is taken; and

WHEREAS: The online SOTEs aligns with the Talloires Declaration, signed on behalf of SJSU by President Whitmore in 2009, that directs SJSU to be a sustainable campus; therefore be it

RESOLVED: That online SOTEs be adopted campus wide for all courses, starting Spring 2013 if possible, under the following conditions:

1. The first campus-wide implementation of online SOTES shall use exactly the same content and form as our current paper SOTEs, specifically
   a. No change to the questions, either in wording or sequencing;
   b. No change to the contents of SOTEs summary reports;
   c. No change to the scheduling of SOTE administration;
2. A standard set of instructions will be prepared by SERB and/or Professional Standard Committee for distribution to instructors and students for completion of the online SOTEs.
3. The current SJSU online SOTE system must be modified s to achieve response rates comparable to current paper SOTEs.

Approved: *9/17/12*

Vote: *12-2-1*

Present: *Aggarwal, Branz, Baker, Culatta, Du, Frazier, Goyal, Hagie, Holsey, Jeffrey, Kelley, Kress, Sofish, Vanniarajan, Walters, Wilson*

Absent: *King, Postovoit, Worsnup*

Financial Impact: In a typical semester, about 80,000[1] SOTE/SOLATE forms are printed, distributed and processed by OIR. OIR estimated that annual savings from elimination of paper forms, decrease in needed support, and distribution costs is over $50,000. Further savings could be seen in the future by reducing storage, office space needed for handling paper evaluations, and other staff time. At the department level, there will be reductions in costs associated with staff time handling paper SOTEs and photocopying written evaluations (2 pages for each student) for dossiers and other purposes.

Workload Impact: A reduction in workload is expected for faculty members, office administrators, department chairs, and OIR personnel. The reductions result from reducing paper handling from the current delivery of packets to departments, putting of packets in faculty boxes, collecting of packets, scanning of quantitative evaluations, photocopying of forms for reporting, delivering of reports to departments, photocopying of written evaluations when SOTEs are used for preparation of dossiers and other purposes.

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[1] This number may be significantly increased if the new CFA-CSU Collective Bargaining Agreement (may require that all classes be evaluated) is approved.