

Resolution on Revising the Standardized Course Evaluation Form

#40-13/14-FAC-April 15, 2014 - First Reading

RESOLVED: That the University Senate of Humboldt State University recommends to the President that the attached set of questions be adopted beginning August 15, 2014, as the core set of course evaluation questions for use in every department; and be it further

RESOLVED: That composite scores will be computed and included on the individual course summary reports for variables labeled "Overall Student Engagement" and "Overall Teaching Effectiveness" and based on item scores in each respective category noted on the form; and be it further

RESOLVED: That course evaluation results should be supplemented by other methods of instructor evaluation in any personnel-related decisions; and be it further

RESOLVED: That the University Senate Faculty Affairs Committee, in consultation with college offices, will by February 15, 2015 review the outcomes of the new instrument and report to the University Senate on findings.

Rationale:

Resolution #27-12/13 – FAC called for a Task Force to review the current course evaluation instrument in use since Spring semester of AY 2005/2006. A Task Force was convened in November 2013 comprised of Professors Jayne McGuire (Kinesiology), Marisol Cortes-Rincon (Anthropology), and Brandon Schwab (Geology) with Nancy Dye (Psychology) serving as liaison with the University Senate Faculty Affairs Committee.

The Task Force identified several areas to improve on the HSU course evaluation instrument.

First, the task force determined that questions on the 2006 instrument contributed to a "student as consumer," compared to a "student as learner" framework. The consumer framework supported student actions related to rating their instructors positively on the specific dimensions of teaching, yet assigning low scores to "overall teaching effectiveness." Review of the literature and consultation with colleagues helped the task force formulate the need for an instrument that encourages students to make their decisions about teachers' effectiveness within the context of their own roles as learners. The task force added questions about student participation in and commitment to the course, as represented by items in the "Student Engagement" section.

Second, as online classes are increasingly represented among HSU course offerings, questions needed to be designed for applicability in face-to-face, online and hybrid courses. Item wording has been crafted to align across multiple modes of course delivery.

Further, the task force designed open-ended questions to solicit information to improve teaching practices.

Finally, the task force determined that the 2005/2006 initiated evaluation instrument was mismatched with HSU's stated values. The course evaluation items emphasized student "satisfaction" (individual consumer model) and did not adequately reflect "an environment of free inquiry where learning occurs both inside and outside the classroom," nor an education that "prepare[s] students to take on the commitments of critical inquiry, social responsibility and civic engagement necessary to meet the challenges of the 21st century." To this regard, the task force added items that ask students' to self-assess their participation in the learning community, commitment to education and level of effort expended in studying.