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Academic Deans

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Fr: Jeffrey Stopple, Professor, Department of Mathematics
Co-Chair, Ad Hoc Committee on Online Course Evaluation

George H. Michaels, Executive Director, Instructional Development
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Via: Gene Lucas, Executive Vice Chancellor

Re: Online Delivery of Course Evaluations
Executive Summary

The Ad Hoc Committee on Online Course Evaluations has been tasked with managing a pilot program implementing online end of course surveys for the past two years. This Committee’s work is in response to the Senate’s recommendations of June 2011. This report presents the results of the pilot program, the results of several surveys of students and faculty about the process, and recommendations for a plan for moving forward that we believe address most of the major concerns expressed. Throughout the remainder of this report, use of the word “we” refers either to the Committee as a whole, or the Sub-Committee responsible for that portion of the project.

While this project was initially undertaken at the direction of the EVC, the work of the Committee has been guided by representatives from all involved Senate committees, graduate students, undergraduate students, administrative staff, and Instructional Development staff. There have been three main concerns that have surfaced among faculty with regard to this change in the way in which end of course surveys are collected. One is that this is simply a means to save money. The other two relate to worries about a decline in response rates, and a resulting decline in ratings, which could have a negative effect on personnel cases for ladder faculty, lecturers and teaching assistants and associates.

In response to the first concern, cost savings, there would be no significant cost savings to the administration, either in Instructional Development or Academic Personnel from this change. For Instructional Development the costs would remain about the same, but would be shifted from purchasing multiple versions of custom printed Scantron sheets for the campus, hiring student workers to scan the surveys at the end of the quarter, and long term maintenance of the optical scanning equipment to additional server hardware to support the new system, and more highly trained and technically adept staff to manage and maintain the system. There would be no change at all for Academic Personnel. If there are cost savings, those would actually be realized in the individual academic departments through eliminating the need to print and photocopy multiple survey questionnaires each quarter, and the staff time and expense for managing the logistics of distributing the appropriate questionnaires and Scantron sheets to faculty and TAs, collecting and organizing the returned sheets, and transmitting them back to Instructional Development for processing. In addition, in departments that regularly include open-ended questions on their surveys, an online system eliminates the need for department staff to separately collect those results and manage them within the department. Responses to open-ended questions are never returned to Instructional Development for processing. This factor is particularly pertinent in the large number of departments that have had their departmental staffing reduced as a result of recent budget cuts.

Much of the rest of this report is concerned with assessing the second and third concerns, and proposing means by which to address them. They are very real concerns, and we have worked very diligently to be sensitive and responsive to those. It will be the case that response rates will be lower than they traditionally have been. This has been our experience so far in the pilot. This has also been the experience of all of our sister campuses that have converted to online course evaluations, at least initially. While response rates may decline, that does not necessarily mean that ratings will decline with them. As long as the reliability of the results remains consistent, in terms of providing meaningful, actionable feedback to the faculty with regard to their teaching, a reduction in response rates is not of itself a problem. The ease of being able to finally combine both scalar questions and open-ended questions, to have them collected, processed and reported together will ultimately result in more useful, and richer, feedback for instructors. This
transition will also ultimately allow the development of a much more flexible, and customizable platform with which faculty can work.

Primary among the recommendations of the Committee is to adopt a departmental opt-in program for a three year period from the end of the pilot program. There are departments that are extremely interested in converting to an online evaluation system for a wide variety of reasons. A three year opt-in window would allow those departments to permanently convert to online evaluations, while allowing departments that want to take a more cautious approach the time to see how the new system works for those departments who do convert. In order to minimize the impact on personnel cases by having evaluation data from both survey methods represented, departments that chose to convert to online surveys will do so in the Fall quarter. Thus, permanent adoption would occur for departments in Fall 2014, Fall 2015, and Fall 2016 by which time it is our hope that all departments will have transitioned. A phased adoption is essential in order to ensure that we can adhere to the rest of the recommendations adequately. In addition, some departments will require substantial consultation to revise their questionnaires to use updated and/or corrected survey items. Some sets of departments that consistently teach cross-listed courses with each other will have to coordinate their adoption of online evaluations. We hope to end the pilot program at the end of Spring 2014 and begin the opt-in program in Fall 2014. We additionally propose the creation of a more permanent Committee on Course Evaluation to guide the transition process. This new committee should represent the same constituencies as the current Ad Hoc Committee.
Introduction

In January 2011 EVC Lucas formed a work group to develop a plan for delivering course evaluations online. The work group was co-chaired by Carol Genetti and George Michaels, and included representatives from the EVC’s office, the College of Engineering, Academic Personnel, Letters and Science IT, and campus IT. That work group delivered a memorandum to the Senate laying out the need for this transition, its potential benefits, and soliciting any suggestions, questions or concerns that the campus leadership might have about this change and its potential implications. That memorandum is included for reference as Appendix A.

The Senate responded with a memorandum in June 2011. That memorandum is included as Appendix B. The Senate response indicated support for the creation of a broad based Ad Hoc Committee on Online Course Evaluations consisting of Senate, graduate student and undergraduate student representatives, as well as members of the original work group. The purpose of that Committee was to guide the development of a pilot program for online delivery of course evaluations. That committee was formed in November 2011. This memorandum is the Ad Hoc Committee’s report on the pilot program to date and recommendations for moving toward campus wide implementation in stages.

Pilot Program Timeline

Winter 2010

Instructional Development went live with electronic only distribution of ESCI reports in Winter 2010. Distribution in electronic form has eliminated the printing of between 9,000 and 11,000 multipage reports per year over the past three years. Distribution of copy protected pdf files via department ESCI contacts from a secure online database has streamlined distribution of ESCI reports. We expect to provide direct access via UCSB NetID and password to faculty in the next two quarters.

Winter-Spring 2011

Online ESCI Task Group convened by the EVC with Carol Genetti and George Michaels as Co-Chairs. During the winter and spring quarters the work group conducted research on approaches that other institutions took on online evaluations, systems that they used, incentives for their students, and effects on survey results. We developed a platform design and plan for distributing questionnaires online, collecting the results and importing them into the backend ESCI processing system. In May 2010 the work group submitted a proposal for the transition to online course survey collection to the EVC and the Academic Senate. In June 2011 the members of the work group conducted a survey of the faculty about the transition to online surveys to gather data for our planning process for the pilot. We received a response from the Academic Senate on the proposal at the end of June 2011. Although overall faculty response was positive on both the proposal and survey, the senate requested that a broader constituency be involved in the continuation of the pilot and eventual transition to production mode.

Fall 2011

During the fall quarter we built the initial delivery platform for online surveys based on Drupal, and refined the necessary data transfer protocols between systems. We ran a test cycle for two Environmental Studies courses at the end of fall quarter as an initial test of the delivery system, and were dependent on the faculty members to remind their students to engage. During fall quarter we recruited additional representatives from the Senate, graduate students and under
graduate students to form the Ad Hoc Committee on Online Course Evaluation, as a response to the issues raised by the Senate.

**Winter 2012**

The Ad Hoc Committee met for the first time, was updated on progress to date, and determined the best strategy for moving forward. It was decided to form three sub-committees to deal with discrete areas of concern: Academic Personnel, Content of the Item Pool, and Implementation. We contacted Student Affairs IT to obtain access to the web-service interface to get course and enrollment data. This was necessary for both online and paper-based survey strategies because the ESCI system requires the curriculum data each quarter to know what courses are offered so that departments can request surveys, and the system needs the enrollment data for both the ParScore system for test scoring and for the automated email reminder system for online ESCI. Although Student Affairs IT were very quick to provide access to the test instance of the web-service, they were not in a position to provide access to the production web-service at that time due to personnel constraints that they were experiencing for their major system transition. We did not run a test of the system in Winter quarter.

**Spring 2012**

The Academic Personnel Subcommittee developed an excellent set of recommendations for moving forward designed to address concerns about possible negative impacts on personnel cases. The first recommendation was clear labeling of ESCI reports to distinguish between traditional, online pilot, and online reports. The second major recommendation was to include whole departments at a time as a guard against disparities in results within departments due to any instrumentality effect.

The Content Subcommittee embarked on an evaluation of the more than 5,000 items in the item pool. Their evaluation included flagging items that should no longer be used, and flagging items in need of revision for clarity or appropriateness for online delivery. That work has continued to the present.

The Implementation Subcommittee developed a short questionnaire to gauge student response to the new survey method. They also received permission to conduct pilot surveys for the Freshman Seminar courses from Dean Nisbet. These courses represented a suitable pool because they are all within one department, there are 30-40 of them each quarter, and the results do not have an effect on faculty members’ advancement cases because they are offered outside their home department. We conducted a trial with 15 courses at the end of Spring quarter, but had to gather the enrollment data directly from the faculty members via eGrades extracts to test the email reminder system. Of the 15 courses we had a mean response rate of 54%, with a range of 6% - 93%.

**Summer 2012**

The Content subcommittee continued their work analyzing the ESCI item pool. We used the online system for the course evaluations for the four Summer Online Pilot courses. We added a new item type to the item pool for headers to be presented in the questionnaires to reflect the full wording of the paper questionnaires.

**Fall 2012**

The Ad Hoc Committee as a whole did not meet in Fall quarter because we were in a holding pattern on expansion of the pilot until we had access to the Student Affairs web-service,
although the Content subcommittee did continue their work. We got access to the production web-service for curriculum and enrollment data at the end of Fall quarter, but too close to the survey window to be able to use it for fall. We conducted a trial with the Freshman Seminar courses and three Art courses for which the senior faculty member volunteered. There were 22 courses included in this sample. We included the survey of student reaction to the online survey system in the fall quarter pool of surveys as a pilot. Carol Genetti stepped down as Co-Chair, to assume her new role as Dean of the Graduate Division, and Professor Jeffery Stopple agreed to step in as the new Co-Chair. The Co-Chairs met in December to consult on the next steps for the Committee. We conducted online surveys for 22 courses, with a mean response rate of 61%, and a range of 33% - 100%. These were all Freshman Seminar courses.

Winter 2013

The Ad Hoc Committee met in February. At that meeting we voted to adopt the recommendations of the Academic Personnel Subcommittee as final recommendations. The Content Subcommittee presented the results of their analysis of the ESCI Item pool and suggestions for removing outdated and/or unused items from future usage, a more user friendly categorization of the remaining items, and the scope of the work remaining to address problematic items still used by departments. The Implementation Subcommittee presented results of enhancements to the system and the results of the preliminary survey of student opinion on the online system. Those preliminary results included:

- Save Drafts 42% Yes
- Online an improvement 70% Yes
- Thoughtfulness 32% Yes, 58% No Opinion, 10% No
- Optimal survey period: Two Weeks - 46%
- Confidence in anonymity: 65% Yes, 25% No Opinion, 11% No
- Wireless Device to Take Survey in Class: 76% yes, 24% No
- General responses to open-ended question: like the ability to write free form comments, want ability to save drafts, split on in class or at home.

These results ended up being consistent with the results of the survey of students conducted with the larger survey pool at the end of Winter quarter, and reported in the next section of this report. Finally, the Ad Hoc Committee considered an analysis of likely departments to include in an expanded pilot for the end of Winter quarter. The analysis took into account three key variables:

- did the department offer courses cross listed with other departments
- did the department have a significant number of co-taught courses
- did the department’s questionnaires contain items from the ESCI item pool identified as problematic

On the basis of this analysis, it was agreed to approach the departments of Statistics and Applied Probability and Film and Media Studies to see if they would be willing to participate in an expanded pilot at the end of Winter Quarter. Both departments did agree to participate, and the results of that analysis of the effects on response rates and ratings is presented later in this
report. Mean response rate for all surveys in Winter quarter was 41.52%, with a range of 9.52% to 100%; that was for 153 courses and discussion sections.

**Spring 2013**

The Committee continued the expanded pilot program including all Freshman and Honors Seminar (FSHP) courses, and all courses and discussion sections in the Department of Statistics and Applied Probability, Department of Film and Media Studies, and the Department of Art. Mean response rate for all surveys in Spring quarter was 37.22%, with a range of 5.26% to 100% in 233 courses and discussion sections. It became clear in discussions with faculty members, students, and in analyzing the data that the shift to the new student email system, which had been completed by the end of Winter quarter had substantially disrupted the email reminder system. We estimate that somewhere between 40% and 60% of the reminder emails were never delivered due to bulk mail throttling on the new cloud mail service.

**Summer 2013**

No pilot surveys for the target departments were conducted in the summer due to the complexities of scheduling in the Summer Session. We did conduct online surveys for the five Summer Online Pilot courses that were offered. ID staff worked to update the questionnaire definitions in the ESCI database to ensure that the wording of the online surveys exactly matched, as much as possible, the wording of the paper questionnaires. We inserted a monitoring graphic in the email reminders as a proxy for a delivery receipt, which was piloted in the Summer Session surveys. We also began throttling the rate at which the ESCI Online server sends the email reminders to students to try to optimize the delivery rate.

**Fall 2013**

Requested continuation of the pilot program from the four departments from Spring, and have asked Counseling and Clinical Psychology, Philosophy, Sociology, and Latin American and Iberian Studies departments to join the pilot. Working with the GauchoSpace development team to add an ESCI reminder for students in participating courses on their home page after log in to test during Fall quarter. We anticipate that the combination of the email reminders and a reminder in GauchoSpace will help prompt greater participation by students. Finally, we are submitting this report.
Results of Faculty Survey Prior to Pilot

In the interim between submitting the work group memorandum and receipt of the Senate response, the work group conducted a survey of faculty opinion on the matter of online course surveys. The survey was conducted over a two week period between June 17 and June 25, 2011. There were 108 respondents. The results of that survey are presented below.

Question 1 asked respondents to indicate their agreement or disagreement with the statement: *I think delivering course evaluation questionnaires completely online is a step in the right direction.* Results are presented in Figure 1 below. Of the responses to this question, 51% indicated that they agree or strongly agree with the statement. Of note, 20% of respondents strongly disagreed with the statement, indicating a significant distrust of any change in the system.

![Figure 1 - Question 1: Right Direction](image)

Question 2 asked respondents to gauge the utility of the feedback that they get from the current course evaluation system. Those results are reported in Figure 2 below. Respondents generally believe that the feedback that they currently receive is moderately to extremely informative, with 81% responding in that range. Only 4% of respondents felt that the feedback is not at all informative.

![Figure 2 - Question 2: Utility of Feedback](image)

Question 3 was added to gauge the extent to which the responding faculty members were using GauchoSpace to provide any elements of their course materials online. 62% indicated that they were using GauchoSpace, and 38% indicated that they were not using GauchoSpace.
The next three questions asked respondents to indicate their assessment of possible benefits on an online course evaluations system.

Question 4 asked them to rate the benefits of streamlined logistics of delivering and collecting surveys. Those results are provided in Figure 3. Seventy percent of respondents thought that this would be beneficial or highly beneficial. Only 7% of respondents saw no benefit in this.

**Figure 3 - Question 4: Streamline Logistics**

<table>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>No Opinion</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not at All Beneficial</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Question 5 asked about the benefits of easily collecting narrative responses from students. Those results are presented in Figure 4. Sixty two percent of respondents thought that this would be beneficial or highly beneficial. Twelve percent thought that this would not be at all beneficial.

**Figure 4 - Question 5: Easy Narrative Responses**

<table>
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</tr>
<tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Opinion</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not Beneficial</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not at All Beneficial</td>
<td>12%</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Question 6 asked respondents to assess the benefits of collecting potentially more thoughtful student comments on their surveys. This question elicited the most even spread of all responses, and indicates a certain degree of skepticism on the part of faculty about the degree to which students will be more thoughtful if completing the surveys on their own time. Results are presented in Figure 5 below.

The questionnaire continued with a set of questions about the desirability of possible future enhancements that could be possible with the implementation of an online course survey system. Question 7 asked about the desirability of easily being able to ask for new questions to add to the item pool. Results are presented in Figure 6 below. A substantial number of respondents clearly thought that this would be desirable. There was similarly strong support for the ability to easily modify their questionnaire each quarter, which was the subject of Question 8. Those results presented in Figure 7. Respondents also thought that being able to administer mid-quarter surveys was very desirable. Those results are presented in Figure 8. Finally, question 10 asked respondents to indicate the desirability of accessing their ESCI results online as needed. Those results are presented in Figure 9. Based on these results, the responding faculty felt that all of these potential enhancements would be desirable outcomes of a future system.

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Figure 5 - Question 6: More Thoughtful Comments

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
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<td>15%</td>
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<tr>
<td>No Opinion</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not Beneficial</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not at All Beneficial</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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Figure 6 - Question 7: Add New Questions

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Response</th>
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<td>Highly Desirable</td>
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<tr>
<td>Desirable</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Opinion</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not Desirable</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not at All Desirable</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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Figure 7 - Question 8: Modify Questionnaire

- Highly Desirable: 28%
- Desirable: 28%
- No Opinion: 19%
- Not Desirable: 12%
- Not at All Desirable: 8%

Figure 8 - Question 9: Mid-Quarter Surveys

- Highly Desirable: 24%
- Desirable: 23%
- No Opinion: 19%
- Not Desirable: 13%
- Not at All Desirable: 17%

Figure 9 - Question 10: Get Results on Demand

- Highly Desirable: 41%
- Desirable: 25%
- No Opinion: 17%
- Not Desirable: 6%
- Not at All Desirable: 7%
The final section of the faculty survey addressed questions about faculty concerns about switching to an online course evaluation system. The questions all asked faculty to rate their level of concern with the possibility of lower response rates, lower ratings, and less detailed narrative responses. Those responses are reported in Figures 10-12 below.

As these results indicate, faculty are very concerned that response rates will be lower, and fairly concerned that students will provide less detailed narrative responses in an online system. Interestingly, faculty reported being less concerned about their ratings being lower, even if there was a decline in response rates.

The Committee considered these results in our first meeting, and used these results to guide the design of the pilot program to address as many of these points as possible. Part of that design was the development of a survey of students about the online survey system, once it went live, as well as plans to try to minimize decline in response rates, and a plan to analyze the
effect on ratings once we had comparative data. The results of those analyses are presented next.
Results of Student Survey

During the pilot we conducted an additional survey of students about their impressions of the online survey format. We did an initial sampling of student opinion based on the limited pilot in Fall quarter 2012. We took advantage of the larger pool of students represented in the Winter Quarter expansion to better gauge student opinion on this mode of collecting survey data. A total of 597 students responded to this survey. Those results are discussed below.

The first question addressed student opinion on the desirability of being able to save draft copies of their responses during the survey period. The text of the question was: *It would have been helpful to save a draft of my responses to return to the survey later.* The results are presented in Figure 13 below. Based on this response, approximately equal numbers of students felt that having the ability to save a draft was helpful as had no opinion on the matter, combined 40% and 37% respectively. We believe that this is a feature that we should work toward including, but not in the first general rollout of the system.

![Figure 13 - Save Draft Helpful](image1)

The second question asked if students thought that the online survey instrument was an improvement over the traditional paper-based survey instrument. The text of the question was: *The online end of quarter survey is an improvement over the traditional paper-based end of quarter survey.* Results are displayed in Figure 14 below. Clearly the preponderance of these students felt that the online survey was an improvement, 74% combined. Only a tiny proportion of the students felt that the online survey was not an improvement 6% combined.

![Figure 14 - Online Improvement](image2)
The third question addressed whether students felt that they could provide more thoughtful feedback in the online format. The text of the question was: *I was able to provide more thoughtful feedback in this online format of the ESCI survey as compared to the paper-based survey.* Results are displayed in Figure 15 below. Of the respondents, a combined 48% agreed with this statement, 40% had no strong feelings. Students that disagreed represented a combined 13%.

![Figure 15 - More Thoughtful Feedback](image)

The fourth question asked students what they thought the optimal length of time for them to access the online survey system should be. The text of the questions was: *What would be the optimal length of time for accessing the ESCI survey online?* Results are displayed in Figure 16 below. The most popular choice was a two week window, with 48% of respondents choosing that option. In all iterations of the online pilot we have been operating the system on a two week window to collect responses.

![Figure 16 - Optimal Survey Window](image)

The fifth question addressed student's confidence in their anonymity in the online system. The test of the questions was: *I am confident that the online ESCI survey maintains my anonymity.* The results are presented in Figure 17 below. A combined 67% of students were confident that the online system protects their anonymity. Only 9% of students felt that there were any issues with protecting their anonymity in the online system.
The sixth scalar question addressed student’s capability to participate in an online survey in class. The wording of the question was: *Would you have a wireless device (laptop, smartphone, tablet) with you in class, that you could use to complete the ESCI survey in class?* Results are presented in Figure 18 below. Exactly one quarter of students surveyed did not have a wireless device that they could use to take the online survey in class. This is consistent with the results of a recent national survey. Clearly a significant number of students would be disadvantaged by requiring them to engage with the online survey in class.

![Figure 17 - Confident in Anonymity](image)

The final question was an open-ended question that asked: *Do you have any suggestions or concerns about the online ESCI survey?* There are two major themes that came out in the responses to the open-ended question. The first theme is that most students felt that the online survey was an improvement because it preserved class time, saved paper, and was more time efficient for them. Quite a number of students expressed concerns that response rates would be lower because their fellow students would ignore the email, and other reminders. In addition some students expressed their annoyance with the frequency of email reminders, while others expressed their dismay that they had not received the email reminders. Presumably that last group of students were prompted to participate by their faculty member’s in class reminders.

![Figure 18 - Device in Class](image)
Results of Faculty Survey During Pilot (Early Spring 2013)

Following the expanded pilot in Winter Quarter 2013, we conducted a short survey of faculty whose departments participated in the ESCI Pilot in Winter. The survey was conducted at the beginning of Spring Quarter 2013. The survey asked two categorical questions and four open-ended questions.

The first categorical questions asked faculty “How did you encourage students to fill out the Online ESCI survey?”. The results are presented in Figure 19 below. There were a total of 29 responses. Based on their responses, clearly a substantial number of the faculty members employed the best practices information that we had shared with them to try to encourage their students to participate.

The second question asked the faculty members to indicate what their perception of the change in response rates was. There were 32 responses to this question. Based on the results presented in Figure 20 below, the preponderance of the faculty recognized that their response rates were either somewhat lower, or much lower, than in previous quarters. It is encouraging to note that a little more than a quarter of the respondents felt that the response rates were about the same.

In terms of responses to the four open-ended questions that were posed, there were two responses that were positive overall, ten responses that were negative overall, and 16 responses that were neutral. Main points of confusion on the part of responding faculty included:
• They did not know how students were alerted about the Online ESCI
• They were not aware of how students received reminders or how many reminders were sent
• They were not clear on the open and close date for the Online ESCI
• More generally: What information do the students receive about the Online ESCIs?

These responses were somewhat puzzling because in Winter quarter we sent individualized emails to the faculty members in the participating departments covering all of those points, other than example text from the email reminders to students. In the Spring quarter instance of the pilot, we tried to make all of those points more clear in the individual communication to the participating faculty members.

Additional important concerns expressed in the faculty survey included:

• Concerns about the timing of the ESCI Online survey window for courses that end out of sequence with the rest of the quarter (e.g. the Freshman Seminar courses frequently end before the ten week quarter is over.
• Concerns about the impact of low response rates on the level of the ratings, and concomitant impacts on personnel cases.
• Lack of clarity on the start and end deadlines for the students.

We have worked very hard to address these concerns. In a future iteration of the system we plan to be able to allow greater flexibility in specifying the start and end dates for the survey window to be open. We need to do this both for courses, like the Freshman Seminars, and Summer Sessions courses. The latter is particularly important because of the seven partially overlapping periods of instruction. Additionally we have worked on improving outreach to students via multiple mechanisms to get better response rates, although as the analysis in the next section shows, declining response rates do not necessarily result in lower ratings. That has also been the experience at other institutions, including UCLA which made the switch to online evaluations in 2012. The final point is a matter of even better, and more explicit communication with the faculty in advance of the survey window opening.
Analysis of Pilot Results on Survey Response Rates and Ratings

The results of our analysis of the ESCI Online Pilot program for Winter and Spring quarters 2013 are presented in the two figures below. These results are not for all courses for which online surveys were conducted. They are for courses for which an ESCI Online end of course survey was conducted in either Winter or Spring quarter 2013 and for which the ESCI results for the same course with the same instructor was available for Winter quarter 2012 and Spring quarter 2012. The comparisons are intended to be as close to a direct “apples-to-apples” comparison of response rates, and potential effects on student responses. Only Campus Items A and B were used for the comparison because they were the only items that could be reliably counted on to exist on all of the surveys. In addition, since we could only use items A and B, these results are only for lecturers or ladder faculty, and not Teaching Assistants.

In both tables, the three far right columns contain the comparative data. In both quarters, response rates were lower for online surveys than they had previously been for paper surveys. We attribute most of this difference to two factors. First, students must use their own time to complete the surveys in the online format, rather than being given time in class to complete the questionnaires. Second, due to changes in the student email system, a substantial number of students either sporadically or never received the initial invitation to the survey and subsequent reminder emails. Due in large part to these two factors, response rates were down by 21% in Winter quarter and 40% in Spring quarter. These results are consistent with findings from sister campuses in the UC that have switched to online end of course surveys in the past two years. In their results, although there was a decline in response rates from an average of 65% for paper surveys to 50% for online surveys, there was no systematic change of the ratings provided by the students on scalar items. Our mean response rates in the pilot were 33.7% and 44.3%, respectively, which is likely lower than the 50% mark due to the e-mail throttling issue, which Instructional Development is taking steps to rectify. By way of comparison, prior to the e-mail issue, the average response rates in the ESCI Online Pilot were 54% (Spring 2012, 15 courses) and 61% (Fall 2012, 22 courses).

We used two measures to explore the effect on ratings: Whether the mean ratings on Items A and B were more or less favorable when conducted online, and a comparison of the mean ratings for Items A and B across all course. For Winter quarter, 40% of ratings were either more favorable or the same as the previous year on Item A. In addition 55% of ratings for Item B were more favorable or the same as in the previous year. In Spring quarter, with double the sample of courses, 35% of ratings for Item A were the same or more favorable than in Spring 2012. Results for Item B indicate that 27.5% of ratings for Item B were more favorable or the same compared to the previous year. The mean rating for Item A increased by 0.1, on average, in Winter quarter, and by 0.28 in Spring. An increase of 0.3 represents a shift of 1/3 of a unit on the 5-point scale. Similarly, the mean rating for Item B increased by 0.03, on average, in Winter quarter, and by 0.29 in Spring. These small changes in the ESCI mean ratings are consistent with the experiences from our sister campuses, where they found that the ratings themselves were largely unchanged, even when response rates decreased.

One added item not directly analyzed here is the benefits to faculty of also being able to collect open-ended responses to questions without the need either for transcription or trying to read student's handwriting. Even with a decline in overall response rates, faculty should find the combination of traditional scalar ratings and open ended responses to be a valuable and rich source of feedback from their students.
### Figure 21 - Winter Quarter Results

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course</th>
<th>Winter 2013 Online ESCI Pilot</th>
<th>Winter 2013 Online ESCI Pilot</th>
<th>Winter 2013 Online ESCI Pilot</th>
<th>Winter 2013 Online ESCI Pilot</th>
<th>Winter 2013 Online ESCI Pilot</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td># Responses</td>
<td>Enrolled</td>
<td>Response Rate</td>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>Median</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FLMST</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>90.91%</td>
<td>1.40</td>
<td>1.30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FLMST</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>62.50%</td>
<td>1.40</td>
<td>1.28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FLMST</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>65.00%</td>
<td>1.40</td>
<td>1.28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FLMST</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>63.33%</td>
<td>1.21</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>1.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STATS</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>87.50%</td>
<td>1.64</td>
<td>1.71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STATS</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>57.53%</td>
<td>1.74</td>
<td>2.19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STATS</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>59.26%</td>
<td>2.31</td>
<td>2.06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STATS</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>83.33%</td>
<td>3.46</td>
<td>3.27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STATS</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>80.00%</td>
<td>3.46</td>
<td>3.27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>111</strong></td>
<td><strong>48.65%</strong></td>
<td><strong>1.78</strong></td>
<td><strong>1.94</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Key:**
- Response Rate Decreased: Mean Less Favorable
- Response Rate Increased: Mean More Favorable or the Same
- # Better: % Better
- St Dev: St Dev of Change in Response Rate
## Spring 2013 Online ESCI Response Analysis (n = 40 courses)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response</th>
<th># Responses</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Median</th>
<th>Min</th>
<th>Max</th>
<th>St. Dev.</th>
<th>Response</th>
<th># Responses</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Median</th>
<th>Min</th>
<th>Max</th>
<th>St. Dev.</th>
<th>Response</th>
<th># Responses</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Median</th>
<th>Min</th>
<th>Max</th>
<th>St. Dev.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Item A</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Item B</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Item C</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Item A   | 80           | 78.75% | 1.94   | 1.99 | 5.5 | 33.70   | Item B   | 80           | 22.78% | 2.38 | 2.44 | -52.37% | -0.00% | -0.15% |
| Item C   | 80           | 23.78% | 2.00   | 2.00 | 5.5 | 33.70   | Item B   | 80           | 22.78% | 2.38 | 2.44 | -52.37% | -0.00% | -0.15% |
| Item D   | 80           | 9.48%  | 1.00   | 1.00 | 5.5 | 33.70   | Item B   | 80           | 22.78% | 2.38 | 2.44 | -52.37% | -0.00% | -0.15% |

| Item A   | 80           | 78.75% | 1.94   | 1.99 | 5.5 | 33.70   | Item B   | 80           | 22.78% | 2.38 | 2.44 | -52.37% | -0.00% | -0.15% |
| Item C   | 80           | 23.78% | 2.00   | 2.00 | 5.5 | 33.70   | Item B   | 80           | 22.78% | 2.38 | 2.44 | -52.37% | -0.00% | -0.15% |
| Item D   | 80           | 9.48%  | 1.00   | 1.00 | 5.5 | 33.70   | Item B   | 80           | 22.78% | 2.38 | 2.44 | -52.37% | -0.00% | -0.15% |

### Changes Between Spring 2013 and Baseline

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Response Rate</th>
<th>Mean Change in Response Rate</th>
<th>Standard Deviation of Change in Response Rate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Item A</td>
<td>Decreased</td>
<td>-55.86%</td>
<td>1.47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Item B</td>
<td>Increased</td>
<td>1.47</td>
<td>1.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Item C</td>
<td>Decreased</td>
<td>-52.37%</td>
<td>-0.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Item D</td>
<td>Decreased</td>
<td>-52.37%</td>
<td>-0.15</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Summary

- **Response Rate Decreased:** 5-item decrease, 5-item increase
- **Response Rate Increased:** 1-item decrease, 1-item increase
- **Mean Favorable Change:** 0.00% change
- **StDev Favorable Change:** 0.00% change

**Key:**
- Response Rate Decreased
- Response Rate Increased
- Mean Favorable Change
- StDev Favorable Change
Recommendations

Based on its discussions, subcommittee work, consultations, and stakeholder surveys, the Ad Hoc Online Course Evaluation Committee recommends:

1. Adopt a departmental opt-in program for a three year period from the end of the pilot program.

   Rationale: There are departments that are extremely interested in converting to an online evaluation system for a wide variety of reasons. A three year opt-in window would allow those departments to permanently convert to online evaluations, while allowing departments who want to take a more cautious approach the time to see how the new system works for those departments who do convert. In order to minimize the impact on personnel cases by having evaluation data from both survey methods represented, departments who chose to convert to online surveys will do so in the Fall quarter. Thus, permanent adoption would occur for departments in Fall 2014, Fall 2015, and Fall 2016 by which time it may be the case that all departments will have made the transition. A phased adoption is essential in order to ensure that implementation can adhere to the rest of the recommendations adequately. In addition, some departments will require substantial consultation to revise their questionnaires to use updated and/or corrected survey items. Some sets of departments that consistently teach cross-listed courses with each other will have to coordinate their adoption of online evaluations. We anticipate, with approval, to close the pilot program at the end of Spring 2014 and begin the opt-in program in Fall 2014. In the last two quarters of the pilot program, the Committee would like to conduct an analysis of the differences, if any, in the nature of student responses to open-ended questions between traditional and online surveys.

2. Create a more permanent Committee on Course Evaluation to manage the transition period 2014-2017.

   Rationale: The Ad Hoc Committee has been extremely valuable in managing all of the various aspects of the pilot program. We believe that the Ad Hoc Committee, as currently constituted, should continue through to the proposed end of the pilot program at the end of Spring 2014. We believe that a more permanent committee with the same representation would be very helpful to manage the process of the three year transition phase. This would allow interested Senate Councils and Committees, as well as graduate and undergraduate students, to have representatives that would be appointed for one or two year terms to help guide the transition.

3. Move entire departments to the online system at one time; do not select individual courses within a department for the pilot or final adoption.

   Rationale: It will be very important for departments and other reviewing agencies in academic personnel cases to know precisely which courses were evaluated online. The process of record-keeping will be much simpler if all of a given instructor’s courses were evaluated the same way in a given quarter. It will also make it easier to provide a standardized evaluation of the teaching, given the consistency of the assessment tool in a given quarter.
4. **Ensure that all personnel materials clearly indicate which courses were evaluated online, and whether the course was evaluated as part of the pilot project.**

Rationale: Given that we do not know to what extent or how changing the evaluation instrument will impact student evaluation of teaching, it is critical that everyone is aware of which courses were evaluated by which means until the transition is complete. It will be critical that reviewing agencies factor this into the assessment of teaching as part of academic personnel reviews. In addition, the evaluation system that is finally implemented may differ in important ways from the pilot, and this may also have an impact on the evaluation results. For these reasons, we recommend that the following documents prominently indicate that the courses were evaluated online, and as part of the pilot program:

- Official ESCI and narrative reports
- Class Instruction Histories provided by Budget and Planning
- Bio-bibliography; statement under “Teaching” header

5. **Reviewing agencies should explicitly note the method of evaluation in their letters until the transition period is complete or until campus agencies judge that it is no longer necessary.**

Rationale: This safeguard ensures that each reviewing agency is explicitly aware of the method by which the reviews were collected. This practice need not be cumbersome; one might for example indicate that it was reviewed online with a parenthetical comment, e.g. ‘received a score of 1.7 (online pilot evaluation)’.

6. **To further mark the difference, change the name of the evaluation system from ESCI.**

Rationale: There are a number of reasons for this. First, it is still the Evaluation System for Courses and Instruction. While the survey method is changing, the rest of the process of data intake, processing and report generation are not. Also, during the transition period, some departments will continue with traditional paper-based ESCI surveys while others are using ESCI Online surveys. Changing the name to something completely different may be more confusing for everyone. We propose adopting “ESCI Online” as the new name.

7. **Departments should consider adopting other additional means of assessing teaching during the transition period. A strong statement of support from the Senate for this approach would be very valuable.**

Rationale: Since there will be a period of transition when results from the new method are being evaluated and new standards for their interpretation are emerging, faculty members might find it reassuring if additional means of assessing teaching supplement the online course evaluations. As noted in Appendix 1 of the APM, these might include: (a) opinions of other faculty members knowledgeable in the faculty member's field, particularly if based on class visitations, on attendance at public lectures or lectures before professional societies given by the candidate, or on the performance of students in courses taught by the candidate that are prerequisite to those of the informant; (b) opinions of students; (c) opinions of graduates who have achieved notable professional success since leaving the
University; (d) number and caliber of students guided in research by the candidate and of those attracted to the campus by the candidate's repute as a teacher; and (e) development of new and effective techniques of instruction.

8. **Inform instructors not to administer online course evaluations in class, even if all students have access to computers or other devices capable of accessing the online survey. Instructions to students should perhaps include a statement on this, e.g. 'Course evaluations should not be completed during regularly scheduled instructional hours of the course being evaluated'.**

Rationale: Since the quality of student evaluations may vary, depending on whether or not the evaluation is administered in class or online, regularizing the parameters of their collection promotes equity and equitability across courses. In addition, we know from surveys of students during the pilot program that 25% of students do not have a device capable of accessing the online surveys in class. In addition, most general assignment classrooms do not have sufficient network bandwidth available to support the entire class accessing the online surveys at the same time. The one exception to this recommendation could be made for courses which are taught in their entirety in a computer lab, where all class meetings occur in a computer lab during the entire course of the quarter. Many of the Writing Program’s courses, for example, could fall into this category.

9. **Adopt a comprehensive communications strategy targeting all participants including undergraduate students.**

Rationale: Providing plentiful information should be provided to the campus about this project moving forward, especially emphasizing the safeguards that are being put into place to ensure that the process does not adversely affect the evaluation of instructors. The communication should emphasize the following points:

a. This is being done across the country, and that every UC campus is somewhere on the trajectory of shifting to online evaluations.

b. The committee is constructing the system based on research on similar processes from other campuses.

c. This process has been going for two years, and is being done carefully and thoughtfully, with input from relevant committees of the Academic Senate, as well as Senate faculty, Unit 18 lecturers, and graduate-student instructors.

d. We are working to determine what factors will best ensure high response rates on this campus.

e. Safeguards are being adopted to ensure that instructors are not unfairly disadvantaged by this move.

f. This change will have positive impacts on the quality of the evaluations, leading to a more useful product that can be used to improve instruction.

1. The new system will allow students to provide more detailed and helpful comments, thus allowing instructors better feedback that can be used to improve teaching;
2. Ease of collecting evaluations of TAs in courses without labs or discussion sessions;
3. Ease of collecting reponses to open-ended questions.
4. The new system will eliminate logistical mistakes and irregularities in the distribution of questionnaires and Scantron sheets, their collection and return to Instructional Development for processing.
5. Eventually, faculty members will be able to access evaluations at all times.
6. Eventually, faculty members will be able to see data in multiple formats including bar graphs.
7. It will be easier to read narrative evaluations when they are typewritten.
8. There will be a significant cost savings, especially in staff time in academic departments, but also in paper, particularly in departments as they are responsible for printing all of the questionnaires in use currently. The initiative is in line with campus sustainability goals.

g. The communications should be conveyed through the following means:
1. Informational sessions at college-level or divisional briefings for Chairs.
2. Visits of committee members to department meetings before a given department goes online;
3. A memo to the campus from the EVC;
4. Visits of committee members to meetings of the Associated Students and Graduate Student Association.
5. A website with clearly and easily accessible information.
6. Articles in 93106 and the Daily Nexus, with interviews of students and instructors who have been through the process.
Appendices
Appendix A

Work Group Memo to Senate, May 2011
To: Henning Bohn, Divisional Chair
    Academic Senate

    Academic Deans

    John Talbott, Associate Vice Chancellor
    Academic Personnel

Fr: Carol Genetti, Associate Dean
    Division of Humanities and Fine Arts

    George H. Michaels, Executive Director
    Instructional Development

Via: Gene Lucas, Executive Vice Chancellor

Re: Online Delivery of Course Evaluations

In January of this year, EVC Lucas formed a work group to develop a plan for delivering course evaluations online. The work group is co-chaired by Carol Genetti and George Michaels, and includes representatives from the EVC’s office, the College of Engineering, Academic Personnel, Letters and Science IT, and campus IT. The purpose of this memorandum is to inform the Senate of the need for this transition, its potential benefits, and to solicit any suggestions, questions or concerns that the campus leadership might have about this change and its potential implications. Feedback will be carefully considered in the planning and implementation process.

Background
The ESCI system was originally designed in the late 1970’s in direct response to undergraduate student outcry over the quality of undergraduate instruction in the UC system at the time, and the lack of any mechanism for providing faculty members with student feedback on courses and instruction. The student protests resulted in the formation of the Instructional Improvement Program, the allocation of a line item in the State budget to address these issues, and a study commissioned by the Office of the President on the need for course evaluation systems on the UC campuses. The Instructional Improvement Program took different forms on each campus; UC Santa Barbara created Instructional Development, whose first Dean was Brian Fagan. Its mission was to develop a flexible system for providing timely feedback to faculty members on courses and instruction, and to develop and administer a grants program to support course design and development. The student feedback survey system became the Evaluation System for Courses and Instruction (ESCI), and the grants program became the Instructional Improvement Grant Program.

The entire ESCI system was developed by Dr. Stan Nicholson, an expert in educational psychology with an emphasis on evaluation and assessment, and Mr. Rick Johnson, an expert in survey design and analysis. The original system was hosted on the campus mainframe computer for the processing and printing of reports, and relied on preprinted data collection sheets for collecting student responses to individual
end-of-course surveys. Course surveys were designed in consultation with individual faculty members and/or departments, with questions for the surveys being drawn from an item pool consisting of questions that had been vetted for clarity and appropriateness of the accompanying response scales (since different response scales could be used for every question). From the beginning, the intent of the system was to allow faculty members or departments to modify the questionnaire from quarter to quarter so that the questionnaire was always asking questions of interest to the faculty member. Another hallmark was the premise that the results of ESCI surveys were the property of the individual faculty member, and could only be shared with the faculty member’s permission. Over time, departmental policies and practice required a standard departmental set of questions to be reported to the department for purposes of curricular analysis and academic personnel responsibilities. Eventually the Senate approved the adoption of campus-wide standard items A & B for inclusion in all ESCI surveys to for purposes of standardized curricular analysis and academic personnel reporting. In addition, the system was designed to report normed results within a running five year window for the same course over time, for that question within the department, for that question within the division or college, and for that question across the campus. For the time, it was the most complete, flexible, and rigorous course evaluation tool in the country. Remarkably, it still is, thanks to the solid underlying architecture of the system.

In the late 1990s, the system was migrated from the mainframe to run on a database system on a local server; quarterly results were printed on locally attached high-capacity laser printers. Dr. Michaels and Ms. Mary Lou Ramos were responsible for that substantial effort. The transition off the mainframe made it easier to catch and correct errors, run custom reports for faculty members, and generate aggregated reports for faculty members and departments. The system has been continuously updated and upgraded since that time.

Problems
While the ESCI system is remarkable for its flexible questionnaire design, rapid processing of the survey data, and stellar reporting capabilities, there is one glaring problem with the system as it currently functions: the now antiquated and labor-intensive manner in which the survey data is gathered, following practices established in the 1970’s. The issues with our current delivery system can be grouped into three main areas.

First, the process is labor intensive and substantially dependent on individual staff members following a multi-step process on a rigid timeline every quarter. Specifically, it requires the following steps:

• Departmental staff members inform ID as to which questionnaire each lecture and discussion section will use in the current quarter;
• ID staff match up data on the courses, instructors, and TA’s with the questionnaire information from each department;
• ID staff print scannable header sheets for each course and section, matching them with the correct number of scantron forms for each class, then deliver them to departments;
• Department staff assemble packets containing a header sheet and the appropriate numbers of printed questionnaires and scantron sheets for each class being reviewed, then distribute them to faculty members and TA’s, together with the department-specific surveys designed to elicit narrative evaluations;
• Faculty administer the surveys, asking student volunteers to return the completed evaluation forms to the department office;
• Department staff receive the packets from the students, then collect and organize the stacks of scantrons, header sheets, and narrative evaluations;
Scantron and header sheets are returned to the ESCI Office in ID, while narrative evaluations are either compiled in binders to be stored in the department office, typed up, or delivered to faculty members to keep;

At ID, the scantron and header sheets for each course are scanned for inclusion in the ESCI response database;

ESCI results are computed and final reports for the quarter are generated;

Up until last year, those reports were printed, collated, and then returned to the departments for distribution to the faculty and TAs, typically after departments create a photocopy to be kept in the instructor’s personnel file; now ID generates password-protected pdf files for each report and posts them on a secure website;

Department staff download zip files of the reports for a given quarter and sends them electronically to the faculty and TAs, keeping a copy for departmental records; narrative evaluations are distributed, processed, and stored following a range of department practices.

The inefficiency of this system has become especially untenable in the face of recent reductions in staffing. There is also a level of frustration created by the obvious advancements in technologies that have made such methods obsolescent.

The second problematic area concerns security of the documents. The entire set of evaluations is in student custody from the time of collection in the classroom until the delivery of the evaluations to the departments. There is also a period when the forms are in department offices and frequently are not secured. Over the years various problems have arisen as a result. These have included whole stacks of forms being lost or misplaced, forms being modified after the fact, forms being ruined by exposure to rain or water from broken pipes, and header sheets being switched between stacks of forms, so that the responses are tied to the wrong set of questions, instructor, section, or course. There have also been cases of narrative evaluations being lost, fabricated, or removed from the original set.

The third set of problems revolves around the collection of handwritten narrative evaluations in class. The current ESCI system can accommodate questions that require a narrative response, but the system cannot process nor store them. Departments or faculty members who want to collect narrative responses must process and report those separately from the main ESCI processing a reporting system. This adds an additional burden to departmental staff. There are also issues with handwritten responses. Some students are concerned about the lack of anonymity of their handwritten responses so don’t write anything or temper their responses. Also, the allocated class time is sometimes too short to allow students to write a thoughtful response. Finally, some handwritten responses are illegible.

The task of the current work group is to determine how to use Internet technologies to solve these problems. By making course evaluations available to students online, all of the aforementioned issues would be resolved:

- The workload of departmental and ID staff would be substantially reduced as the logistical issues of transporting, organizing, distributing, collecting, reorganizing, and returning all of those forms would be eliminated;
- The system would be secure, with students logging in to a secure website and the responses feeding directly into the ESCI database, thus preventing the possibility of loss or tampering;
- Students would have a greater sense of assurance of anonymity as their responses would not be written by hand;
- And, students would have the time to provide thoughtful responses on both sets of questions.
Other advantages would be the saving of class time that is now devoted to the collection of the evaluations at the end of each quarter, as well as a significant improvement in reporting, as the system would generate a single, cohesive (and legible) report, inclusive of both quantitative and discursive data.

**The Proposal**

The work group has developed a multi-phase plan for implementing online course evaluations. We seek the Senate’s comments on the outline of the plan, reaction to the proposed timeline, and any suggestions, questions or concerns that may be raised by the Senate membership in response to this change in procedure.

**Phase One - Awareness**

This is the current phase. In addition to requesting input from the Senate and Deans, we have contacted the Registrar’s Office, Student Affairs, and the GauchoSpace team for information on ways in which online survey delivery can leverage current campus systems and processes, and to find out if there are any negative impacts to their systems that need to be considered and avoided during the design process. We will also be requesting faculty input via a survey. This will serve to make the faculty aware that this effort is underway and to elicit faculty input on future system enhancements. Current ideas are to make individual access to ESCI reports available online and to create a web interface that will allow faculty to redesign their questionnaires at the beginning of each quarter. This phase will continue through Spring quarter 2011.

**Phase Two - Technical Design and Implementation**

This phase will primarily involve the work group, Instructional Development staff, and potentially members of the Student Affairs IT staff and the GauchoSpace team. In this phase we will finalize the technical design for the delivery system, acquire any additional hardware necessary, implement the survey delivery system code, and do preliminary testing. Initial design meetings have already occurred and have been very productive. Significant portions of the necessary elements are already in place in the existing ESCI system, including the question pool, the survey definitions for all courses, and the mechanisms for correctly connecting questionnaires with the courses and instructors. The following functions remain to be developed: authentication of students using their UCSB NetID; connection of students with the list of courses for which they are enrolled; the association of a particular survey with the course it is submitted for; delivery of the questionnaire as a web form; submission of responses to the ESCI server; notification for the student that the survey has been completed. In addition the system will need to have a timed script that automatically sends students a weekly reminder email during the survey period, for as long as they have uncompleted surveys pending. We anticipate completing this work during the summer of 2011.

During Phase Two, we will also establish a subcommittee of faculty members to work in conjunction with the Instructional Development staff to assess the question pool. In addition to weeding and streamlining the current question bank, this group will consider adding new questions that embody current approaches to evaluation, including those that prompt students to reflect and report on their learning and skills development. This activity will take place either in the summer or early fall of 2011, depending on faculty availability. This is independent of the technical work, so the two activities to be contemporaneous.

**Phase Three - Piloting**

The EVC has requested that the online survey system be piloted during Fall quarter 2011. We are confident that this is feasible and plan on proceeding toward that goal. For the pilot, we will solicit participa-
tion by a small set of departments that are willing to have all of their course evaluations distributed on-line. We seek a mix of departments in terms of size and discipline, and intend to include one department each from Engineering, Education, and the three L&S divisions. We believe that a pilot with five departments will be manageable and sufficient to provide significant information on peak loads, student and faculty reactions, and other pertinent issues. Departments not in the pilot will follow traditional course-evaluation practices.

**Phase Four - Adoption**

We anticipate that the adoption phase will extend over the next three to five quarters, at which point the system will be universal. Entire departments will be brought online in a given quarter in order to keep the logistics manageable. If all goes smoothly, we could have full implementation as early as Fall Quarter 2012, no later than Spring 2013.

During Phase Four we will also be working on increasing the ways in which faculty can individually tailor the evaluations to best receive input on their course design and teaching, as well as how they access and evaluate survey results. Mechanisms for faculty input and feedback will be available throughout the process and this information will be weighed and incorporated into the system design if feasible. We plan to make ESCI reports available to faculty at anytime, via a web-based interface accessible by UCSB NetID and password. Each of these enhancements will have its own development cycle, and will be rolled out when ready throughout Phase Four.

**Incentives for Student Participation**

One of the main issues that other campuses have faced in moving to online course evaluations is a reduction in levels of student participation. Currently, more than 90% of our students complete course evaluations on average and we would like to ensure similar high levels of participation in the online environment. After surveying and discussing the literature on the subject, the work group determined that the following measures are likely to be most effective: (1) raise student awareness on the importance of course evaluation and demonstrate that student input results in positive change in instructional practice; (2) extend the period of submission to the last four weeks of the quarter; (3) construct an automated system that sends reminder emails at periods of increasing frequency; (4) allow early access to course grades for students who have completed evaluations for all of their courses (until the date that grades are due, at which point all students would have access).

**Faculty Issues and Academic Personnel**

Course evaluations are a significant component of faculty personnel cases and many faculty members are understandably sensitive about the evaluation process. It will be important to illustrate the benefits to the system for faculty members, including the savings in class time, better reporting, permanent accessibility, and the introduction of an efficient process by which they can tailor evaluations to particular classes.

The professional literature is mixed as to whether students evaluate courses more harshly in online environments than they do in class, with some studies reporting one way and other studies reporting the opposite. (The discrepancies are at least partially based on the quantitative design of the study.) It will be critical for the campus to acknowledge that the shift to the online environment may require a recalibration in our *qualitative* assessment of the quantitative data. In other words, the implications of a given ESCI result on Question A may change in the new environment. This fact will need to be explicitly acknowledged by all agencies that evaluate personnel decisions, including departments, deans, and the Committee...
on Academic Personnel. The quarter in which the new evaluation system was implemented for the department of a given candidate will need to be highlighted on the bio-bibliography and in the written documents that accompany each case. These measures should help to reassure faculty members that their personnel cases won’t be disadvantaged as a result of this technological shift.

Conclusion

ESCI was designed to fill a sorely needed gap in UC’s approach to undergraduate instruction. It has served the campus well over the years, but changes in technologies have alleviated the need for the labor-intensive and fallible techniques of data collection. We hope that the plan put forth for addressing that shortcoming meets with the approval of the Senate. The purpose of the ESCI system has always been to provide UCSB faculty and TAs with meaningful, reliable, and understandable feedback on their courses and instructional strategies. We hope that the improved method of delivery, faculty interface, and question bank will provide faculty members with new ways to effectively improve instruction. In addition, this system will boost efficiency, reduce stress for our lean departmental and ID staff, and increase cost effectiveness and environmental sustainability.

Please share this document with any of the Councils or Committees within whose portfolio this proposal would logically fall. We look forward to responses, welcome discussion, and are eager to incorporate input. Thank you for your attention to this important matter.

cc: Tom Putnam, Associate Vice Chancellor for Information Technology
    Glen Beltz, Associate Dean for Undergraduate Studies, College of Engineering
    Toby Lazarowitz, Executive Assistant to the EVC
    Cindy Doherty, Director, Academic Personnel
    Alan Moses, Technical Coordinator, LSIT
Appendix B
Senate Response to Work Group Memo, June 2011
The Academic Senate has completed its review of the proposal for Online Delivery of Course Evaluations. Several groups were able to provide substantive comments and suggestions including: Committee on Academic Personnel (CAP), Undergraduate Council (UgC), Graduate Council (GC), Council on Research and Instructional Resources (CRIR), Council on Planning and Budget (CPB), Council on Faculty issues and Awards (CFIA), and the Faculty Executive Committees (FEC’s) from L&S, Engineering, and Creative Studies.

All groups believe there is value in working on an online evaluation tool and there is support for the rationale of the project. Groups cited the ease of administration, savings of staff time, tighter security, more legible comments from students, organizing narrative comments in a single file, and saving many reams of paper. At the same time, there are serious questions and concerns such that the Senate recommends the project proceed more slowly, have a true pilot period that could test the quality of an online system and involve faculty members from UgC, GC and CAP in developing the pilot. In addition, it is critical to involve lecturers in any pilot about online delivery of ESCI given that their personnel cases rely solely on their teaching. The COE FEC recommends the use of a “rigorous pilot of the proposed program, for example by using the new system in a few large courses whose syllabi and instructors have remained stable for several years, in order to investigate the effect of the change on ESCI results.”

Decisions about the Campus-wide implementation of a new evaluation system should be contingent on the outcome of the pilot. CRIR notes: “we are uneasy about the idea of the online ESCI system as proposed. This change in how ESCI will be handled stands to affect faculty in significant ways and we do not agree that the proposal should be executed as currently planned. Our group is aware of research that suggests that the evaluation scores will initially drop when an online version is implemented, and that there will be reductions in the scores. This research should be reviewed and made available to faculty and lecturers during the pilot stage of the project. Research in this area also shows that when the person being evaluated is present during the online survey process, the outcome is different than if they were not present. Research that is available on these aspects of an online process should be referred to when considering the results of the pilot project.” These differences between paper and online systems suggest that attempts to maintain comparability in scores may well prove futile. At issue is therefore not the mode of delivery, but the discontinuation of ESCI as we know it, and the design of a new and intrinsically non-comparable evaluation system.

There are several specific areas of concern on the part of the Senate reviewing groups that warrant further discussion and exploration.
The suggested time period of starting at week six for administering the surveys seems much too early to every group. CAP says, “Many courses build up to a synthetic or climactic conclusion, so it would be premature to administer evaluations in weeks as early as 6 - 8. Also, some students may opt to evaluate early in response to low grades or challenging assignments, registering their protest before they have actually done the assignments or the hard work needed to improve a low grade.” CPB wonders if students will be able to change their evaluations in week eight or nine. UgC points out that a four week window in which to evaluate a course creates inherent bias for a particular course; an evaluation done in week six would not be comparable to an evaluation done in week ten.

Several groups point out that the incentives for completing an evaluation seem weak. CFIA states that they are “unconvinced that the incentives listed (early access to their grades) will encourage students to go online and complete the evaluations. Do we even have evidence that faculty are able to submit grades significantly prior to the deadline to make the offer of this incentive meaningful?” CRIR suggests that faculty do not need additional pressure around grading and issues of security would arise if completing a survey is connected to grades. Other groups echo this concern believing that there will be a significant drop in participation unless more realistic incentives are built in. UgC and the COE FEC suggest that perhaps students would either have to complete the evaluation or “actively” opt out of doing it before having access to their grades.

Of great concern is the expectation that participation will drop significantly. Most groups commented that the student responses will likely represent the extremes, both positive and negative, thereby losing the middle and providing skewed and/or inconclusive results. CAP says, that “It would also lead to a more bifurcated distribution of scores for each class, which would be hard to interpret if data from the middling majority of students are missing because they were not inspired (or angered) enough to log on and report." CAP and others have serious doubts that students will choose to complete a survey on their own time. CAP states, “Already, CAP sees response rate problems in many dossiers in the personnel system. CAP takes strong issue with the report’s statement that ‘90% of our students complete evaluations on average.’” CAP continues to say that “High completion rates are generally obtained in small enrollment courses, but it is very rare to get anything close to that high response rate in large lecture classes. Perhaps the statement meant to say that 90% of all courses get a high completion rate.” CRIR suggests that perhaps the last class continues to be the right time and asking students to fill out the survey on their laptops (or smartphones) might work. There are challenges with wireless classrooms but that is a preferred strategy, if possible.

CAP finds the narrative comments of very high value to their work in evaluating personnel cases, especially in interpreting the middle range scores. They believe that in the classroom, there is ample time to complete evaluations and students provide comments in part because time is allowed and because they see other students doing the same. They are concerned that an online survey will inadvertently encourage students to simply check boxes and not write any substantive commentary. At the same time CFIA wonders about an alternative yet worrisome problem; students who do not attend class completing a survey.

Some groups suggest that this may be the time to re-evaluate the survey instrument altogether, and they welcome the plan to evaluate the question bank as discussed in the Report. The current survey does not ask about the level of student engagement in the course (did they attend class, did they do the reading/homework prior to lectures, etc.). Many groups believe that trying to capture student engagement could be most helpful. CAP states, “By asking questions more geared to student self-assessments of their efforts and discouraging responses geared toward the entertainment value of the course
or the personalities of instructors, we might produce different expectations from students for their own contributions to the learning environment of UCSB.”

Several groups were curious as to whether the Task Force had studied other institutions who had implemented online evaluation systems. The COE FEC is aware of “data from other institutions in which a change from paper to online surveys resulted in drastically reduced participation rates. The FEC was particularly concerned that the proposal offers no evidence of benchmarking of similar initiatives outside of UCSB. CRIR members are aware that there is substantive research on these questions and they urge the Task Force to provide background research to faculty. Although the Report mentions literature on the subject, several believe that surveying institutions who have implemented online surveys could be very useful.

A few groups said that further cost savings and costs should be explored before moving forward. CRIR questions whether the current IT systems have the necessary capacity. They say, “It is imperative to allow for simultaneous and synchronous data collection and we are not convinced that this can this be handled well.” Questions arose about costs of enhanced security systems if necessary. Finally, some members of CRIR think that limited resources could be better utilized by enhancing the online course and registration system rather than ESCI.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment.
Appendix C
Winter Quarter Student Survey Results
1. It would have been helpful to save a draft of my responses to return to the survey later.

(a) Strongly Agree (b) Agree (c) Neither Agree Nor Disagree (d) Disagree (e) Strongly Disagree
Response weighting: 1 2 3 4 5
Blank Total Total
(a) (b) (c) (d) (e) Response Students Courses Mean Median
This COURSE current quarter 17% 23% 37% 17% 6% 2 597 1 2.7 3.0

Student-weighted Norms (GR students)
Dept ESCI INSTRUCTORS current qt 17% 23% 37% 17% 6% 2 597 1 2.7 3.0
Dept ESCI INSTRUCTORS over time 17% 23% 37% 17% 6% 2 597 1 2.7 3.0
Campus INSTRUCTORS over time 17% 23% 37% 17% 6% 2 597 1 2.7 3.0

2. The online end of quarter survey is an improvement over the traditional paper-based end of quarter survey.

(a) Strongly Agree (b) Agree (c) Neither Agree Nor Disagree (d) Disagree (e) Strongly Disagree
Response weighting: 1 2 3 4 5
Blank Total Total
(a) (b) (c) (d) (e) Response Students Courses Mean Median
This COURSE current quarter 43% 31% 20% 4% 2% 1 597 1 1.9 2.0

Student-weighted Norms (GR students)
Dept ESCI INSTRUCTORS current qt 43% 31% 20% 4% 2% 1 597 1 1.9 2.0
Dept ESCI INSTRUCTORS over time 43% 31% 20% 4% 2% 1 597 1 1.9 2.0
Campus INSTRUCTORS over time 43% 31% 20% 4% 2% 1 597 1 1.9 2.0

3. I was able to provide more thoughtful feedback in this online format of the ESCI survey as compared to the paper-based survey.

(a) Strongly Agree (b) Agree (c) Neither Agree Nor Disagree (d) Disagree (e) Strongly Disagree
Response weighting: 1 2 3 4 5
Blank Total Total
(a) (b) (c) (d) (e) Response Students Courses Mean Median
This COURSE current quarter 25% 23% 40% 11% 2% 3 597 1 2.4 3.0

Student-weighted Norms (GR students)
Dept ESCI INSTRUCTORS current qt 25% 23% 40% 11% 2% 3 597 1 2.4 3.0
Dept ESCI INSTRUCTORS over time 25% 23% 40% 11% 2% 3 597 1 2.4 3.0
Campus INSTRUCTORS over time 25% 23% 40% 11% 2% 3 597 1 2.4 3.0
4.. What would be the optimal length of time for accessing the ESCI survey online?

(a) Three Weeks  (b) Two Weeks  (c) One Week  (d) Five Days  (e) Two Days
Response weighting: 0 0 0 0 0 Blank Total Total
This COURSE current quarter 22% 48% 25% 3% 2% 3 597 1
Student-weighted Norms (GR students)
Dept ESCI INSTRUCTORS current qt 22% 48% 25% 3% 2% 3 597 1
Dept ESCI INSTRUCTORS over time 22% 48% 25% 3% 2% 3 597 1
Campus INSTRUCTORS over time 22% 48% 25% 3% 2% 3 597 1

5.. I am confident that the online ESCI survey maintains my anonymity.

(a) Strongly Agree  (b) Agree  (c) Neither Agree Nor Disagree  (d) Disagree  (e) Strongly Disagree
Response weighting: 1 2 3 4 5 Blank Total Total
This COURSE current quarter 28% 39% 24% 7% 2% 4 597 1 2.2 2.0
Student-weighted Norms (GR students)
Dept ESCI INSTRUCTORS current qt 28% 39% 24% 7% 2% 4 597 1 2.2 2.0
Dept ESCI INSTRUCTORS over time 28% 39% 24% 7% 2% 4 597 1 2.2 2.0
Campus INSTRUCTORS over time 28% 39% 24% 7% 2% 4 597 1 2.2 2.0

6.. Would you have a wireless device (laptop, smartphone, tablet) with you in class, that you could use to complete the ESCI survey in class?

(a) Yes  (b) No
Response weighting: 0 0 Blank Total Total
This COURSE current quarter 75% 25% 4 597 1
Student-weighted Norms (GR students)
Dept ESCI INSTRUCTORS current qt 75% 25% 4 597 1
Dept ESCI INSTRUCTORS over time 75% 25% 4 597 1
Campus INSTRUCTORS over time 75% 25% 4 597 1
7. Do you have any suggestions or concerns about the online ESCI survey?

The online survey will generate less reliable results from students unless it is presented within the class time and format. As it is, it pops up during dead week, when everybody is too busy to bother with it. I had three minutes to do this, my results are crap. Please include evaluations during CLASS TIME, otherwise many of the thoughtless results will be unfair to instructors who depend on the feedback.

Because I had to log in to take it I was a little concerned the survey would be registering my identity and this made me a little hesitant in my answers -- I didn't see it reassure me anywhere that it would be keeping me anonymous. (Although, admittedly, I didn't read everything around here). I liked the only survey format because typing allows me to write faster and therefore a little more than I would on the paper survey. I'm not sure you'll be able to get as many people to actually take this though as forcing materials as opposed to having to waste it taking these surveys and I would support the online switch heartily.

Some questions need an option: cannot be evaluated. For example, the TA of a course may not be the grader of this course, so I cannot evaluate if this TA is good at grading or not.

No.

I don't like the idea of having to log on with my UCSB NetID to complete an anonymous survey. I would rather have you email a response form to everyone in the class by way of umail addresses. saves trees! :D

Make the mobile version of the site more minimal, it's a bit cluttered

It's awesome.

The best part about the survey is that you can complete it anywhere online, as well as it saving A LOT of paper. I am currently completing all of my surveys at work, which is very convenient for me. I can complete my answers more thoughtfully, not rushed, or pressured in any way. I think the online survey is an excellent idea. I suggest that you do not make online the only option to complete the survey, but that you offer it first.

I hope this online survey is anonymous
It is important to change formats like this in conjunction with the rapid technology advancements and changes occurring in our society today. So, this online survey has helped students with filling this out on our own time, and with organization. Thanks and good luck!

It is nice being able to fill this out on my own time but I am certain that a significant portion of the student body will never fill out the surveys if it switches to an online medium.

As everyone knows, the responses to the online system will be far less than the traditional paper-based review system that is distributed in the last lecture. If the sample size is still large enough to produce accurate findings, then I would stick with the online system to save paper and time for everyone. On the other hand, if it the sample sizes begin to dwindle then I see no problem with reverting back to the in class forms.

It only had a section for extra comments for the TA but not for the professor.

Without a paper in front of a person, he/she may not feel motivated to complete an online survey during his/her own free time.

How do I tell if I submitted it?

Great way to be sustainable.

students may or may not put as much thought into the survey and there is no guarantee that the students will complete the surveys ontime.

Add a Other Comments or General Feedback section.

I like being able to complete the surveys online. In class, it’s such a rush to complete the survey, that I forget important points that I wanted to say. Being able to access it on your own time (as long as it doesn't take too long) is fine. If the survey was any longer it wouldn’t be that great because it takes time out of studying. Also, I have terrible handwriting and I feel bad when
The online survey will generate less reliable results from students unless it is presented within the class time and format. As it is, it pops up during dead week, when everybody is too busy to bother with it. I had three minutes to do this, my results are crap.

I, however, greatly appreciate having that time back in class & sections to discuss the final and the

I don't like the idea of having to log on with my UCSB NetID to complete an anonymous survey. I would rather have you email a

I think the online survey is an excellent idea. I suggest that you do not make online the only option to

professors can't read what I wrote, so typing it out is good. Plus it saves paper!

None.

Everything should move to paperless, but I believe that if someone was truly dedicated they could probably figure out who wrote what survey.

No

None. I definitely prefer filling out the end of the course surveys online than in class scantrons.

Great idea... save the paper! Would be nice to have the opportunity to fill out in class still, however, although I understand that not every student will have a laptop/smartphone, etc.

Seems like a good system and a great way to not waste entire ScanTron sheets.

no

Better.

Well this system is clearly better. It eliminates the paper and the hassle of in class evaluations. Anonymity is obviously a concern. But I feel like my handwriting could be compared with in class samples if a teacher was intent upon finding out who wrote the feedback on the paper evaluation. So I don't think that is a big issue. I don't care that much about being anonymous. I give honest feedback and I don't think a teacher would try to punish me for giving my opinion. I think this system is a great improvement and I see no reason why the paper system should be used next year. Thanks for this upgrade.

no.

I would not complete the survey in class with the electronic device. The current system in place with ESCI is satisfactory, however, my anonymity I am not confident on, this is because I must sign in.

It would be beneficial if the teachers could send us links to the survey and announce that in class, as opposed to relying on ignorable automated system emails.

This form of surveying is extremely efficient. The paper-based survey tends to take up a lot of class time that the professor could use on teaching. I would not recommend completing the survey during class. Often times my cell phone does not have service in many of the classrooms.
Maybe put some sort of restrictions on students who do not complete their evaluation, such as You may not view your final grade on GOLD until evaluations have been submitted or something like that.

This is a good idea.

The ESCI survey appears straight-forward and easy to use.

In the schools I attended the word evaluation always meant a very important thing. Every year a representative from LAUSD would determine if our schools would be discredited and culmination certificates be made useless. I believe plenty of people would agree that the evaluations such as these would be advantageous. My suggestion would just be to push this online survey that reminds one to submit teaching evaluations.

My concern is that students receive many emails, some of which they overlook and delete. It is true that students can miss out on completing an in-class survey by not showing up to class, but the number of students not completing a survey may increase. The online method is worth a try though, in my opinion. It does save paper, which may be important.

No

Strong improvement over what we used to do to review professors.

If it's not done in class, it's not likely to get done by the majority of students. I'd recommend putting some time aside in class to do these surveys on our computers or smart phones.

No

Don't spam people with emails if they haven't completed the surveys

No

Yes.

I think it's great, very environmentally-friendly and much more efficient. I feel I can say more here (because I type faster than I write). I hope you continue with this system.

It won't be very effective. In class you are forced to take the survey. When you get an e-mail link, it's very easy to ignore. I answered, but I doubt many will.

Wish there was a neither agree nor disagree option.
The online survey will generate less reliable results from students unless it is presented within the class time and format. I am hesitant in my answers -- I didn't see it reassure me anywhere that it would be keeping me anonymous. (Although, admittedly, I do put more thought into the online survey than I would on the paper survey. I'm not sure you'll be able to get as many people to actually take this though as forcing a response form to everyone in the class by way of umail addresses. Good luck!

N/A

It only had a section for extra comments for the TA but not for the professor.

It only had a section for extra comments for the TA but not for the professor.

Without a paper in front of a person, he/she may not feel motivated to complete an online survey during his/her own free time. Students may or not put as much thought into the survey and there is no guarantee that the students will complete the surveys.

None.

None. I definitely prefer filling out the end of the course surveys online than in class scantrons. Great idea... save the paper! Would be nice to have the opportunity to fill out in class still, however, although I understand that this is a bad idea. My concern is that students receive many emails, some of which they overlook and delete. It is true that students can miss out on feedback.

No.

The only problem with the online survey is that most students won't fill it out. They'll just forget it or not do it all. But it is definitely more convenient for those who DO want to fill out the surveys. I appreciate the e-mail reminders, however, when I receive one every day it makes me feel as though I need to rush to complete the surveys. I worry that less students will complete surveys this way than the previous traditional paper surveys in the classroom. because it need the user name that make me feel uncomfortable that we can us id to see who did that survey.

The only problem with the online survey is that most students won't fill it out. They'll just forget it or not do it all. But it is definitely more convenient for those who DO want to fill out the surveys.

None

No.

This is definitely great for the environment in that it saves paper. Also, sometimes I forget to write something down on the survey so saving a draft and returning to it before final submission is helpful. I definitely prefer to do this than filling out a sheet of paper that will have to put digitized later anyway. In order to increase use and engagement of online surveys, you can have the survey tied to students seeing their grades or something like that.

I worry that less students will complete surveys this way than the previous traditional paper surveys in the classroom.

My only concern is getting everyone to do it with the same efficacy as having a physical piece of paper in front of you. I feel like it would be easy for people to forget or ignore something I feel is very important to our educational experience if evals were completely online.

I suggest that the student is given the option of saving answers before submitting.

Stop sending me so many god damn emails all the time.

I worry that less students will complete surveys this way than the previous traditional paper surveys in the classroom.

I am concerned that less feedback will be given because students are less likely to complete the survey if the are expected to complete it on their own time

The only problem with the online survey is that most students won't fill it out. They'll just forget it or not do it all. But it is definitely more convenient for those who DO want to fill out the surveys.

None.

The only problem with the online survey is that most students won't fill it out. They'll just forget it or not do it all. But it is definitely more convenient for those who DO want to fill out the surveys.

None

this is a bad idea.

The fact that the survey can be completed during any free time that we have is convenient. However, when the survey is in front of the student in class, it is like an obligation to complete. If the survey is online and not mandatory, I feel as if students will not take the time to complete the survey.

The ESCI survey appears straight-forward and easy to use. The ESCI survey has proven to be a vast improvement. Not only was class time not wasted, but it has allowed me to fit it into my own schedule while also providing more well thought out responses. That said, question 6 of this particular survey indicates that the system is being considered for use in-class using wireless devices, which I think would be a mistake, removing one of the greatest benefits to this system. I have doubts about the total anonymity promised by this system, but I also have doubts that
The online survey will generate less reliable results from students unless it is presented within the class time and format. As it must be included during class time, otherwise many of the thoughtless results will be unfair to instructors who depend on honest feedback and I don’t think a teacher would try to punish me for giving my opinion. I think this system is a great improvement over paper surveys.

My only concern is getting everyone to do it with the same efficacy as having a physical piece of paper in front of you. I feel like taking the survey online is less anonymous. It sucks and less people will do it BECAUSE it’s online.

I really like the online survey because students are not forced to do it but the only problem is that students will either forget to do the survey or would not care to do it. My other concern is that if students choose to do the survey, it would probably be the students that either really enjoyed the class and want to write a good review or really hated the class and the professor. So there would be a lot of extremes with an online survey. The in-betweeners would not care to take the survey. I also feel like taking the survey online is less anonymous.

My only reservation is that students can more easily avoid filling these out since it is not being physically handed to them. These surveys are important so I hope you find a way to maintain the average amount of responders.

No.

Some of the questions should have N/A options. Also, it would be useful to have a space for writing general comments about an instructor that don’t fall into the available categories.

Perhaps not allow the distribution of your quarter grade until you complete the survey to ensure participation.

Haha definitely my anonymity. I logged in for this, so inherently there is a way you can find out who I am...

Students often get wrapped up in their own lives and forget to do things like this so reminders sent to email every few days will help the efficiency of the surveys I think. I needed 2 reminders before I filled these out today.

Nope I think this is way better than the paper alternative. Time saver, tree saver. Everybody wins!

Being able to complete the surveys electronically will save a lot of paper, money and it also allows for more well developed answers. I believe this format is ideal.

This is gay. I would rather just get it over with in class when I have the time. Now you are wasting my time outside of class that I could be using to do other shit. ESCI gets two thumbs down!!!!

The 6th question would depend on the class. Also, I feel it is great in that it reduces paper waste. However, it prevents total anonymity because we have to log in to give our comments.

Better because students can provide a more honest & thorough response because: they have more time to respond, they can respond during a period time when they are still actively involved in the course (as opposed to the end of the year), & can take the survey at a time when they are perhaps less biased about the course (pending finals).
I wonder how much participation this survey will receive by comparison to the old paper one. It is easier for students to ignore or forget about this service because it is online, and not at a specific time within a class.

Make sure all students do it

It would be nice to have reminders of some kind. Also, an integration with gauchospace would be nice and very helpful.

I appreciate the e-mail reminders, however, when I receive one every day it makes me feel as though I need to rush to complete the survey and that inhibited my ability to take the time to provide thoughtful answers.

Nothing special

I don't think its better than doing evals in class. Professors had to remind students in lecture almost everyday this week and people still did not know about it. Doesn't make a difference.

I am slightly concerned that many people will not take the surveys at all due to the fact that emails are easy to disregard rather than the professor/ta giving it out on the last day of class, but I believe if there was a system where students were reminded every so often, or if there was a minor consequence given (like a limited restriction to access GOLD if the surveys weren't taken or something along those lines) then that would solve the problem of students disregarding these surveys if they were to make the transition to the internet instead of the traditional paper surveys.

The one concern I have is that, I had two classes to complete the survey for, but it has each class put down twice, so it says that I have four surveys to complete, but they are the exact same. Maybe a completed next to the ones that need to be completed will be helpful.

I think it would be best to set up specific timelines in each quarter to make sure that evaluation is done before finals.

WELCOME TO THE FUTURE

I strongly agree with the online survey, since with a computer, I can write down more sentences to describe the Instructor and the Teaching Assistant. Moreover, it will save the TA a lot of time during the section, which is important during the dead week.

Unsure as to whether my responses are actually anonymous. Otherwise relatively simple and efficient way to gain feedback. In addition I like that it wastes less paper and is there more eco friendly

To question 6, my answer is MAYBE. I sometimes have my computer and I sometimes don't.

N/A
Suggestions: Implement it campus wide. Concerns: That it won't be implemented campus wide soon and I will continue having to fill in those frustrating paper sheets when all I want to do is leave class so I don't write every comment that I should.

Nice that it's online and quick.

Way better than paper

I suggest we start using this system for class surveys. I do not have any concerns.

Using an online survey does not take away from class time.

Do this for all classes.

Is it really anonymous? They kept sending me emails about how I didn't complete mine yet, so they do know when I respond...

After pushing submit the first time, it would be nice to be able to go back to the survey without having to erase all your answers. I appreciate the online survey because it doesn't take time away from lecture and section during that last week where class time is valuable for reviewing before the final

It's great and doesn't waste as much paper! Also it's cool to be able to fill it out in the comfort of my own home. I'm not sure as many students would participate as they would in class because it's easy to forget about an email but when everyone has time to do the survey in class they are forced to complete it. I forgot to do it the first time, but the reminder email was a great reminder.

Will the professors see the survey results before they finalize grading?

No.

I think that this system is much better because it allows us to use our final class/section for review rather than dealing with evaluations. It also is less uncomfortable for the professor/TA who has to leave the room while students are taking the survey.

No

good

Question 6 needs to have a Sometimes slot. Probably, but doing this survey on a phone would be somewhat annoying I would assume.

Spread this to all classes! End paper!

It was very convenient to do this online, but maybe make it available sooner to not take away from studying the few weeks before finals.
The online survey will generate less reliable results from students unless it is presented within the class time and format. As it...

The best part about the survey is that you can complete it anywhere online, as well as it saving A LOT of paper. I am currently...

It is nice being able to fill this out on my own time but I am certain that a significant portion of the student body will never...

Do this for all of our classes!

Do this for all of our classes!

None.

Better.

concern. But I feel like my handwriting could be compared with in class samples if a teacher was intent upon finding out who wrote...

This form of surveying is extremely efficient. The paper-based survey tends to take up a lot of class time that the professor could...

The ESCI survey appears straight-forward and easy to use.

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It sucks and less people will do it BECAUSE it's online.

This is GREAT in comparison to the paper ESCIs.

I think the online survey is a good idea in general as it eliminates the need for TAs or Professors to use class time for the...

survey. However, it also requires students taking time out of their often busy schedules to fill out a survey. So as long as the...

surveys aren't too long and there is adequate time for completing it, I think it should be fine.

it is really good to go paperless.

This would be an improvement to the paper survey. Although, students might forget since these surveys are open during dead week.

The suggestion that one might complete these surveys on a smartphone is a bit of a joke; the thought sorority girls and other...

normal types all tapping away on tiny iPhone screens to comment about their instructors or TAs is laughable. Also, I came on to...

submit blank surveys for my TA and professor, just so I would stop receiving the email reminders. I find the You will receive