Educational & Research Technologies Committee
Minutes
427a Waterman
September 13, 2017

Present: Hung Do (BSAD), Nancy Jenny (LCOM), Lutz Kaelber (CAS), Marc Law
              (CAS), Tim Lee (LCOM), Cathy Paris, Helen Read (CMES), Paul Philbin* (LIB),
              Jane Petrillo (CALS), Regina Toolin (CESS)

Absent: Tim Tourville (CNHS), Brian Voight (RSENR)

Guests: Mike Austin, Veronika Carter, Thomas Chittenden, J. Dickinson, Mara Saule,
              Wendy Berenback

Regina Toolin called the meeting to order at 8:34 am in Waterman 427a.

1. Minutes. The minutes of the May 10, 2017 were approved as written.

2. Committee Overview:

CHARGE OF THE ERTC

The ERTC shall have the responsibility of matters related to the development and
implementation of educational and research technologies at the University that guide acquisition
of information literacy by students and faculty. It shall review and recommend policies and
procedures relating to the planning, introduction, and use of campus-wide technologies,
including computers, communications, electronic data handling, and instructional media. The
committee shall assume responsibility for informing the administration of educational and
research priorities and needs related to information literacy and see that these are considered in
all planning. It shall maintain close liaison with the Curricular Affairs Committee, the Financial
and Physical Planning Committee, the Student Affairs Committee, and the Research,
Scholarship, and Graduate Education Committee. Each of these committees shall appoint one of
their elected members to serve as a voting member on the Educational and Research
Technologies Committee. The committee shall maintain close liaison with appropriate
administrative offices in its areas of responsibility and with the Facilities and Technologies
Committee of the Board of Trustees.

3. UVM Integrated Course Evaluation, Thomas Chittenden (SAC). A resolution to have online course evaluations was passed by the full Faculty Senate in 2011 / 2012. This resolution was brought forward by both the ERTC and the SGA. Because the company that would provide the software went out of business this resolution sat idle. Recently the SGA has passed another resolution for course evaluations. SAC together with the SGA have worked on a new resolution to bring forward to the Faculty Senate.

Student Affairs Committee of the Faculty Senate

WHEREAS the University of Vermont Faculty Senate passed a Motion on Online Evaluations on April 9th 2012 (FS2012-174) supporting the creation of an online course evaluation platform for UVM courses;

WHEREAS the University of Vermont Student Government Association passed a resolution supporting the revitalization and standardization of Academic Course Evaluations on November 18th 2014 (SGA2014-04);

WHEREAS course evaluations at the University of Vermont are departmentally designed, managed, and controlled, while the myUVM student portal is a centrally managed information portal used to disseminate curriculum, grade and advising information;

WHEREAS course evaluations conducted at the culmination of a course enable students to best reflect on the entire course experience, after all coursework has been completed and all instructor feedback received;

WHEREAS online course evaluations experience reduced student participation rates because of technical or procedural obstacles, or because the collection platforms are unfamiliar to respondents;

WHEREAS a BANNER/myUVM integrated course evaluation platform would allow for the seamless capture of respondent characteristics that would provide greater insight into how students receive courses offered at the University of Vermont;

BE IT RESOLVED that the University of Vermont Faculty Senate supports the implementation of a BANNER/myUVM integrated departmentally controlled course evaluation platform;

BE IT ALSO RESOLVED that the anonymity of respondent submissions will be maintained in all presented results with specific attention to semantic security limiting multi-dimensional response parsing to only include sub-populations with a minimum number of five collected responses from that sub group;

BE IT ALSO RESOLVED that such a platform will make available the course questionnaire to students at the beginning of the final exam period for students to complete up until being able to view their final course grade, and that a prompt will ask students if they would like to opt out or in to completing the evaluation;

BE IT ALSO RESOLVED that if the student opts to complete the course evaluation, this will occur before the final grade is viewable ensuring that students must complete the course evaluation before their grade is viewable through the online portal during the two week period beginning the morning of the first scheduled final exam block;

BE IT ALSO RESOLVED that functional units or departments on campus are under no obligation to use this integrated platform for course evaluations, and that the determination to do so rests with the governance structures in place within each functional unit/department;

BE IT ALSO RESOLVED that this platform places full autonomy and control of the questions, responses and managed access to the responses solely with the functional units or departments on campus currently responsible for managing course evaluations;

BE IT ALSO RESOLVED that any implemented system would include data access and access attempt auditing to maintain verifiable integrity over the departmentally controlled responses to these course evaluations.

Departmentally Controlled Banner/myUVM Integrated Course Evaluation Platform Option

Educational Research & Technologies Committee and Student Affairs Committee of the Faculty Senate Joint Proposal
University of Vermont
Last Modified 2/29/2016

NOTE: This document is a revised notion incorporating feedback from many constituencies on campus regarding the departmentally controlled optional integration of course evaluations into the Banner/myUVM student portal.

Issue: At the University of Vermont, course evaluations are conducted during the semester before finals week with low participation rates (for units that conduct online course evaluations). Additionally, the data collected lacks depth in that it doesn't capture respondent demographics (class year, major, gender…) that could be used to better inform faculty on the student perspective in their courses.

Proposal:
To address the issues above, the Educational Technology & Research Committee and the Student Affairs Committee proposes that the faculty senate pass a resolution supporting the implementation of an optional myUVM portal integrated course evaluation platform for UVM departments to consider using for their own purposes. The key features of this platform would be:
1. **Timing.** Students would be prompted to answer these departmentally designed questions BEFORE they see their final grade for the course. By integrating the course evaluation into the myUVM portal, it will have students offer feedback on the course at a time when they can reflect on the class in entirety (including end of semester help sessions, papers, or exams conducted during finals week) BUT still before they see the final grade in the class.   Current campus evaluations are conducted during the week or two BEFORE final exams when students have NOT completed the course and are under a lot of pressure from their academic responsibilities. Integrating the evaluation into the myUVM portal will allow the evaluation to occur after the course is complete but still before they see their final recorded grade in the course.
2. **Opt-In**. Based on previous conversations on this topic, the integrated online course evaluation platform would ask the respondent (student) if they would like to complete a survey on their course. If they choose yes, they will be presented the departmentally selected questions. This Opt-In gateway will ensure only meaningful responses are harvested.
3. **Online.** There are some academic units at UVM using paper based surveys with scantrons and manual transcribing of open ended comments. This would be an optimized web-based course survey platform units could opt to consider migrating towards for operational efficiencies in collecting and aggregating the responses.

4. **Participation rate.** Academic units on campus using online course evaluations struggle with low participation rates (especially compared to paper based course evaluations). Presenting students with these Evaluations JUST before they are able to see their final grade will do two things:
   a. Validate the authenticity of the survey for the potential respondent (while they are logged on to the trusted myUVM web portal).
   b. Put the survey conveniently in front of them (circumventing issues with spam filters, authentication problems or browser problems).
5. **Richer Data.** Current course evaluations at UVM are not able to parse responses on important dimensions including Class Year, Ace score or Course Performance. Integrating a course survey mechanism into the myUVM/BANNER SIS portal will allow for seamless capture of respondent characteristics while still ensuring anonymity to the submitted response. This would allow for response parsing to identify differences in the student course experience among academic sub groups of our student population. Figure 1 is an example of how three questions could provide deeper perspective on the student experience among different student sub groups.

Figure 1

Course Survey Responses

1: Strongly Disagree - 2; 2 - 3; 3 - 4; 4 - 5: Strongly Agree		Q1	Q2	Q3
All Responses	Mean	3.89	3.86	3.77
	Std. Dev.	1.01	1.06	1.08
	Min / Max	2.0 / 5.0	1.0 / 5.0	1.0 / 5.0
Class (Mean Scores)	First Year	-	-	-
	Sophomore	3.25	3.21	3.06
	Junior	3.89	3.87	3.80
	Senior	4.25	4.21	4.33
Performance (Mean Scores)	High (A+, A, A-, B+, B or B-)	4.12	4.38	3.87
	Low (C+ or lower)	3.66	3.78	3.75
Major (Mean Scores)	In Major (BSAD)	4.44	4.62	4.51
	Out of Major (Non BSAD)	3.20	3.10	2.40

6. **Departmental Autonomy.** The University of Vermont culture values departmental control over course evaluation questions and data. For the platform to be supported by the Faculty Senate, the implementation of this solution would need to ensure that:
   a. Departments would be under NO obligation to use this platform – it would merely be an option for them to consider using if they so choose.
   b. Each department that wants to use this platform would choose their own questions (meaning there would be no common questions).
   c. ONLY the department (or departmentally designated individuals) may access the collected responses.
   d. Data access auditing would be required of any considered solution (showing regular, verifiable access of records or access attempts to validate the integrity over the security & policy controls restricting access to evaluation data.
7. **Question Rating Scale Directional Consistency.** Current course evaluations conducted at UVM have different directional scales on their ratings based questions (e.g 1 is Strongly Disagree on some evaluations and 1 is Strongly Agree on other course evaluations). A centrally implemented campus platform would create an opportunity to unify the scale direction of all departmentally designed course evaluation questions.

Helen Read motioned for the ERTC to support the resolution (On Line Evaluations) as a co-sponsor as it is presented to the Faculty Senate, Marc Law seconded the motion.

Approve 8   Oppose 0   Abstain 1

4. Unified Communications Project, Mike Austin: Currently looking at a new unified communications system that would bring the campus more up to date. The two market leaders in this area are Microsoft Skype for Business and SISCO Communications. Currently they are working with both systems to determine what system would be best for the University of Vermont. The goal would to have the system up for summer 2018.

The ERTC would like a demo of each system. Mike will present at a future meeting and continue to update the committee of this project.

5. Old Business.

- **Instructional Lab Software.** Mara Saule and Paul Philbin presented the committee with general lab information. A concern last year was that Adobe software was not available in the Waterman lab. That software has been added. The ERTC feel this issue has been resolved and will revisit this topic if other concerns arise.

  Mara Saule would like to present on TIF funds ($77 per year per student) and how they are used. The committee would like to add her to the agenda for the October meeting.

- **Document Cameras.** The committee would like to survey faculty to get more data around usage. The questions the committee would like to include are:
    a. Do you use a document camera?
    b. What do you use it for?
    c. How often do you use it?
    d. Where do you use it?
    e. What unit do you teach in?
    f. General comments

  Andrew Horvat will be inviting Wolf Vision to campus to do a presentation. Once it is scheduled members of the committee will be invited.

  The committee is okay with reviewing the survey via e-mail.

- **Laptop /Tablet requirement.** Currently there is no university requirement, however some colleges require it of their students. If laptops are required there is a possibility of student aide resources to help purchase these devices. The committee would like to research how CESS, GSB and LCOM manage the required laptops.

6. New Business. There was no new business at this time.

* Delegate

The meeting adjourned at 9:59am. The next meeting of the ERTC will take place in 427a Waterman on October 11th from 8:30 am -10:00 am.