

SENATE COMMITTEE ON UNIVERSITY TEACHING AND LEARNING
(SCUTL)

REPORT TO SENATE
MAY 1995

NUMBER OF MEETINGS

SCUTL, a new Senate Committee formed in 1994 after the adoption of the SCIMO Report, got off to a slow start. Time delays were incurred due to a tied vote that required an additional ballot for two members, and to difficulties in finding a secretary to assist with setting up meetings, distributing materials, etc. (a position eventually filled by Flo McCallum of the Registrar's Office). The Committee began meeting in late November 1994. However, SCUTL has met eight times since then, making it a rather active Senate Committee.

ACTIVITIES OVER THE PERIOD NOVEMBER 1994 TO APRIL 1995

Initial meetings dealt with philosophical issues regarding teaching and learning, so that the committee members could arrive at a consensus about the Committee's mandate and direction. Two (interrelated) fundamental principles emerged from these discussions: (1) that there is no "one way" to teach effectively, i.e., diversity in teaching was endorsed; and (2) that SCUTL should not be, nor perceived to be, a body that will tell people how to teach better. Regarding (2), the Committee members felt that a "didactic" approach would alienate some members of the university community, particularly those already sceptical of the need for and/or effectiveness of this Committee.

Realizing that the Committee could deal with just about anything that goes on at the University, a decision was reached to focus on one thing at a time - and do it well. The first task that SCUTL decided to embark upon was the development of a standardized teaching evaluation form.

In an initial step, the Chair contacted all teaching units on campus to ascertain what types of evaluation were being used. Of 27 units approached, 22 responded (representing the Faculties of Education and Business Administration, all departments in the Faculty of Science, and most teaching units in the Faculties of Applied Sciences and Arts). We found considerable diversity in current practices. Of the 22 units, 14 use the "standard" university blue form; of these 14, 9 use an additional unit-specific form. Eight units, including the Faculty of Education and nearly one-half of departments/programmes in the Faculty of Arts

use their own evaluation forms only.

With the assistance of Dr. Walter Wattamaniuk and Sue Roppel of Analytical Studies, who gave a very useful presentation at one Committee meeting, and with the research-based knowledge of Drs. Peter Coleman and Gary Poole (both of SCUTL), an instrument has been developed *for testing purposes only*. SEE ATTACHED. The Committee had hoped to administer the pilot test in the last weeks of the 95-1 semester, but that turned out to be too ambitious.

This results of the pilot test will be used for statistical analysis - checks on reliability and validity of questions, factor analysis, etc. It is anticipated that the final form will be significantly shorter than the attached one, i.e., redundancies are built into the attached for statistical analytical purposes.

IMMEDIATE PLANS

SCUTL plans to administer a first pilot test at the end of the summer semester, to tenured and tenure-stream faculty members only. The results of the statistical analysis will pave the way for a larger testing of the instrument in the 95-3 semester, on both CFL and Sessional Instructors. Issues to be dealt with in the next few months include: working out a way to guarantee anonymity and confidentiality of data; the actual administration (the ways and means) of the evaluation form; liaising with TSSU, given that Sessional Instructors will be included in the second test phase; and beginning to organize a Symposium on teaching evaluation for the university teaching community at large.

OTHER BUSINESS BROUGHT BEFORE THE COMMITTEE

In addition to our principle focus -- the development of a standardized teaching evaluation form -- SCUTL received memoranda asking us to consider three other issues: (1) criteria used to select our Excellence in Teaching Award winners; (2) the creation of a teaching award for Sessional Instructors and Teaching Assistants; and (3) the reliability and validity of participation grades in seminars and tutorials. Each of these issues was discussed by the Committee; however, any action will be taken only after the bulk of the work on the evaluation forms has been completed.

Submitted by:

Ellen M. Gee, Chair, SCUTL

SIMON FRASER UNIVERSITY

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Student Assessment of Instruction Survey

PILOT VERSION, SPRING, 1995

As part of its continuing efforts to help instructors to provide the best possible teaching for students, the university is testing a new Student Assessment of Instruction Survey which it is hoped will be more comprehensive and hence more helpful. Please be assured that ALL your answers on this assessment are thought to be important.

Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey. If you have any thoughts that you would like to share about the evaluation of teaching at SFU, please feel free to send an e-mail message to Gary_Poole@sfu.ca.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Ellen Gee".

Ellen Gee, Chair
Senate Committee on University
Teaching and Learning

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Poole".

Gary Poole, Director
Centre for University Teaching

Student Assessment of Instruction Survey
PILOT VERSION, SPRING, 1995

COURSE _____

INSTRUCTOR _____

- PLEASE RESPOND TO EACH STATEMENT IN THIS SECTION BY CHOOSING ONE OF THE FOLLOWING:

- A. ALWAYS
- B. OFTEN
- C. SOMETIMES
- D. RARELY
- E. NEVER
- F. DO NOT KNOW
- G. STATEMENT IS NOT APPLICABLE TO THIS COURSE

CIRCLE THE APPROPRIATE BUBBLE ON YOUR ANSWER FORM FOR EACH.

1. The instructor prepared well for class.
2. The instructor was open to students' questions in class.
3. The instructor appeared bored when teaching this class.
4. The instructor's contributions to the class were interesting.
5. The instructor demonstrated a thorough knowledge of the subject matter.
6. The instructor seemed genuinely interested in teaching.
7. The instructor explained material clearly.
8. The instructor's organization was valuable for my learning.
9. The instructor stimulated my intellectual curiosity.
10. Students asked questions in class.
11. The instructor showed enthusiasm for the material being taught.
12. I was confused by the instructor's explanations of course material.
13. It was evident that the instructor had prepared well.
14. The instructor presented the material in an interesting way.
15. The instructor's material was well-organized.
16. The instructor demonstrated a thorough knowledge of the subject matter.
17. I felt that the instructor was not interested in the material for this course.
18. The instructor had reasonable expectations for assignment completion.
19. The instructor helped me to develop a better understanding of course material.
20. The instructor provided prompt feedback on the course assignments.
21. I found it difficult to be attentive in class.
22. The instructor did not seem to have the background required to teach this course.
23. Because of the instructor's teaching, I spent time thinking about concepts relevant to this course.
24. The instructor specified the criteria for evaluating student assignments.
25. The organization of class material made sense to me.
26. The instructor provided helpful feedback on course assignments.
27. I was impressed by the amount of knowledge related to the course that the instructor demonstrated.
28. GIVE THIS INSTRUCTOR AN OVERALL RATING AS LECTURER, (A = EXCELLENT, B = GOOD, C = ADEQUATE, D = FAIR, E = POOR, F = NOT APPLICABLE TO THIS COURSE)
29. GIVE THIS INSTRUCTOR AN OVERALL RATING AS SEMINAR FACILITATOR/LEADER, (A = EXCELLENT, B = GOOD, C = ADEQUATE, D = FAIR, E = POOR, F = NOT APPLICABLE TO THIS COURSE)
30. GIVE THIS INSTRUCTOR A GENERAL OVERALL RATING, (A = EXCELLENT, B = GOOD, C = ADEQUATE, D = FAIR, E = POOR)

ABOUT THE CLASS:

31. In the class in which you responded to this survey there were usually (pick one)
 - A. Between 1 and 20 students;
 - B. Between 21 and 40 students;
 - C. Between 41 and 100 students;
 - D. Between 101 and 300 students;
 - E. More than 300 students.



Proceed to page 2 on reverse side

ABOUT YOU, THE RESPONDENT:

The following questions are used as a means of examining what kinds of students are in THIS class.

32. What grade do you anticipate receiving for this course?

- A. In the A range
- B. In the B range
- C. In the C range
- D. A "D" grade
- E. I do not anticipate passing this course.

33. Why did you take this course? Choose the single most important reason.

- A. It was compulsory
- B. I am interested in the subject
- C. No alternative course was available
- D. It looked like an easy credit
- E. Other reasons.

34. How many credit hours have you successfully completed prior to this semester?

- A. 0 to 30 credit hours
- B. 31 to 60 credit hours
- C. 61 to 90 credit hours
- D. 91 to 120 credit hours
- E. More than 120 credit hours

35. How many credit hours are you taking this semester?

- A. less than 9
- B. 9 to 12
- C. 13 to 16
- D. 17 to 20
- E. More than 20

36. Gender: A. Female B. Male

37. What is your cumulative grade point average at present?

- A. 3.50 or over
- B. 3.00 to 3.49
- C. 2.50 to 2.99
- D. 2.00 to 2.49
- E. below 2.00
- F. I do not have a cumulative grade point average.

38. How would you best characterize the learning experience you had in this class?

- A. I learned something new each week.
- B. I learned something new every couple of weeks.
- C. I learned some things of value.
- D. I learned very little.
- E. I learned nothing.

With respect to your learning experience, please explain your answer to question 38.

Do you have any comments regarding this new survey?

FINALLY,

What is your declared or intended major(s) or areas of concentration?

What is your declared or intended minor(s)?

22. SENATE COMMITTEE ON UNIVERSITY TEACHING AND LEARNING (SCUTL)
Standing (Reporting Category B)

<u>Members</u>	<u>Conditions</u>	<u>Term</u>	<u>Expiry Date</u>	<u>Names</u>
Member at-large	Chair - Elected by Senate	2 yrs	Sep 30/96	E. Gee
Faculty Member	Elected	2 yrs	Sep 30/96	C. Banerjee
Faculty Member	by	2 yrs	Sep 30/96	P. Coleman
Faculty Member	Senate	2 yrs	Sep 30/95	I. Gordon
Faculty Member		2 yrs	Sep 30/95	A. Rawicz
Undergraduate Student	Elected by Senate	1 yr	Sep 30/95	K. Chan
Graduate Student	Elected by Senate	1 yr	Sep 30/95	K. Giffen
Director, Centre for University Teaching	Secretary, Ex-officio (Voting)			G. Poole

Purpose:

1. To assist departments in the development of methods of evaluating teaching.
2. To develop new standard teaching survey instruments and to develop a policy regarding the regular use of teaching surveys by all course instructors.
3. To undertake a periodic review of the programs of awards given for excellent teaching in the University.
4. To receive periodic reports on programs developed and delivered by the Centre for University Teaching and to provide advice on future activities of the Centre.
5. To assist Departments and Faculties in implementing new teaching technologies and methods.
6. To support the ongoing examination of all learning methods in order to continue to improve the University's instructional quality and cost effectiveness.
7. To explore means by which Sessional Instructors might be supported and guided in providing effective teaching.

Reports annually to Senate in May

Membership and purpose approved by Senate June 6, 1994 (S.94-45)