UNIVERSITY OF LOUISIANA AT LAFAYETTE  
FACULTY SENATE REPORT

Student Evaluation of Instruction  Jonathan Kulp  04/10/13
Name of Committee  Person Submitting Report  Date

Task of Committee (please indicate the task of your committee here):
oversees decisions related to student evaluation of instruction content and process

Progress Report:

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<td>1.</td>
<td>In response to Senate request, we held online discussion about changing the deadline for SEIs. Detailed memo attached</td>
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Committee Members Present at Committee Meetings:

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Anticipated Future Plans

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<td>1.</td>
<td>Before the next Faculty Senate Meeting, the following actions are planned:</td>
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Action Required by the Faculty Senate (list any action that needs to be taken by the Faculty Senate as a result of this report)

None
Memorandum

Date: April 10, 2013
From: Jonathan Kulp, chair of SEI committee
To: Faculty Senate
Re: SEI Deadline Will Remain the Same

Summary

The Student Evaluation of Instruction Committee voted 4 to 3 against changing the deadline for students to submit their course evaluations.

In conjunction with institutional research staff, the committee determined that changing the dates as suggested by the Faculty Senate to be two weeks before the last class day would not be “best practice” in terms of institutional research. We considered instead a compromise of two days before last class day of the semester (the Wednesday of that week), but the majority opinion was that this would not substantially address the issue raised by the Faculty Senate.

The committee appreciates and shares concerns about how the course evaluations are used in faculty performance evaluations, but feels that this is a topic for Deans and Department Heads, not for the SEI committee.

Discussion Points /Supporting Arguments

1. There will always be students who blame teachers for their poor academic performance. We have to trust our bosses to have the good sense to distinguish between valid criticism and disgruntled whining.

2. Timing should not really make a difference in whether course evaluations are good or bad.
   - If a student is doing poorly in a class, s/he should know this well before the senate’s proposed new deadline of two weeks before the last day of classes, and could still easily return bad evaluations of their teachers. As such, the new deadline would accomplish nothing except a likely decrease in the overall response rate.
   - If a student does not know that s/he is doing poorly in a class by the last month of the semester, then there is a serious communication problem or a lack of transparency in the grading process.
   - Faculty who are concerned that students can already see their final grades before doing evaluations may simply wait until after the last class day to submit final grades.

3. The response rate has been good, we do not want to go backwards in that respect
4. Requesting that the deadline be moved earlier to avoid bad reviews makes it appear that faculty are not confident in their own teaching abilities. If we are doing our jobs conscientiously, then we should not concern ourselves with the possibility of gratuitous negative evaluations from bad students.

5. According to Dr. Bruder’s office, numerous students have requested extending the deadline.

6. The committee’s proposed compromise of 2 days earlier would not substantially address the issue raised in Faculty Senate about the SEI process. It would be a token gesture at best. The committee feels that if there can not be substantive change, then there is no reason to change at all.