Arkansas State University-Jonesboro (ASU-J) Faculty Senate Task Force Report on Online Student Perceptions of Teaching (SPT) Surveys
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Background for the Task Force and Report

The Arkansas State University Faculty Handbook of Policies and Procedures 2006 Amended 2009 Section III Academic Policies and Procedures Student Evaluation of Faculty III 64-65 states:

> "Student evaluation of faculty is conducted as a part of the continuing process of faculty development. Procedures for student evaluation of faculty are established by the department and/or college under university guidelines. Student evaluations are a component of the annual faculty performance review, merit salary recommendations and promotion and tenure. Student evaluations will be administered by deans, department chairs, program directors, faculty other than the one teaching the course, or departmental administrative staff. Graduate or undergraduate students will not administer these evaluation."

In recent years a number of colleges, departments, and programs on the ASU-J campus have moved to online student evaluations of teaching which we more accurately refer to as "student perceptions of teaching" (SPT). The move to an online delivery format is understandable given advances in technology and resulting efficiency in terms of time, expense, accuracy, etc. In fact, many

colleges and universities across the country have moved to online systems for SPT surveys.

In the fall 2013 meeting of the College of Education the ITTC presented an overview of the online system that is now available for ASU-J colleges, departments and programs to use for conducting these surveys. During and following the presentation a number of college faculty voiced serious concerns about the process. These issues and others were later discussed in the ASU-J Faculty Senate. They include but are not limited to:

- Shared Governance Issues- As stated in the principles articulated by the American Association of University Professors (AAUP), curriculum and instruction are primarily the responsibility of the faculty. Faculty have a voice in the development and implementation of any changes associated with the use of technology in the assessment of faculty and courses, such changes cannot simply be imposed by administration, changes should be proposed via the existing shared governance process, and approved changes must be articulated in the ASU-J Faculty Handbook of Policies and Procedures.
- Personnel Issues- In accord with Arkansas law and ASU-J policy these assessment results are part of the faculty member's personnel file. Consequently, access to this information is limited to promotion, retention, and tenure committees at the time of pre-tenure, tenure and promotion reviews and to administrators with direct supervisor authority over the faculty member (i.e., department chairs, college deans, provost, and chancellor). Program coordinators, directors, vice-chairs, associate deans, etc. are not privilege to this information. Additionally, since Arkansas law and ASU-J policy require the use of this information in faculty personnel decisions (i.e., promotion, retention, tenure, and merit) the university has a responsibility to its faculty to use the best possible methods and decisions. Serious concern has been raised and is supported in the current professional literature that low response rates characteristic of online evaluations will cause degradation in the quality of the data. Some efforts to increase online response rates can raise significant ethical concerns (e.g., providing students with a grade incentive for completing the online evaluation at the end of the semester in an attempt to increase response rate). Furthermore, moving to an online system for student evaluations of faculty raises additional concerns specific to the administration, reliability, and validity of the instrument, process, and data. For example, what mechanisms are in place to ensure that the student completing the evaluation is indeed the student currently enrolled in the course? How does one know if the student is completing the evaluation independently?

- Ethical Issues-Statements of the ethical rights of human subjects both international and national require that the collection of data from individuals be done in a way that respects subjects' rights as persons. The most important of these rights is that participation in data collect be voluntary. Any procedure that requires students to complete surveys of faculty may be a violation of our students' fundamental rights as human beings.

Consequently, Chair Julie Isaacson appointed an ASU-J Faculty Senate Task Force in the fall of 2013 to address the matter and report back to the body. Dr. Hall was asked to chair the task force. Several senators, faculty, and staff elected to serve on the task force. The members are listed above. A central question for the task force was: How can we improve the online SPT survey process and system on the ASU-J campus. Furthermore, how can we improve the entire assessment of faculty teaching on the ASU-J campus?

In an attempt to address the above question the task force met on several different occasions during the fall 2013 and spring 2014 semesters. First, the group examined a number of the current SPT surveys and practices used in colleges and departments on the ASU-J campus. They also discussed a number of the problems and issues associated with the current ASU-J SPT surveys and practices and potential future practices including:

- The unknown reliability and validity of the current SPT surveys
- Content and variety of the current SPT surveys
- Appropriateness of the content with the current SPT surveys for certain courses (e.g., supervised clinic/practicum/internship and online courses)
- Whether there is a need for a single SPT survey for all courses taught via traditional face-to-face delivery and the need for a different survey for courses taught online, and the need for yet another different survey for courses taught through the compressed video network (CVN)
- Annual ongoing cost of SPT survey administration and recording of student responses including personnel time associated with the traditional paper and pencil system
- Psychometric appropriateness and defense of using single item averages/means to gauge student perceptions of teaching and the course which in turn are used to make judgments and "high-stakes" recommendations and decisions specific to faculty and courses
- The make-up and appearance of the online SPT survey procedure and whether it is "user friendly"
- Standardized administration of the online SPT survey including how students are notified of the requested survey and the directions (e.g., "The process is voluntary and used to enhance the quality of instruction. It is also used and for faculty merit raises and promotion, retention, and tenure purposes. Student participation is important. Finally, responses are confidential, anonymous, and not available to the professor until after grades are turned in.")
- Settings for administering and completing the online SPT survey. That is, in class (e.g., proctored on-campus in a college computer labs with a PC

or in class with a PDA) or outside of class (e.g., un-proctored using a campus PC, personal PC, or PDA)

- Less control of the SPT survey administration with the online format
- Whether students' completion of the SPT survey in certain departments or colleges at ASU-J was in fact currently mandatory
- Whether incentives are used in some ASU-J departments and colleges in an attempt to enhance SPT survey response rates. If so, what types of incentives are used? Is this practice appropriate and ethical?

Secondly, the task force conducted an extensive review of the current professional literature on the topic with Drs. Hall and Welch carrying out the computer searches on the relevant data bases and summarizing the key findings. This information is presented throughout the recommendations section of this report.

Finally, through the support of the ASU-J Office of Academic Affairs and Research and with the assistance from Dr. Owens the task force carefully examined the Student Ratings of Instruction System offered through IDEA Education, a non-profit organization. As part of this examination a pilot of their paper and pencil tool was implemented at the end of the fall 2013 semester with a limited number of ASU faculty (15 classes). A much larger second pilot (242 classes) was also carried-out at the end of the fall semester of 2014 specific to their online system using PC or PDA technology. This system is further discussed in the final portion of the recommendations section below.

Recommendations from the Task Force in Regard to Online SPT Surveys at ASU-J

Advanced Communication to Faculty and Students Regarding a Change in the Process

1) The move to an online SPT system must be communicated to faculty and students early on as to why the transition is occurring and how the process will be implemented. Furthermore, faculty may need training in the use of the new system (Crews & Curtis, 2011).

Evaluating the SPT Survey System

2) There should be a mechanism in place for students, faculty, and administration to evaluate the online SPT system on a regular basis to make needed changes or improvement.

Psychometric Properties of the SPT Survey

3) The SPT survey needs to be reliable and valid because it is used to assist in making "high-stakes" summative evaluation decisions about instructors, such as promotion, retention, tenure, and merit pay. The survey should adequately assess the effectiveness of instruction and not be biased by factors outside of the instructor's control (Kelly, Ponton, & Rovia, 2007).

The psychometric properties of the SPT instrument/survey are important especially reliability, content validity, and factor structure. Uniform scaling and administration/use are also necessary. In terms of reliability, specifically internal consistency values need to acceptable (e.g., Keeley, 2012).

Ethical Issues in the Administration and Use of the On-line SPT Survey

4) Informed consent (i.e., using an "I agree" button), student anonymity and confidentiality must be addressed. Students should be aware of the purpose of the SPT survey and the learning and teaching actions that may arise from the process which should include enhanced learning and teaching. Anonymity and confidentiality is mandatory for collection, storing, and reporting. Student names or ID numbers should not be recorded in association with any SPT survey data. A process should be in place to inform a student of their recourse if they believe the system to protect their anonymity has been subverted (McCormack, 2005). Students must be assured that confidentiality exists in terms of their SPT responses. A written guarantee could be provided to students stating that no identifying information will be disclosed (Cummings, Ballantyne, and Fowler, 2001).

Standardized Administration of the SPT Survey

5) As stated by McCormack (2005) administration of the SPT survey should follow standardized procedures which safeguard the reliability and validity of the information obtained. Neither the instructor nor teaching assistant should be involved in the administration process and results should not be reported to instructors until final grades have been submitted (University of Wisconsin-LaCrosse, 2007). Furthermore the SPT survey should be administered at a time in the semester that will maximize the validity of the information obtained. That is, they should not be administered before or after an exam or on the same day assessment results or assignments are returned to students. Furthermore, they should not be administered during the final exam period or coincide with special classroom events (University of Wisconsin-LaCrosse, 2007).

If students are allowed to respond to the online survey outside of class they should have about 2 weeks to complete the task. After they complete the SPT survey they should receive a page indicating they did in fact complete and submit it (Dommeyer, Baum, Hanna, & Chapman, 2004).

Controlled Access to the Results from the SPT Survey

6) Who has access to the results of the SPT survey and who does not (e.g., individual faculty, chairs, deans, provost, chancellor) must be spelled out in advance. Access to the results of the online SPT survey should be restricted and remain as they are for those currently conducted using the traditional in-class method.

Student and Faculty Handbooks Policies and Procedures for the On-line SPT Survey

7) Adoption of an online SPT system may call for wording changes specific to policies and procedures articulated in the ASU-J Student Handbook and the ASU-J Faculty Handbook of Policies and Procedures.

Limitations of SPT Surveys and Need for Multimodal Multimethod Assessment System

8) SPT surveys are only a measure of *student perceptions of teaching* and as noted by Wright (2006) they represent survey data which "may give an overview of student feelings concerning a faculty member they do not provide an in-depth picture of what happened in the classroom". Therefore, Multimodal-Multimethod assessment of Faculty Teaching is needed (e.g., pre and post testing, peer observations/evaluations, teaching portfolios, and self-evaluations). These points may be especially relevant to the assessment of university teaching as it applies to temporary faculty, adjunct faculty, pre-tenured faculty, faculty applying for tenure and promotion, and any faculty undergoing post-tenure review.

McKeachie (1969) notes that when data collected from students is used for personnel evaluation it should always be used in conjunction with other information pertaining to the teacher and the course. It is important to note the most widely accepted criterion of instructional effectiveness is student learning (Kelly et al., 2007). The need for a multimodal-multimethod system is also supported by Clayson & Haley (2011) who found that student respondents falsified results. In their study 30% of the surveys contained answers that students knew were not true. McCormack (2005) also calls for the use of multiple methods to gather student feedback. The faculty senate at the University of Wisconsin-La Crosse (2007) noted that student feedback is only one source of data for assessing teaching effectiveness and that should be interpreted in conjunction with data from other assessment methods in particular peer evaluations of teaching and self-assessment. They suggest that should comprise no more than 30%-50% of teaching because students are not in a position to judge several important factors associated with effective teaching (e.g., appropriateness of course objective; instructor knowledge of subject matter; balance and relevance of course materials; and quality and fairness of tests, assignments, and grades).

The AAUP (2005) in *Observations on the Association's 1975 Statement on Teaching Evaluation* states there is concern with the practice or relying solely on numerically based SPT surveys. Stark-Wroblewski, Ahlering, and Brill (2007) note that results from their study revealed that SPT surveys and learning measures assess distinct aspects of teaching effectiveness. They call for supplementing the SPT survey with pre-post learning measures especially in terms of promotion, retention, and tenure. The AAUP Chapter at Wayne State University has advocated for peer evaluation of teaching including classroom observation and teaching portfolios to complement SPT surveys. The use of observations in addition to SPT surveys is also noted by other authors (i.e., Calkins and Micari, 2010). Smith (2012) states that while there are considerable limitations, both SPT surveys and peer observations of teaching have been commonly used in the UK. Ismail, Buskist, and Groccia (2012) extensively discuss the peer review process for assessing teaching including the use of an observation checklist. AAUP (1975) in their *Statement on Teaching* and in the above 2005 reference discuss several possible avenues for evaluating teaching including assessing student learning, student perceptions, classroom performance, self-evaluation and outside opinions. In sum, departments are encouraged to develop additional methods to assess teaching effectiveness.

Possible Need for Different SPT Surveys or Items Based on Method of Course Delivery and Type of Course

9) Content of SPT surveys for online courses may differ from the content for traditional face-to-face courses. The same may be true for courses taught through CVN. Traditional SPT surveys may not adequately assess the essential constructivist-based practices that have been recommended for effective online instruction (e.g., Bangert, 2008). There is a need for SPT surveys that provide online instructors with valid feedback about the effectiveness of their online teaching practices. Drouin (2012) cites some examples worthy of possible considerations. Other current methods for assessing online instruction include self and peer evaluations of teaching using rubrics (e.g., Drouin, 2012).

The SPT survey for supervised clinical, practicum, and internship courses must be specifically tailored for those courses. These courses often possess different content, are clinic/field-based and are lower enrollment. This is true regardless of whether they are administered in-class/on-site or online.

Formative Assessment of Teaching using SPT Surveys

10) The university could consider a SPT survey system for formative assessment of teaching (midterm) not just summative (end of the semester) for faculty feedback purposes in an attempt to improve teaching. This may be especially applicable for temporary faculty, adjunct faculty, pre-tenured faculty, faculty applying for promotion or faculty undergoing post-tenure review. The formative assessment would simply be used to enhance teaching not for PRT or merit purposes. However, one concern that may exist with a formative evaluation system is possible retaliation by the instructor. Wilson and Ryan (2012) provide a useful overview pertaining to the use of the formative assessment of teaching.

SPT Survey Scores and Score Adjustment

11) Given that SPT survey data are typically negatively skewed (i.e., ratings tend to clump at higher scores) the mean is not the best measure for summarizing the scores. In most cases when you have asymmetrical distributions the median is the statistic of choice (University of Wisconsin-La Crosse, 2007). Because results are subject to error and not perfect measures it is recommended that results be reported to only one decimal place (Cashin, 1995). Absolute cut-off scores for decision making should be avoided and should be based on survey results from a variety of courses over several terms (University of Wisconsin-La Crosse, 2007).

SPT survey score averages may need to be adjusted or scaling may need to be altered to reflect the fact that SPT scores obtained by online methods are usually lower than SPT scores administered by traditional paper and pencil methods (e.g., Nowell, Gale, and Handley, 2010). This would call for promotion, retention, and tenure committees and others to reexamine the criterion/cut-scores used to interpret and determine effective teaching. Changes to promotion, retention, and tenure documents and merit documents may be in order to address this issue.

Lower Response Rates and Methods for Increasing Returns (Incentives) with SPT Surveys

12) Response rates to online SPT surveys have been observed to be lower than in-class evaluations (e.g., Adams & Umbach, 2012; Dommeyer, Baum, Hanna, & Chapman, 2004). Low response rates may result in error and bias (Adams & Umbach, 2012). Adams and Umbach (2012) report results from a number of studies (including their own) pertaining to online SPT. These findings indicate females are more likely to respond than males. Additionally, high performance and achievement is positively tied to response rates. White students tend to be more likely to respond than students from other ethnic groups. Artistic majors tend to be less likely to complete such surveys compared to investigative majors. Students are more likely to respond to SPT surveys in their major. The above authors also state the "survey fatigue", "over surveying", and "survey saturation" is a problematic issue for online SPT surveys today.

Enthusiastic promotion of the online SPT survey to students early in the semester is necessary to increase returns. Verbal and email reminders to students (especially to those who are non-responding) to complete the SPT survey are important as well as demonstrations on how to complete the online SPT survey.

The Advisory Board Company (2009) calls for the use of email reminders to students as well as campus-wide marketing campaigns such as banners, advertisements in student publications, flyers, meetings with and emails to student leaders, and faculty testimony about the importance of completing the SPT survey. Furthermore, students need to know there is value in completing the SPT survey (Adams, 2012; Crews & Curtis, 2011). Students also need to know their information is used to improve instruction (Anderson, Cain & Bird, 2005; Crews & Curtis, 2011; Cummings, Ballantyne, and Fowler, 2001). Additionally, instructors can provide class-time for students to complete the online survey which could include using a university computer lab for this task (Crews & Curtis, 2011) if students do not have their own PDAs and available internet connectivity. Crews and Curtis (2011) also provide other methods used in an attempt to increase response rate including verbal reminders, demonstrating how to complete the online course survey, the course survey link in the syllabus, emailing the SPT survey link to the entire class.

Finally, keeping SPT surveys brief/concise and assuring students that their responses are anonymous should assist in enhancing returns (e.g., Nevo, McClean, & Nevo, 2010, Quinn, 2002). The IDEA Center (2014) provides information specific to supporting best practices for online response rates when using their SPT survey system. These include placing IDEA objectives selected for the course in the syllabus and informing students early on in the course how you have changed the course given prior student feedback. At the end of the course they recommend encouraging students to complete the SPT survey, passing around a sample copy of the survey, reminding them that their feedback assists in enhancing the course, and reassuring them that their response are confidential.

The IDEA Center (2014) also suggests possibly using Twitter, Facebook, or other forms of social media to remind students to complete the SPT survey; using class time to complete the SPT survey; ongoing system monitoring of response rates during the assessment period; sending reminders every 3 days and if the response

rate is low near the end of the evaluation period every day. The importance of student responding to the SPT survey should also be addressed in the required freshman experience course/s in an attempt to make it a part of institutional culture. Finally, sharing strategies with faculty in an attempt to increase student response rate prior to moving to an online SPT survey system is deemed to be beneficial (Crews & Curtis, 2011).

An important question is: Can incentives ethically be used to increase SPT survey response rates? While this is controversial and some faculty strongly believe extra credit should not be used in an attempt to increase response rates (e.g., Crews & Curtis, 2011) one method that may be viable is the withholding of early access to end of the semester course grades unless the survey is completed and submitted by the student (Anderson, Cain, & Bird, 2005). For example, the University of Oregon (2011) uses a grade hold incentive and reminder notices. They report an average online response rate of 78%-79% not including declines. Some universities have used incentives to students in the form of prizes for respondents that are awarded through a lottery (Nutly, 2008).IDEA has recommended rewarding entire classes with prizes if they reach a set response rate (e.g., 75%).

To address the matter of “survey fatigue”, “over-surveying”, “survey disillusionment”, or “survey saturation” universities may need to limit all survey requests to the student body and centralize the survey process in the institutional research office (Adams & Umbach, 2012). Furthermore, Adams and Umbach (2012) note that survey fatigue is particularly problematic when students receive multiple requests in a very short period of time.

Response Rate, Minimum Number of Feedbacks, and Class Size with SPT Surveys

13) In terms of response rate, a response rate of 75% is needed for very small classes (i.e., 10 or < students) to obtain reliable data. The response rate for reliable data decreases to 58% with 20 students and further as the number of students in the course increased (Nutly, 2008). Response rates can be similar across methods (i.e., online vs. paper-pencil) if best practices are followed which include email reminders, clear explanation of the importance of the survey to students and how the information will be used, and the use of small incentives (Crews & Curtis, 2011; Registrar, 2013).

Rantanen (2013) provides empirically-based guidelines on the number of student feedbacks on a SPT survey needed for reliable assessment of teaching. Specifically, when general teaching effectiveness is evaluated the minimum number of randomly chosen implementations is four. If the objective is to evaluate a course then at least two implementations are needed. If one wants to know how a teacher has succeeded with a specific implementation of the course then 15 feedbacks are enough to get a satisfactory level of reliability. Hobson and Talbot (2001) also indicate that a class size of at least 15 is necessary for the meaningful use of SPT surveys. Rantanen (2013) notes the number of feedbacks is directly related to class size as shown below:

Class Size	Student/s
1	1
5	4
10	6
20	9
30	10
40	11
50	12
100	13
200	14
Infinite	15

The above guidelines could be used by the university to ensure that the SPT survey data are more reliable and valid.

Setting for Administering the SPT Survey

14) The SPT survey at a given university should be conducted either entirely in-class or online (Nowell, Gale, & Handley, 2010). If the SPT survey is not completed onsite (in-class) so that faculty can be sure that the correct students are completing the survey there is no way to prove who responded to the online tool (Adams, 2012).

Technology and Security Issues Pertaining to the On-line Administration of the SPT Survey

15) Crews and Curtis (2011) note that one of the main concerns with online SPT surveys is that students can be placed/uploaded by the system administrator into wrong course sections. Nevo, McClean, and Nevo (2010) state that it is critical that some form of identification be used to ensure that only students registered in the course are the ones responding and that these students only respond once. Furthermore, the online SPT survey system must ensure that students who withdraw from a course are also dropped/excluded from the SPT survey system (Crews & Curtis, 2011). It is worthy to note that the IDEA system which is administered through Campus Labs requires a student log-in using regular ASU credentials.

Online SPT surveys must be presented in a friendly, inviting and easy to use way. Specifically, access should be simple and concise; the survey form should be consistent with the browser; the form needs to be easy to navigate through and to submit once it is completed; the form needs to download rapidly via modem; the screen needs to look attractive, simple, and straightforward; a help screen or email link for queries is essential; confirmation of successful or unsuccessful submission is critical and in the case of the latter there should be clear instructions for returning to the form to complete missing or incorrect information (Cummings, Ballantyne, and Fowler, 2001).

Extraneous Variables That May Not Be Controlled For in SPT Surveys

16) Problems with traditional SPT include: low interrater agreement among students (e.g., it can be as low as .20); potential for gender bias (e.g., female faculty in the U.S. have been shown to receive lower ratings than male faculty, with male students rating female faculty lower); smaller classes rated higher

than larger classes; humanities and social science classes rated higher than science classes; optional classes rated higher than compulsory classes; and classes with higher actual and expected marks rated more highly than classes where students expect to receive lower grades (Langbein, 2008; Smith, 2012). While some SPT surveys may control for some of these extraneous variables they likely will not control for all of them. Users should remain very cognizant of this point.

Viable SPT Surveys and Systems

17) Keeley (2012) provides a review of three publicly available published SPT surveys and two private systems that present with evidence of reliability, validity and factor structure. Included in the first group are the: Student Evaluation of Educational Quality (SEEQ), the Teacher Behavior Checklist (TBC) and one unnamed measured developed by Barnes. In the second group one is from the University of Washington while the other is the IDEA System. In the paragraph below we address the latter because it is the SPT Survey system that we have piloted at ASU-J.

The IDEA Diagnostic Form (revised and renamed "IDEA 2.0") is an instrument, administered either in paper-pencil format or electronically through Campus Labs that contains a total of 43 items. Items 1-20 focus on the instructor. Items 21-32 call for the assessment of progress on learning objectives previously identified by the instructor using the IDEA Center Faculty Information Form (1998) as important for the course (e.g., knowledge base, critical thinking skills, working with a group). Items 33-35 address the amount of reading, work/assignments, and difficulty of subject matter in the course. Items 36-42 assess the student's attitudes and behavior in the course (e.g., "I had a strong desire to take this course." "As a result of taking this course, I have more positive feelings toward this field of study." "Overall, I rate this instructor as an excellent teacher." Overall, I rate this course as excellent.").Item 43 calls for student judgments (e.g., "As a rule, I put forth more effort than other students on academic work." The instructor can add additional questions to the form if desired using items 48-67. The last page allows students to make descriptive comments.

The IDEA system also has a Short Form (IDEA Center, 2002; Pietrzak, n.d.) that will soon have a new name and slightly different format. The current form consists of 18 items. Items 1-12 assess progress on the learning objectives as noted above on the Diagnostic Form. Items 13-18 focus on student effort, background for the course, desire to take the course, feelings toward the field of study after taking the course, overall rating of the instructor, and overall rating of the course. The instructor can also add additional questions to the form if desired. The last page also allows students to make descriptive comments (IDEA Center, 2002). The Short Form may be used more often with well-established instructors (e.g., tenured faculty, others with significant amounts of teaching experiences) while the Diagnostic Form is more frequently used with junior, temporary, or part-time faculty (Hoyt & Lee, 2002).

The IDEA Center Diagnostic Form is currently administered by an independent non-profit organization. The IDEA system statistically controls for a number of extraneous variables (i.e., class size, student motivation, discipline-related

difficulty, and student effort) and their effect on the ratings (Keeley, 2012). This is seen as an advantageous feature of the system. Internal consistency reliabilities (i.e., split-half reliability computed using the Spearman Brown formula) ranged from .84-.95 for a class size of 35-49 with lower reliabilities possible for smaller classes (Hoyt & Lee, 2002). Keeley (2012) notes that validity evidence consists of internal comparisons within the system (e.g., student ratings on their progress on the objectives tend to be higher for objectives selected by the instructor versus those the instructor did not select. More validity studies are needed using outside measures. The tool appears to possess a two or three factor structure (e.g., the instructor's role in transmitting knowledge and the student's role in acquiring knowledge (Hoyt & Lee, 2002). However, Pietrazk (2014a) reports that there is likely a common single domain that is being mainly assessed by IDEA scores that is separate from academic measures. Pietrazk (2014b) has also noted that the ratings from IDEA do not appear to be due to response sets (i.e., random responding, etc.) or based on student perception of course difficulty. Students appear to respond to the survey based on their perception of classroom atmosphere as influenced by the faculty member. Furthermore, they appear to separate factors under their control such as how much effort they put forth in the course from the ratings of instructor. One possible advantage of the IDEA system is that it allows one to compare ratings to others who taught similar courses at similarly-sized institutions (Keeley, 2012).

Benton, Webster, Gross, and Pallett (2010a) analyzed data using IDEA paper versus IDEA online survey methods from 2002-2008. They noted that the ratings do not appear to be impacted by survey delivery method which supports administering IDEA either by paper or online. Benton, Webster, Gross, and Pallett (2010b) also analyzed using IDEA student ratings in traditional versus online courses using data from 2002-2008. Overall, the comparisons between traditional and online courses revealed similarities and supported the validity of IDEA in both environments. They did note that student response rate was higher in traditional versus online course. Furthermore, students in online courses reported that instructors in online courses used more technology to promote student learning.

Universities that have used the IDEA Student Rating System include: Butler University, California State University, Creighton University, Emory University, Howard University, Illinois State University, Johns Hopkins University, Kansas State, Loyola University, New Mexico State University, Saint Louis University, South Dakota State University, University of Alabama-Birmingham, University of Alaska, University of Akron, University of Cincinnati, University of Michigan-Shanghi Jaio Tong University Joint Institute; University of Oklahoma, University of Rhode Island, University of South Dakota, Utah State University, Wichita State University (Garvin, 2014).

ASU-J IDEA Pilot Information and New On-line Technology: Lessons Learned

The two pilots of the IDEA Student Ratings of Instruction system conducted during the fall of 2013 and the fall of 2014 were very instructive with regard to potential use of the system. The smaller paper-and-pencil pilot showed that the system yields rich and detailed data and addresses some of the concerning issues associated with SPT surveys described above, such as standardization and

established reliability and validity. The paper-and-pencil format, however, required a great deal of administrative legwork and proved lengthy to administer, since it required the students to totally fill in the items on op-scan sheets. The larger pilot was with IDEA's new survey. This survey was administered electronic through the recent partnership of IDEA (a leading platform)with Campus Labs (a leading service provider for assessment)showed that the electronic system is highly user-friendly and requires far less time for students to complete the survey. A cursory examination of the response rates clearly indicates that "in-class capture," or asking students to complete the instrument in class on mobile devices (smart phones, iPads or other tablets) yielded response rates of 75-100%, while using e-mail messages and spoken reminders in class to request that students complete the ratings outside of class on their own generally yielded response rates of less than 25%. Campus Labs provided the results in a very user-friendly electronic format that could be used either formatively to focus on improved teaching and learning or for summative administrative assessment of teaching. For both the individual and the group reports, raw data as well as data adjusted for outside variables (i.e., class size, student motivation, course difficulty and student effort) can be viewed and compared. All results can also be compared to the overall IDEA database and to its discipline-specific database. On individual reports, when areas of weakness are identified, links are provided to read well-researched reports regarding the pedagogical importance of the items identified.

Updates on new IDEA Surveys

IDEA is currently piloting several new or revised surveys that will be ready for electronic implementation within a year. New items are being piloted during the spring 2015 semester to update the learning objectives and teaching methods on the Diagnostic Form to better reflect current, research-based trends in higher education. The new form, to be named IDEA 2.0, will be somewhat shorter and will include the new items for which strong reliability and validity can be established. The "short form" will be replaced with a new survey entitled Learning Outcomes 2.0, which is also being updated at this time. A new 12-item instrument called Teaching Essentials is also being developed. This instrument contains specific teaching methods and takes into account the most important external variables. It does not include the learning outcomes or require faculty members to select essential objectives. It is intended to provide a screening of fundamentals of teaching for a quick review of faculty performance. Finally, IDEA has also developed the Immediate Feedback System, which faculty members can choose to use on their own throughout the semester in a formative manner to receive quick feedback after a unit, a portion of a course, or even after a particular project or class meeting. The purpose of the Immediate Feedback System is for formative assessment to allow faculty to make adjustments *during* a semester or course. This form is purely for the use of the faculty member, not for assessment use by department chairs, deans, or PRT committees. Each faculty member will be able to decide individually to launch feedback cycles throughout the semester and will be able to receive results almost immediately after students respond. All of the new IDEA assessments will be available to institutions contracting with IDEA and Campus Labs and adopting the basic IDEA Student Ratings of Instruction system.

Conclusions

The (ASU-J) Faculty Senate Task Force on Online Student Perceptions of Teaching (SPT) Surveys recommends to the ASU-J Faculty Senate and to the Office of Academic Affairs and Research that they consider the content of this report in further developing university policies and procedures for the assessment of teaching. Both should strongly consider the advantages of adopting the IDEA System across all colleges in a uniform matter to assess SPT. All of the above recommendations should be carefully considered in implementing practices to improve the assessment of teaching.

References

References are available upon request from the chair of the task force.