

**UNIVERSITY COUNCIL
INSTRUCTIONAL DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE
REQUEST FOR DECISION**

PRESENTED BY: Bob Tyler, Chair, Instructional Development Committee of Council

DATE OF MEETING: June 13, 2006

SUBJECT: **Recommendation on a University-wide Instrument for Student Evaluation of Teaching at the University of Saskatchewan**

DECISIONS REQUESTED:

That Council support the Instructional Development Committee's recommendation that student evaluation of instruction be performed in every offering of every course (including Spring and Summer Session).

That Council support the Instructional Development Committee's recommendation that the University of Saskatchewan adopt the Student Evaluation of Educational Quality (SEEQ) for student evaluation of instruction.

SUMMARY OF PROPOSAL:

In January 2004, University Council approved the Framework for Student Evaluation of Teaching which recommended, among other things, that the Instructional Development Committee (IDCC) "...determine the level of interest in and viability of developing a common questionnaire for student evaluation of teaching." During the 2004/05 academic year, the IDCC polled other medical-doctoral universities in Canada to ascertain whether they used a common instrument and received copies of these instruments. It also conducted a short survey on teaching evaluation by students at the University of Saskatchewan.

In August 2005, the IDCC and the Provost's Office sponsored a comprehensive survey of Deans and Department Heads requesting information on current practices in both student and peer evaluation of teaching (see attached). Results from all sources of information clearly identified the need for a common survey instrument at the University of Saskatchewan. The survey results showed that the majority of respondents were favourable to the implementation of a University-wide instrument for student evaluation of teaching.

The IDCC undertook a study of potential survey instruments and has been impressed with the Students' Evaluation of Educational Quality (SEEQ) instrument as a validated evaluation instrument focusing on courses as well as instruction. In April 2006, two members of IDCC and staff from the Integrated Planning Office participated in a two day conference and meetings with officials at the University of Manitoba to further explore the possibility of the SEEQ instrument as the recommended instrument for the University of Saskatchewan. A wealth of information was collected on SEEQ and presented to the IDCC in March/April. The Committee has subsequently confirmed that SEEQ is the best survey instrument for a University-wide tool for student evaluation of teaching at the University of Saskatchewan.

RATIONALE:

The Instructional Development Committee of Council (IDCC) has been actively working on a series of policies on evaluation of teaching (by peers and students) since 2000. University Council has approved three major policy documents on evaluation of teaching:

- ***Principles of Evaluation of Teaching (March 2002)***
 - Asked departments and colleges to enunciate positions concerning:
 - Use of properly validated, department or college approved, student evaluation form;
 - Process for peer evaluation of teaching;
 - Development of teaching case files and teaching dossiers for personal development and use in collegial or administrative decisions;
 - Restricted student access to information from student evaluation instruments and where such information will be stored.
 - Envisioned the development of a University-wide instrument for student evaluation of teaching.
 - Recommended that all teachers be evaluated at least once every three years. Teachers under review for renewal, tenure or promotion or other collegial decisions shall have their teaching evaluated on an annual basis.

- ***Framework for Peer Evaluation of Teaching: Best Practices (June 2003)***
 - Recommended that one course per year be evaluated by a peer for each teacher in a probationary appointment.
 - Recommended that departments and colleges determine the frequency of evaluations for those who have achieved tenure, permanent or continuing status and those promoted to full Professor (recommended every three years as a guideline following tenure or promotion to full Professor).

- ***Framework for Student Evaluation of Teaching (January 2004)***
 - Recommended that the IDCC work with individuals knowledgeable about statistics and evaluation measurement to develop a proposal for financial resources and technical expertise to assist departments and colleges with the validation process for teaching instruments.
 - Recommended that the IDCC consult with stakeholder groups to determine the level of interest in and viability of developing a common questionnaire for student evaluation of teaching. Costs, a web-based survey instrument, and identification of unit(s) on campus responsible for testing and devising a strategy for making outcomes available should be explored.

In 2004, University Council approved a recommendation that the IDCC initiate the development and implementation of a common survey instrument for student evaluation of teaching. The IDCC pursued this recommendation by engaging in several tasks, namely:

- Gathering comparative data from all of the colleges on campus related to their current student evaluation of teaching policies and practices;
- Soliciting similar information from other medical/doctoral universities across Canada;
- Consulting with recognized experts in the field of evaluation in higher education;
- Facilitating ongoing campus-wide discussion/dialogue on the subject with interested groups/individuals;
- Participating in recent national conferences on post-secondary teaching and learning;
- Conducting a literature review of current issues and best practices related to student evaluation of teaching.

This resulted in a considerable body of data which was summarized in a report by Edwin Ralph (College of Education) in November 2005 and led to the original recommendation of the SEEQ (Students' Evaluation of Educational Quality) instrument as a possible common instrument for the University of Saskatchewan.

The first effort involving the collection of comparative data from all of the colleges on campus related to their current student evaluation of teaching policies and practices received a poor response from colleges and departments on campus resulting in insufficient information to fully understand the current practices on campus. Therefore, in August 2005, IDCC and the Provost's Office sponsored a new, more comprehensive survey of Deans and Department Heads requesting information on current practices in both student and peer evaluation of teaching. A concerted effort was made to follow-up with all colleges and departments indicating the importance of responding and providing all of the necessary information. This resulted in a favourable response rate with information received from all colleges except one and from many departments. Responses were compiled and tabulated over the fall/winter and a summary report was presented to IDCC during meetings in March/April 2006. Key conclusions:

- ***The majority of respondents were favourable to the implementation of a University-wide instrument for student evaluation of teaching.***
- ***Student Evaluation of Teaching:¹***
 - All colleges provide opportunities for students to evaluate teaching in courses, but...
 - Students are not informed of results or changes resulting from their evaluations
 - Evaluations are sometimes conducted with the instructor present (and administering the evaluation form)
 - There is a heavy administrative burden associated with administering the surveys, processing the results, creating summary reports, and transcribing responses to open-ended questions
 - The process for transmitting the evaluation instrument to the department for interpretation is unknown
 - There is no uniformity in 'look and feel' of evaluation instruments
 - Differences between formative and summative evaluations are not clearly enunciated. Timing (at the end of the term) indicates that these are primarily summative, but formative evaluations are conducted in some courses.
 - The biggest obstacle has been 'validation' of the teaching evaluation instrument.
 - Most colleges reported that they conduct student evaluation of teaching for all or most courses every year (once/semester). Some conduct teaching evaluations less frequently for faculty of higher rank (once every 2-3 years).
 - It is not known if instructors advise students about the importance of teaching evaluations, but most instruments include information on how the results will be used.
 - Colleges and departments have not developed a norm base of evaluation outcomes to compare collectively across the whole department and, specifically, long-term trends for courses and instructors (exceptions: History, Geological Sciences, Physics, Computer Science, Psychology).
- ***Peer Evaluation of Teaching:***
 - Most colleges and departments have established a guide, checklist or policies/procedures on peer evaluation of teaching.
 - Most colleges and departments include the various aspects of teaching in their peer reviews including materials and classroom performance.
 - Most colleges and departments share the results with instructors.

¹ A complete catalogue of the responses including the instruments used in the colleges and departments is available in the Integrated Planning Office.

- There is less certainty on whether the peer reviewer and the instructor discuss the evaluation process in advance or whether the conclusions are comprehensive, comparative and focused on overall performance.
- Peer evaluation of teaching continues to be focused on observation of classroom performance and on a review of course materials. There is no indication that teaching dossiers/portfolios are distributed to external peers for review/evaluation as part of collegial processes. There is no indication that the various teaching roles described in the *Standards for Tenure and Promotion* are given consideration when peers evaluate teaching.

After synthesizing the considerable body of data that was gathered in 2004 from six different sources, along with the more recent data collected in 2005, it was clear that a common survey instrument was needed at the University of Saskatchewan. Several survey instruments were considered but in particular, IDCC has been impressed by the SEEQ (Students' Evaluation of Educational Quality) instrument as a validated evaluation instrument focusing on courses as well as instruction. As such, it will be helpful for colleges and departments in revising curriculum, as well as helping individual instructors improve teaching.

In April 2006, two members of IDCC and staff from the Integrated Planning Office participated in a two day conference and meetings at the University of Manitoba to further explore the possibilities of the SEEQ instrument as the recommended instrument for the University of Saskatchewan. The following provides a general overview of the SEEQ instrument.

What is SEEQ?

- SEEQ is used to obtain student feedback on teaching quality and effectiveness. It is based on the conceptualization that teaching is a complex, multidimensional activity consisting of several dimensions (learning, enthusiasm, organization, group interaction, individual rapport, breadth, examinations, assignments, and overall).
- SEEQ is an easy way to obtain feedback on teaching with demonstrated effectiveness in improving teaching quality and students' learning experience. It is a professional evaluation summary that will facilitate recognition of outstanding teaching and can be included in a Teaching Portfolio by staff applying for promotion or accelerated incremental progression.
- It has been designed based on the assumption that student learning is to be the goal of the teaching process. Teaching is not the end, but a means to the end, which is student learning.

Who developed SEEQ?

- SEEQ was developed by Dr. Herbert Marsh of the University of Western Sydney in the late 1970's and unveiled in the *British Journal of Educational Psychology* in 1982.
- SEEQ is currently used by two universities in Canada (Manitoba and St. Mary's) and several universities around the world (i.e. University College Dublin, Australian National University, Western Sydney, Curtin, Penn State, Syracuse, and Maryland), including non-English speaking universities.

Use of SEEQ?

- SEEQ was developed to serve as only one of several sources for the evaluation of teaching.
- It has been designed to provide information that could be formative (i.e. assist instructors to improve their teaching), summative (i.e. assist administrators in making informed and fair personnel decisions) and informative for students (assist them in course/program decisions).

Reliability/Validity of SEEQ

- The SEEQ instrument has been exhaustively researched and tested and is acknowledged in the international arena of educational research for its validity and reliability.
- It has been developed according to research-based best practices that seek to increase instrument reliability and validity, and to reduce rater bias and inaccuracy.

- Specifically, statistical tests repeated over 13 years, with responses from approximately 50,000 courses and almost 1 million students in a wide range of disciplines at both the undergraduate and graduate levels, have shown that SEEQ measures what the researchers intended it to measure, and it can be counted on to make the same measurement from one administration to the next.

SEEQ Questions and Flexibility

- The standardized questions in SEEQ were developed based on the following:
 - Interviews with faculty and students concerning what constituted effective teaching.
 - Replies from faculty on what information is needed for effective feedback to improve teaching.
 - A review of questions in other widely used student questionnaire.
 - An analysis of responses students wrote about courses and teaching in open-ended questions.
- Supplemental questions provide additional flexibility for SEEQ, allowing instructors to adapt the instrument to gain feedback on further aspects of teaching that are not covered by the standardized items.
 - Questions can be chosen from SEEQ Item Banks containing a wide range of survey items that can be used to obtain feedback on particular discipline areas or unique aspects of a course.
 - Examples include diverse contexts of teaching such as unit content, delivery mode including online and distance education, or resourcing that might impact on teaching.

In April, the IDCC considered all of the information gathered on the SEEQ instrument and in May signaled its intention to take a recommendation to Council in June identifying SEEQ as the University-wide tool.

The consultation process included discussion with Deans Council, the University Review Committee, the Faculty Association (to be arranged), and a report back to Deans and Department Heads on the results of the August 2005 survey. The IDCC has regularly met with student leaders. Evaluation of teaching was also featured in student focus groups between January and May as part of the discussions associated with the development of the Teaching and Learning Foundational Document.

IMPACT AND RELATIONSHIPS:

Colleges and departments have made substantial progress in the implementation of course evaluations since the last study was conducted (in the late 1990s). However, there is no ‘common look and feel’ to these evaluations, which may lead students to believe that they are not officially sanctioned, and lack of information about outcomes associated with them may affect student participation. In addition, the existing evaluations are primarily paper-based, creating a substantial paper and administrative burden in colleges and departments, thereby limiting access to precious administrative and secretarial services. By far the biggest issue has been the effort required to validate course evaluation forms. Some departments, such as the Departments of Psychology, English, and History in the College of Arts and Science, and the College of Law, have spent many years developing a ‘validated’ instrument. SEEQ offers the advantage of being validated by significant usage nationally and internationally.

University Council has adopted three major policy papers to support evaluation of teaching. The IDCC is currently concerned that the recommendations contained in these reports do not go far enough to support its long-term vision and goal for evaluation of teaching on campus. Further, the IDCC anticipates that the Teaching and Learning Foundational Document will offer some conclusions about the importance of evaluation of teaching to ensure that it achieves the same status as research activities in collegial decision-making processes. The IDCC believes, specifically, that student evaluation of instruction should occur in every offering of every course and that the results of student evaluation of instruction should be made available to both students and faculty. This will assist students in making decisions about courses they wish to take and it will benefit faculty in identifying ways in which courses could be improved. The IDCC begins, however, with the premise that teaching on campus is at least good and in many cases excellent. It acknowledges that an independent reference point needs to be provided to confirm this

impression and that SEEQ is a much better tool for this than other, popular, means students have at their disposal to discriminate among course offerings. Finally, IDCC believes that the major purpose of teaching evaluation is improvement. It believes that SEEQ should be a useful tool in the understanding of the quality of teaching on campus and will assist the University to improve its performance in this vital activity in the coming years. Obviously, supports will need to also be found to assist faculty and the IDCC is fully aware of the plans for expansion of the Gwenna Moss Teaching and Learning Centre as part of the new University Learning Centre initiative.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES REQUIRED:

The Provost has indicated that resources will be made available from central sources to support this initiative. At least initially, it is anticipated that the Vice-Provost will take responsibility for this initiative with assistance from the Integrated Planning Office.

COMMITTEE COMMENTS AND RECOMMENDATION:

In April 2006, the IDCC considered all of the information gathered on the SEEQ instrument and signaled its intention to take a recommendation to Council in June identifying the SEEQ as the University-wide tool for student evaluation of teaching.

FURTHER ACTION REQUIRED FOLLOWING COUNCIL DECISION:

A meeting with the Faculty Association Executive and a report back to Deans and Department Heads on the results of the August 2005 survey.

ATTACHMENTS:

- August 2005 Survey instrument to Colleges and Departments
- Evaluation of Teaching at the University of Saskatchewan Report (January 2006)
- Information on SEEQ
- SEEQ Instrument from University of Manitoba

August, 2005 Survey

Student Evaluation of Teaching

- 1) Are student evaluations conducted in courses offered by your college/department? If your response is 'no', skip to question 17.
- 2) How often are student evaluations conducted?
 - Once per semester
 - Once per year
 - Once every few years
 - Other
- 3) Is there a department or college policy outlining when or how student course evaluations are conducted?
- 4) What is the best way to characterize student evaluation of teaching in your college or department? Are **all courses** offered by your college/department evaluated by students? Are most courses evaluated? Are some courses evaluated? Are selected courses evaluated? Other?

If there is no systematic process for evaluation, who chooses the courses that will be evaluated and what is the process for evaluation? (i.e. one course per instructor, a few courses per year)
- 5) Who is evaluated? Tenure track professors? Sessional lecturers? Tenured professors? Lab instructors and clinicians? Adjunct faculty?
- 6) Are student evaluations conducted for laboratory classes? Team taught courses? Clinical settings? Experiential learning opportunities? Graduate courses? Tutorials? Other?
- 7) How are student evaluations of teaching administered? (i.e. who distributes the form and who collects the form)
- 8) Who sees the results of the student evaluations? Instructor? Department Head? Promotion and Tenure Review committee? Students? Administrative staff? Other?
- 9) In what format are the results shared with the instructor (if at all)? Full length (word for word)? Summary form? Both full length and summary form? Other? If the results are provided in summary form, who prepares the summary?
- 10) Describe how student evaluations are used. In course planning? In assignment of faculty to courses? In formative support for instructor? Other?
- 11) What happens to the student evaluations once they have been received and processed?
- 12) Are the results/uses of results specifically communicated to students? If so, explain how.
- 13) Are students given an opportunity for unstructured or open-ended comments? How are these handled or used?
- 14) Are students given an opportunity to evaluate programs? If yes, at what point? (early leavers, second year, graduates, alumni, rotating cycle, other)
- 15) Do accreditation processes (if applicable) require student evaluation of teaching?
- 16) Does the department/college have a specific policy and/or a designated person or committee responsible for overseeing course evaluations by students?
- 17) If you do not use a survey instrument, would you find a University-wide student evaluation instrument useful? [Note this instrument would be modifiable to include additional questions of particular interest/relevance to the discipline] Why or why not?

Peer Evaluation of Teaching

- 1) Do you conduct peer evaluation of teaching in your department/college? If your response is 'no', skip to question 10.
- 2) For what purposes? (Indicate all that apply) improve teaching/provide feedback for new instructors; improve teaching/provide feedback for experienced instructors; improve course content; for use in tenure and promotion decisions (faculty, sessional lecturers, adjunct professors); other (please describe)
- 3) How often are peer evaluations of teaching conducted? Once per semester? Once per year? Once every few years? Before tenure and promotion decisions only? After tenure and promotion decisions? When requested by the instructor? Other?
- 4) Who is evaluated by peers? Tenure track professors? Sessional lecturers? Tenured professors? Lab instructors and clinicians? Adjunct faculty?
- 5) What is evaluated? indicate all that apply
 - Effectiveness of lecturing, guiding student discussion, responding to questions, explaining and providing comments on student assignments
 - Content organization and comprehensiveness
 - Validity and fairness of testing
 - Course design
 - Instructional materials (written course materials, lab manuals, audio visual resources, computer programs)
 - Involvement on graduate advisory or examination committees
 - Supervision of undergraduate and graduate student work
 - Teaching dossier
 - Pedagogical research, publications, presentations
 - Other
- 6) Do you evaluate – indicate all that apply
 - Laboratory classes
 - Team taught courses
 - Clinical settings
 - Experiential learning settings
 - Graduate courses
- 7) What is the process followed? Who selects the peer evaluators? Does the department/college provide a guide for peer evaluation of teaching, including expectations? Is there a prescribed format for peer evaluation of teaching (or an instrument that peer evaluators can follow to provide their evaluation)?
- 8) Are the peer evaluations of teaching shared with the instructor? Department Head? Promotion or Tenure Review Committee? Students? Members of the Department/College? The Peer Evaluators? Other?
- 9) If the results are shared with the instructor or others, in what form are they available? Full length? Summary? Both full length and summary? Other (please describe)
- 10) Does the department/college have a specific policy and/or a designated person or committee responsible for overseeing course evaluations by peers?
- 11) Would you find a University-wide guide to peer evaluation of teaching helpful? Why or why not?

Evaluation of Teaching at the University of Saskatchewan (For the Instructional Development Committee of Council)

Purpose

The purpose of this project is to establish a baseline of information about current U of S teaching evaluation practices to assist in the development of the Teaching and Learning Foundational Document and in the IDCC's consideration of a campus wide system of student and peer evaluation of teaching as recommended in the *Framework for Student Evaluation of Teaching at the University of Saskatchewan* (January 2004).

Methodology

An e-mail was sent to all Deans, Department Heads, and Program Directors (for the College of Medicine) in early August (2005) requesting copies of current instruments used for student and peer evaluation of teaching and supplementary information in the form of responses to the Student and Peer Evaluation of Teaching surveys that were distributed in order to provide the context for teaching evaluations.

All the information requested was to be submitted by September 15, 2005. In early September, reminders were sent out to all non-responders (those who had not yet responded to the request for information on teaching evaluations). In addition to this request for information, data was also collected from a previous and less comprehensive request for information in Fall (2004). Data from both of these sources were used to summarize information on evaluation of teaching across campus.

Overall, information was received from about two-thirds of the colleges and departments on campus. A couple of colleges with departments submitted an overall summary for the college but no information was received at the department level and others included both college summaries along with information from some of the departments within the college.

The data that was received ranged from minimal information (i.e. copies of current instruments with no responses to the surveys) to comprehensive information (i.e. completion of both student and peer evaluation of teaching surveys, copies of current instruments, and copies of policies/guidelines for teaching evaluations). In cases where the Student and Peer Evaluation of Teaching surveys were not completed, information was drawn from any other materials that were submitted. A table has been created to outline what materials were received from each of the colleges/departments.

Please note that all the data you have received is in draft format and is therefore subject to change. It is also important to note that the following summaries on student and peer evaluation of teaching are based only on the colleges/departments that responded to the surveys and to the responses that were provided in the surveys (i.e. in many cases, questions were left blank).

Results compared to "Recommendations for Best Practices" (as outlined in the Framework for Student Evaluation of Teaching at the University of Saskatchewan, January 2004)

Recommendation 1:

All teachers be evaluated at least once every three years and that teachers under consideration for renewal of probation, tenure or promotion should have their teaching evaluated on an annual basis. The recommendation regarding frequency should be viewed as a minimum. Student evaluations of teaching should be conducted serially and information gathered should be collected from various course levels. Student evaluation of teaching is mandatory.

Student evaluations of teaching are primarily conducted for formative purposes (i.e. improve teaching and course content/curriculum development) however, they are also used for summative purposes (i.e. tenure and promotion decisions, salary review process). In accordance with Best Practices, most colleges/departments indicated that they conduct student evaluation of teaching every year (once/semester) for all courses. Some conduct teaching evaluations less frequently (i.e. every 2-3 years) for faculty of higher rank (i.e. full professors with tenure where career-decisions are no longer an issue).

Recommendation 2:

Instruments for the summative student evaluation of teaching should be applied consistently to the teaching of all teachers within an academic unit.

Most colleges/departments indicated that they conduct student evaluation of teaching for all or most courses every year (once/semester). This includes the evaluation of tenured professors, tenure track professors, sessional lecturers, adjunct faculty, and lab instructors. Therefore, it can be surmised that student evaluation of teaching is applied fairly consistently to the teaching of all instructors within an academic unit.

Recommendation 3:

Colleges should review their practices with respect to providing summative information from teaching evaluations to students and are encouraged to make the information available, on a restricted basis, to all admitted and registered students at the University of Saskatchewan. This can be done by making the information available through department or college offices, in a department or college resource room, via electronic means or through a local branch of the University Libraries.

The most apparent discrepancy between Best Practices and current practice at the University is the communication of results to student. There is no formal communication in any college/department of the results of teaching evaluations to students. Some indicated that the results may be communicated through informal means (i.e. meetings not specifically related to teaching evaluations). A couple of colleges (Engineering and Kinesiology) noted they are looking for a more formalized process to share results with students, but currently no college/department has an official process for the communication of results to students.

Recommendation 4:

Teachers who gather formative information from students should advise the students how their views and comments will be taken into account or what the effect will be on future instruction.

The surveys sent out to colleges/departments did not directly ask whether instructors advise students about how their input will be used and what the impact will be on future instruction. However, a review of the teaching evaluation instruments shows that the majority of instruments include an introductory paragraph noting the purpose of the survey, how the information will be used, and general instructions on how to complete the survey.

Recommendation 5:

The optimum time period for administering a student evaluation during the term is after the deadline when students are permitted to withdraw from the course and prior to the last two

weeks of the term. It is recommended that evaluation instruments be administered at the beginning of a class. Students should be given enough time to complete the questionnaire and give feedback.

Of the colleges/departments which noted a timeframe, teaching evaluations are conducted in-class near the end of the year (for 6 credit unit courses) or the end of the semester (for 3 credit unit courses). Contrary to Best Practices, the timeframe for conducting teaching evaluations ranged from the last 2-3 weeks of classes to the last 2 days of classes.

Recommendation 6:

Proper instruction and training should be given to individuals charged with administering student questionnaires. Students should be advised of the importance of teaching evaluations and be provided with information on how the information will be used. Teachers should not administer summative student evaluation instruments.

The majority of colleges/departments follow approved guidelines/policies for student evaluation of teaching. It is not known if teachers advise students of the importance of teaching evaluations, however, the majority of teaching evaluation instruments summarize the importance of the evaluation and include information on how the results will be used.

With respect to administration, most evaluations are distributed and collected by administrative staff (with the instructor not present) and returned to the Department Head or Dean's Office for processing. Contrary to Best Practices, in some cases the instructor being evaluated administers the evaluation either alone or with the help of a designated student. In the latter situation, the instructor often distributes the evaluations but the student is responsible for providing the completed evaluations to the appropriate office.

Recommendation 7:

Colleges are responsible for approving and validating teaching instruments used in departments and colleges.

Based on the information received, many colleges/departments currently use standardized evaluation instruments that have been approved by faculty. The question of validity was not directly addressed in the surveys that were distributed to colleges/departments, however one department (English) did indicate they use a validated instrument.

Recommendation 8:

Departments and colleges are encouraged to develop a norm base of evaluation outcomes for comparative purposes and to assist with the interpretation of evaluation results over time. The interpretation of student ratings and weightings of the criteria should be used to determine teaching effectiveness. Results from a series of a particular course, gathered over a reasonable period of time, should be analyzed and compared to generated averages and percentile rankings in a particular unit. Comparative norms are developed through a year-by-year accumulation of evaluation results for teachers across all evaluated courses. Comparisons are only made when sufficient data have accumulated across years to ensure confidentiality.

For the most part, it appears that colleges/departments have not developed a norm base of evaluation outcomes. However, 3 departments (History, Geological Science, and Psychology) did indicate that each year data is added to a normative base in order to compare collectively across the whole department and specifically to compare long-term trends for courses and instructors.

Instruments for Student Evaluation of Teaching

In addition to collecting information on student evaluation of teaching practices through survey responses, it was also requested that copies of current instruments used for student evaluation of teaching be submitted. A review of these instruments confirms that a whole host of different instruments are used across campus. These differences are not only apparent between colleges but also between departments within the same college. In general, there seems to be little consistency in terms of the overall design or visual presentation of the instruments. This is potentially problematic as students might not recognize that these different instruments are all intended to measure the same thing. Although most instruments use questions with rating scales for responses, the scale itself often varies from one instrument to the next. Probably the only consistent feature of these instruments is that almost all of them include open-ended questions and/or comments. Overall though, there is still great variation in the instruments used for student evaluation of teaching at the U of S.

Administration of Student Evaluation of Teaching

The administration of teaching evaluations requires considerable time and energy. As such, the large majority of colleges/departments rely heavily on administrative staff for assistance during the teaching evaluation process. Depending on the particular college/department involved, this assistance can come in the form of administering the surveys to students, processing the results, creating summary reports, and other related duties. This administrative support is required on a regular basis as student evaluations of teaching are generally conducted every year (once/semester) for all courses. The significant time commitment required to undertake teaching evaluations in colleges/departments is something that needs to be emphasized in this review of current practices at the U of S. If a campus wide system of teaching evaluations is going to be considered for the U of S, it would be ideal if this instrument could also reduce the workload on administrative units across campus.

Conclusions for Student Evaluation of Teaching

In conclusion, there are areas of student evaluation of teaching where the University seems to be doing well in terms of the Recommendations for Best Practices (as outlined in the Framework for Student Evaluation of Teaching at the University of Saskatchewan). Based on the information collected, it appears that most colleges/departments have established guidelines/policies for student evaluation of teaching. In most cases, teaching evaluations are conducted at least once a year for most or all courses (with tenured professors being evaluated less frequently). The large majority of survey instruments include a paragraph indicating the purpose of the survey and how the information will be used. These findings all parallel the Recommendations for Best Practices.

However, there are also areas that require improvement in order to meet the recommendations for Best Practices. One key area that needs to be improved is the communication of results to students. Although a couple of colleges are trying to establish a formalized communication process, currently no college or department has a formal process in place to share the results of teaching evaluations with students. Another key area for improvement is in the administration of teaching evaluations where some instructors administer the evaluation themselves and are present for all or part of the evaluation process which is in direct contrast to Best Practices.

A smaller issue that needs to be addressed is the fact that the timing of student evaluations sometimes conflicts with the recommendations for Best Practices such that evaluations are conducted during the last couple of weeks of classes. Finally, more work could be done by

colleges/departments to establish a norm base of evaluation outcomes in order to compare evaluation results over time.

Summary of Gaps for Student Evaluation of Teaching

- No formal process exists for the communication of teaching evaluation results to students
- Timeframe for administering student evaluations of teaching not within the optimum time period
- Instructor under evaluation sometimes present or responsible for administering teaching evaluations to students
- Unclear whether validated teaching instruments are being used
- Lack of development of a norm base of evaluation outcomes for comparative purposes and interpretation of evaluation results over time.

Results compared to “Criteria for Peer Evaluation” (as outlined in the Framework for Peer Evaluation of Teaching at the University of Saskatchewan: Best Practices, June 2003)

Before the peer review is conducted, the reviewer and the reviewee should discuss the process and understand their respective roles in the review in accordance with the relevant standards and institutional, college and departmental policies.

Based on the information collected, it is not clear whether the reviewer and reviewee discuss the evaluation process ahead of time, however the majority of colleges/departments have an established guide, checklist, or policies/procedures that they follow. At the very least, the majority of evaluation results are reviewed and finalized with the instructor.

For best practice, it is recommended that information on the candidate’s teaching be gathered from two different people before a major decision is made. It is suggested that each reviewer should observe classroom performance on two different occasions for each evaluation. Over time, it is also preferred if information is gathered on teaching at various course levels.

While most colleges/departments did not specify the number of reviewers assigned to a specific instructor, a few colleges indicated that more than one reviewer is selected. In these cases, the reviewers are often selected by the Department Head in consultation with the instructor. A few colleges/departments specified that the reviewers selected must be of equal or higher academic rank than the instructor being evaluated.

Information is lacking with respect to the number of classroom performances observed, however it can be summarized in general that peer evaluations of teaching are conducted yearly (once/semester) before tenure and promotion decisions, every 2-3 years for tenured professors (below the rank of full professor) and by request for full professors. Only one department (English) specified a prescribed format for both the number of classroom performances observed and the course level where reviewers are required to visit two successive meetings of a junior and senior course.

Peer evaluation should embrace the various aspects of teaching including the criteria listed below. All peer evaluations will culminate in a written assessment. As a minimum, criteria to be evaluated should include: review of classroom performance, quality of examinations, course outlines and course materials, syllabi, reading materials, reading lists, laboratory manuals, workbooks, and classroom assignments.

The data collected shows that most colleges/departments are meeting the minimum criteria by embracing the various aspects of teaching listed above. Specifically, the majority of colleges/departments indicated that they include the following in peer evaluation of teaching:

effectiveness of lecturing (guiding student discussion, responding to questions, explaining and providing comments on student assignments), content organization and comprehensiveness, validity and fairness of testing, course design, and instructional materials (written course materials, lab manuals, audio visual resources, computer programs). In addition to this, many colleges/departments also evaluate the following: involvement on graduate advisory or examination committees, supervision of undergraduate and graduate student work, teaching dossier, and pedagogical research, publications, and presentations.

Conclusions should be based on evidence from documentation that has been provided and knowledge supported by a review of materials and classroom performance. The review should be comprehensive and comparative and focus on overall performance. "The review should culminate in a written summary that is thorough, grounded in evidence, and clear in its conclusions" (Van Note Chism, 1999, p. 34).

Based on the aspects that most colleges/departments listed for inclusion in peer evaluation of teaching, it can be concluded that these reviews are likely based on the evidence obtained during the evaluation process including both a review of materials and classroom performance. In most cases, the reviewer(s) prepares a written summary report which is then shared in full with the instructor.

A best practice is to ensure that the outcomes of the peer evaluation are shared with the teacher. This can be done in writing by the reviewer or by discussions with the reviewer or the department head or dean. Information gathered from peer evaluations (and evaluations from students) may form part of the information used by a department head or dean when advising candidates on their career progress. The advice can be formative and provide guidance on what is required to improve teaching effectiveness.

As mentioned above, the majority of colleges/departments share the outcomes of peer evaluations with the instructor. Depending on the college/department, a couple of different methods are used. For the most part, the written reports are automatically reviewed with the instructor by the reviewer(s) or the Department Head. In other cases, the instructor receives a copy of the written report and can make comments or request a meeting to discuss the results. Upon review of the written report, many colleges/departments require that the instructor sign the report to show that it has been reviewed and then the report is officially submitted to the Department Head or Dean's Office.

In addition to providing formative information for the instructors (i.e. improve teaching/provide feedback for instructors, improve course content, etc.), the large majority of colleges/departments also use the results of peer evaluation of teaching for summative purposes (i.e. tenure and promotion decisions).

Instruments for Peer Evaluation of Teaching

In addition to collecting information on peer evaluation of teaching practices through survey responses, it was also requested that copies of current instruments used for peer evaluation of teaching be submitted. The large majority of instruments used for peer evaluation of teaching appear to be entirely based on open-ended questions. However, the range and style of questions vary from one instrument to the next. For the instruments where questions with rating scales as responses are used, there is usually a section to include comments based on the response chosen for each question. In comparison to student evaluation of teaching instruments, the overall design for peer evaluation of teaching instruments offers more opportunity to personalize the feedback provided.

Conclusions for Peer Evaluation of Teaching

In conclusion, there are areas of peer evaluation of teaching where the University seems to be doing well in terms of the Criteria for Peer Evaluation (as outlined in the Framework for Peer Evaluation of Teaching at the University of Saskatchewan: Best Practices). Most colleges/departments have established a guide, checklist, or policies/procedures on peer evaluation of teaching. Based on the information collected, it appears that the majority of colleges/departments include various aspects of teaching in their reviews including both teaching materials and classroom performance. Following the peer evaluation process, most colleges/departments share the results with instructors in one form or another. These findings all fall in line with the Criteria for Peer Evaluation.

However, there are also areas where the information is less clear with respect to the Criteria for Peer Evaluation and may require improvement in order to be considered Best Practices. These areas include the number of reviewers assigned to a specific instructor for the peer evaluation process. Some colleges/departments specified the number of reviewers, but the majority did not. Information is also lacking with respect to the number of classroom performances observed and the specific course level chosen for the peer evaluation process. Finally, it's difficult to summarize the degree to which the reviews are comprehensive, comparative and focused on overall performance. Since many aspects of teaching are included in the process, it can be speculated that the conclusions of the reviews parallel the Criteria for Peer Evaluation.

Summary of Gaps for Peer Evaluation of Teaching

- Unclear to what extent the peer reviewer and instructor discuss the evaluation process in advance in terms of understanding their respective roles
- Information lacking on the number of reviewers assigned to a specific instructor and the number of classroom performances observed including the level of these courses
- Unclear whether the conclusions of peer evaluation of teaching are comprehensive, comparative, and focused on overall performance

General Findings **(Student Evaluation of Teaching)**

What is evaluated?

Most evaluate teaching and course content

How often evaluations conducted?

Most evaluate yearly (once/semester)

Policy on when/how conducted?

Most have policies/guidelines that they follow

Which courses evaluated?

Most evaluate "all" followed by "most" courses

Choose courses to evaluate?

For those who do not evaluate all courses, almost all leave the choice of which courses to evaluate up to the discretion of the individual instructor

Process for choosing courses?

For those who do not evaluate all courses, all leave the process for choosing courses up to the discretion of the individual instructor

Who is evaluated?

Most evaluate all instructors including: tenured professors, tenure track professors, sessional lecturers, adjunct faculty, and lab instructors

Other evaluations conducted?

Most evaluate the following: laboratory classes, team taught courses, graduate courses, clinical settings, tutorials

Who administers evaluations? How?

- Most evaluations distributed and collected by administrative staff and returned to the Department or Dean's Office for processing (for the most part instructor is not present)
- Some have the instructor/student volunteer distribute evaluations and the student collects forms (i.e. in sealed envelope) and returns to Department/Dean's office for processing

Who sees results of evaluations?

For the most part: Department Head, instructor being evaluated, Promotion and Tenure Review Committee, administrative staff

Format of results shared?

- Most share full-length results of evaluations but some share summary reports
- Most receive copies of student comments with student names removed

How evaluations used?

- Mostly formative purposes (improve teaching and course content/curriculum development)
- Also for summative purposes (tenure and promotion and salary review process)

Evaluations after processed?

- Majority of originals stored in Department Head's office (i.e. in instructor's personal file)
- Majority of copies kept by individual instructors
- Length of storage time uncertain (some store for a few years, then destroy i.e. shred)

Communicate results to students?

No formal process to communicate results to students

Opportunity for open-ended comments?

Almost all evaluations include open-ended questions and/or comments

Opportunity to evaluate programs?

Most provide opportunities to evaluate programs (i.e. with graduating class, recent graduates and through SPR process)

Accreditation processes/evaluation?

Slim majority have accreditation processes that require student evaluation of teaching (almost split evenly between yes and no)

Policy/person/committee oversees teaching evaluations?

- Most have Department Head or Committee oversee teaching evaluations
- Many have approved policies/guidelines

Current evaluation tool?

See copies of evaluation instruments

University-wide evaluation instrument?

- Majority are open to this idea
- Most "no" responses were from the College of Medicine (issue of relevance)

General Findings
(Peer Evaluation of Teaching)

Purpose of evaluations?

- Improve teaching/provide feedback for new and experienced instructors
- Improve course content
- Tenure and promotion

How often evaluations conducted?

- Yearly i.e. once/semester (before tenure and promotion decisions)
- Every 2-3 years for tenured professors (below rank of full professor)
- By request (full professors)

Who is evaluated?

- Tenure track professors
- Tenured professors (below rank of full professor)
- Sessional lecturers
- Lab instructors and clinicians

What is evaluated?

For the most part:

- Effectiveness of lecturing
- Content organization and comprehensiveness
- Validity and fairness of testing
- Course design
- Instructional materials

Also for:

- Involvement on graduate or advisory examination committees
- Supervision of undergrad/grad work
- Teaching dossier

Other evaluations conducted?

- Laboratory classes
- Team taught courses
- Graduate courses

What is the process followed?

- Majority conducted by Department Head or faculty of equal or higher academic rank
- Most follow established guidelines, attend lectures and provide a written report
- Most evaluators review written report with instructor and forward a copy to the Department Head

Who selects evaluators?

For the most part, the Department Head selects evaluators (sometimes in consultation with the instructor being evaluated)

Guide for evaluation?

Majority have a guide, checklist, or policies/procedures to follow

Format for evaluation (i.e. instrument)?

See copies of evaluation instruments

Results shared?

- Department Head
- Instructor being evaluated
- Promotion and Tenure Committees

Format of results shared?

- Almost all share full length report (evaluators review report with instructor and then sign)

Policy/person/committee oversees evaluations?

- Mostly Department Head or Dean
- Some don't have anyone who oversees peer evaluation of teaching

University-wide evaluation instrument?

- Majority are open to this idea
- Needs to be flexible to be relevant to all areas

Students' Evaluation of Educational Quality (SEEQ)

What is SEEQ?

- The Students' Evaluation of Educational Quality (SEEQ) is an instrument used to obtain student feedback on teaching quality and effectiveness. SEEQ provides an empirical basis to evaluate teaching and recognizes the complex and multidimensional nature of teaching.
- The survey comprises items grouped into nine dimensions of teaching (learning, enthusiasm, organization, group interaction, individual rapport, breadth, examinations, assignments, and overall) allowing faculty to pin-point specific areas of teaching quality.
- The SEEQ is an easy way to obtain feedback on teaching with demonstrated effectiveness in improving teaching quality and students' learning experience. It also increases student involvement in the education process.
- It's a professional evaluation summary that will facilitate recognition of outstanding teaching and can be included in a Teaching Portfolio by staff applying for promotion or accelerated incremental progression.

Who developed SEEQ?

- SEEQ was developed by Herbert Marsh of the University of Western Sydney in the late 1970's and unveiled in the British Journal of Educational Psychology in 1982.
- The SEEQ instrument is in the public domain, and its use by universities is free of charge. SEEQ is currently used by two universities in Canada (Manitoba and St. Mary's) and several universities around the world (i.e. University College Dublin, Australian National University, Western Sydney, Curtin, Penn State, Syracuse, and Maryland) including non-English speaking universities.

Reliability/Validity of SEEQ

- The SEEQ instrument has been exhaustively researched and tested and is acknowledged in the international arena of educational research for its validity and reliability.
- Specifically, statistical tests repeated over 13 years, with responses from approximately 50,000 courses and almost 1 million students in a wide range of disciplines at both the undergraduate and graduate levels have shown that the SEEQ measures what the researchers intended it to measure, and it can be counted on to make the same measurement from one administration to the next.

SEEQ Questions

- The standardized questions in SEEQ (1-32) were developed based on the following: interviews with faculty and students concerning what constituted effective teaching; replies from faculty on what information is needed for effective feedback to improve teaching; a review of questions in other widely used student questionnaires; an analysis of responses students wrote about courses and teaching in open-minded questions.
- Supplemental questions can be added to the SEEQ instrument to complement the standardized instrument.
- The back side of the answer sheet also includes space for students to include open-ended comments on any topics the instructor may think appropriate.

Flexibility of SEEQ Instrument

- Supplemental questions provide flexibility for SEEQ and allow instructors to adapt the instrument to gain feedback on further aspects of teaching that are not covered by the standardized items.
- Questions can be chosen from SEEQ Item Banks containing a wide range of survey items that can be used to obtain feedback on particular discipline areas or unique aspects of a course (i.e. diverse contexts of teaching such as unit content, delivery mode including online and distance education, or resourcing that might impact on teaching). These questions can be printed on the back of the SEEQ instrument.

SEEQ Item banks

- The main SEEQ Item Bank can be accessed on the University of Western Sydney's website by clicking on "SEEQ Item Bank" at www.uws.edu.au/about/adminorg/academic/edc/evaluation/teaching/seeq. Item Bank categories include: the unit and its organization, unit components, assessment, group work, practical/skills classes, clinical sessions, field placement, online learning, teaching methods, equity issues, resources and the learning environment, students, student's own view of their learning, the teacher, computing & information technology skills, and a miscellaneous category.
- Another SEEQ Item Bank can be accessed at lsn.curtin.edu.au/seeq/package/package1.html on the Curtin University website. Item Bank categories include: self-directed learning and multimedia, computer-based laboratory teaching and learning, laboratory work in science, laboratory teaching in nursing, studio work in art and design, education practicum supervision, clinical teaching and learning, distance education, tutorial, on-line teaching and learning, and a postgraduate supervision questionnaire.

What is SEEQ used for?

- The recommended uses for SEEQ include:
 - Formative evaluation: questions 1-29 provide diagnostic feedback for faculty about the effectiveness of their teaching that will be useful in improvement of teaching.
 - Summative evaluation: questions 30-32 provide a measure of overall teaching effectiveness that can be used in personnel decisions because they are the most reliable indicators.
 - Information for students to use in the selection of courses and instructors.
 - An outcome or a process description for research on teaching.

Who administers SEEQ?

- Evaluations are conducted by SEEQ Administrators (designated person other than the instructor)
- Students complete the SEEQ survey anonymously with the instructor not present
- Completed evaluation forms are placed in a sealed envelope signed by the SEEQ Administrator and returned to the College/Department office.
- SEEQ Coordinators in each College/Department are then responsible for sending all completed forms to a central location for processing (i.e. Information Technology Services).
- Responses are machine-scored with all forms (for each course/section) accompanied with a summary report returned to the College/Department.
- Department Heads review results and send originals back to instructors and file summary report.
- The instructor will only receive results from the survey, including open-ended responses written by students, after the assessment period is finished.

When is SEEQ administered?

- SEEQ is administered for ALL courses/sections each time they are offered (in all academic sessions).
- Evaluations administered near the end of the term have been found to be most effective because students have an overview of the teaching and learning experiences by that time.
- Recommended to administer the survey as closely as possible to the final week of classes to maximize the reliability of students' responses.

SEEQ Results and Summary Report

- SEEQ results should be processed/analyzed centrally (i.e. Information Technology Services).

- This allows for tracking of all courses for which SEEQ evaluations were not conducted (missing report).
- Results should include an overall university summary as well as a breakdown by College/Department.
- Report should include a summary (numbers and percentages for all response options) for all questions.

Interpretation of SEEQ Results

- SEEQ statistical data are designed to measure teaching effectiveness for an individual instructor, not teaching effectiveness within a unit or across an institution. Therefore, Deans/Directors/Department Heads should not explicitly rank instructors relative to one another.
- In performance evaluations, avoid saying: Prof A ranks 4th among the instructors teaching a given course or Prof A is the best (or worst) instructor. Instead, say the following: The average score on question 32 is 3.7, the range for all instructors is 2.8 to 4.9, Prof A's score is 4.0 (this puts the instructor's score in a context that makes the score meaningful i.e. is the score in the "acceptable range" within the unit).
- No anonymous material can be used in the performance evaluation of an instructor except for the aggregated statistical data (open-ended comments written by students on SEEQ forms are considered anonymous unless the student signs the form).

Communication of SEEQ Results to Students

- SEEQ provides results that are available for public scrutiny.
- Make results available in central locations on campus and online.