

CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, EAST BAY

DESIGNATION CODE: 07-08 BEC 14

DATE SUBMITTED: May 21, 2008

TO: The Academic Senate  
FROM: The Executive Committee of the Academic Senate  
SUBJECT: Online Student Evaluations  
PURPOSE: For Action by the Academic Senate

**ACTION**

**REQUESTED:** That the Academic Senate approve the use of the Scantron online evaluation tool in online courses for 2008-09, and voluntarily in traditional courses; effective Fall 2008

**BACKGROUND**

**INFORMATION:** Faculty and administrators at CSUEB have been discussing the use of online evaluation tools, both to facilitate student evaluations in online courses and to address concerns raised in traditional classes. On April 30<sup>th</sup>, a number of faculty, including members of 2007-08 FAC, attended a demonstration of the Scantron online course evaluation tool. AVP for Academic Programs Carl Bellone reported that here are several big advantages with Scantron:

- It is a very good solution for online evaluations
- It allows for paper evaluations, so no one has to do an online evaluation
- We don't have to change any of our questions
- Faculty can choose, as they do now, which courses they want evaluated
- Departments can add questions of their own if they wish
- The results come back with the data analyzed instead of the green bar sheets
- It should cut the processing time dramatically
- It is the least expensive option we could find
- It could be used for other survey purposes not connected to course evaluations

Although there was considerable enthusiasm for the product among FAC members and others, it was not possible for FAC to consider the issue this year. In addition, in March a joint task force composed of representatives from the Statewide Academic Senate, CFA, and the CSU administration released a Report on Student Evaluations of Teaching. The product of six months work, the report includes recommendations for the design, conduct, and use of student evaluations. At its meeting of May 6, the Executive Committee agreed to refer the report to the 2008-09 FAC with a request for a systematic review of our policies, procedures, and practices for possible modification by the 2008-09 Academic Senate. A draft referral letter was approved at ExCom's meeting on May 20<sup>th</sup>. As part of this review FAC will consider general use of the Scantron system or other software products.

However, the problem of providing effective and confidential student evaluation of teaching in online courses remains unresolved and there is some urgency in adopting a more functional system. Since the Scantron system appears to be a useful solution, at its meeting on May 20 the Executive Committee agreed to support a proposal to authorize use of this system in online courses for the 2008-09 academic year.