SUBJECT: Student Opinion Surveys of Faculty Instruction
NUMBER: 2:8

1. Purpose

This policy and its procedures set forth the SDBOR requirements regarding student opinion surveys of faculty instruction and provide standardized procedures for administration of the survey.

2. Policy

The current agreement between the South Dakota Board of Regents and the Council of Higher Education requires that every faculty member be evaluated annually. The major purposes of the evaluation are to determine the level of performance relative to established standards, to assess progress toward promotion and/or tenure, and to inform annual salary decisions. (Section XII 12.2.1). In regard to student opinion surveys and their relationship to evaluations, the agreement states that “the evaluation…will include student opinion surveys…if the faculty unit member’s duties include teaching.” (Section XII 12.2.3).

   a. The University, as directed by the SDBOR, requires the use of the IDEA Student Ratings of Instruction as the student opinion survey to facilitate the evaluation of faculty. Colleges have the option to select the short form (Agriculture & Biological Sciences, Arts and Sciences, Nursing, and Pharmacy), or long form (Engineering, Education and Human Sciences, University College). Faculty from Colleges that have chosen to use the short form may elect to use the diagnostic (long) form.

   b. Tenure-track faculty will administer the survey for all courses, that is, every semester in every section of every course during every term. The only exemption for tenure-track faculty is for a multiple section course when multiple sections are taught by the same faculty member. In this situation a student opinion survey does not need to be administered in every section of a multiple section course. The supervising administrator will designate which section(s) of a multi-section course will be given student opinion surveys. This decision is made by the supervising administrator anytime during the term.

   c. Lecturers and repeating term faculty will administer the diagnostic/short form in at least one section of every course each year.

   d. Tenured faculty will administer the diagnostic/short form in every section in a given semester at least once every three years.
e. Part-time and occasional term faculty will administer the diagnostic/short form as needed.

f. Department heads, deans, or the vice-president for academic affairs may require the survey of any course.

g. The e-IDEA may be used by departments although due to poor response rates, it is strongly advised that tenure-track faculty use the paper format for maximum responses. Faculty who will be applying for promotion to full professor may also opt to use paper versions so as to have valid IDEA scores to report.

h. The Provost and VPAA may approve course exemptions from the evaluation process (thesis, dissertation, independent study, clinical sections, special topics, capstone, practicum, student teaching, etc.).

i. Sections with fewer than ten (10) students enrolled at the time the IDEA instrument is to be administered will be exempt from data collection unless specifically requested by the faculty member.

j. Regardless of the rotation employed for administering the long or short form according to instructor professional rank, the University must provide students an opportunity to provide written comments in a confidential manner.

3. Procedures

a. Through discussion at the departmental level between the department head and faculty member, the rotation schedule (frequency of administration) will be determined.

b. If a faculty member from Agriculture & Biological Sciences, Arts and Sciences, Nursing or Pharmacy wishes to administer the long (diagnostic) form, the request should be made through the department to the Office of Academic Evaluation and Assessment at the beginning of the semester.

c. The IDEA Survey should be administered during the last three weeks of class instruction prior to finals week and at the beginning of the class period. Classes that end earlier (short courses, e.g. CM 101, ENTR 203) should administer the survey in the last week of classes. It is important to provide students with sufficient time to complete these surveys confidentially.

d. A designated person other than the faculty member will remain in the classroom and will distribute and collect the survey, place them in a sealed envelope, and deliver them to the designated office.

e. The faculty member is not present in the classroom when students are completing the survey. The faculty member must be available to begin class once survey are completed and collected.

f. The Provost and VPAA has approved the following general course exemptions from IDEA survey:
i. Those with fewer than ten students enrolled (unless requested by faculty member or supervisor.)

ii. Those with the following prefix/number or number series:
   1. Independent Study 491, 591, 691, 791, 891
   2. Master’s Research Problem/Project 788
   3. Thesis 798
   4. Dissertation 898

   g. The Provost and VPAA has approved alternative survey instruments for clinical or individualized instruction. Courses with approved alternative instruments include:
      i. Nursing: all clinical courses
      ii. Music: all courses with a MUAP or MUEN prefix
      iii. Medical Laboratory Science: all clinical practice courses

   h. All courses must provide students an opportunity to provide written comments in a confidential manner. For those courses with the prefix/number or number series indicated below, instructors may elect to use the IDEA survey or the approved open ended questions in the Student Comments Option for Student Opinion Surveys form located in the UPPM Appendix. However, one of these two forms of assessment must be made available to students.
      i. Activity Courses:
         SPCM 281, Speech and Debate Activities
         THEA 135, Theatre Activities-Acting
         THEA 145, Theatre Activities-Technical
         MCOM 144/344, Mass Communications Activities
      ii. Student Teaching (488 series)
      iii. Special Topics 492/592/692/792 (If more than 9)
      iv. Internship 494/594/794
      v. Practicum 495/595/695/795/895
      vi. Field Experience 496/596/796/896
      vii. Cooperative Education 497
      viii. Undergraduate Research/Scholarship 498
      ix. Directed Study PHA 700
      x. Practice Experience PHA 701-780
      xi. Nursing Education Practicum 778
      xii. International Experience or Study Abroad 482/582

4. Responsible Administrator

The Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs, successor, or designee is responsible for annual and ad hoc review of this policy and its procedures. The University President is responsible for approval of modifications to this policy and its procedures.

SOURCE: Approved by President on 10/02/2013.
Revised Approved by President on 04/21/2014.