

UNH FACULTY SENATE
MOTION # XVII-M16

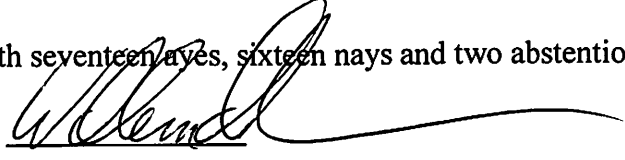
on electronic web-based evaluation for all courses

1. Motion presenter: Barbara White on behalf of the Teaching Evaluation Form Implementation Committee
2. Dates of Faculty Senate discussion: 4/15/2013 and 4/29/2013
3. Motion: To make a gradual transition from paper/pencil-based evaluation to electronic web-based evaluation for all courses over a time period sufficient to establish comparability between the methods. Once comparability has been assessed, changes or additions to the question set will be explored (through field testing). Departments and other academic units for the pilot will be selected by consultation between department chairs and deans, as to which departments and programs participate in the pilot. For compelling reasons, in keeping with current policies on exemptions, individual faculty may request of their chair an exemption from the pilot. Such a request must be approved by the dean.
4. Rationale: The ad hoc committee charged with revising the teaching evaluations for UNH courses has, after careful consideration and study, defined two critical issues upon which we need to make decisions. The first is how to make a transition to on-line delivery. It is the committee's opinion that UNH will likely ask us to move in this direction and that the faculty has the opportunity now to shape how this transition occurs. The second issue before the committee is revision of the questions asked in the evaluation. Heeding expert advice and suggestions given to the committee, we recommend that each of these important issues be handled separately. Due to the timely need of moving to web-based course evaluations for e-UNH courses, we recommend handling web-based evaluations first. The recommended time to assess transition effects on the different method of evaluation is four semesters. Once we have an assessment plan implemented for web-based course evaluations, we will, in the next year, present suggestions on evaluation questions to the senate.

The committee, by a vote of seven to one, agreed to bring this motion forward to the senate, based on the following factors. (1) The committee sought feedback from all faculty on the following question. "For the evaluation of traditional 'face to face' classes, would you favor a move to a fully on-line course evaluation system, providing the following two conditions could be met, that student completion of the form would be at or above current levels and that assurance of confidentiality would be at or above current levels?" Though there were some departments and individuals that stated that they did not support such a move, a majority of the faculty and departments that responded to the question were in favor of the transition to web-based teacher evaluations. (2) Based on consultations with various UNH faculty, staff and administrators with expertise in fields related to surveys and teaching excellence, as well as research provided by the team working on teacher evaluations for e-UNH courses, the committee concluded that the overall quality of evaluation responses would not be diminished by a move to a web-based system. (3) The primary concern faculty expressed about web-based teacher evaluations was centered on completion rates. The committee concluded that there were several models of incentives used, by institutions around the country for web-based teacher evaluations, that could easily be utilized by UNH to achieve acceptable results within the range of the current completion rate (76%). Some incentives (that the

student does not receive the grade until the evaluation has been completed, for example) can assure a near 100% completion. (4) Web-based evaluation systems offer far greater flexibility to easily construct sets of questions that can include university-wide questions, college-wide questions and questions specific to course categories (Discovery, Inquiry, large survey classes, etc.). Most faculty members are in favor of having a system with this amount of flexibility. There is no cost effective way this can be achieved using a paper system. (5) Web-based systems make it far easier for instructors to create and execute their own questions. (6) Web-based systems allow teachers of courses as well as chairs and administrators easily and quickly to analyze the course evaluation data in multiple ways. (7) Research has not revealed that confidentiality is in any way compromised when utilizing a web-based evaluation system. (8) Though there may not be a drop in the overall cost of a web-based system, from a sustainability viewpoint the elimination of the paper and energy used for the current system will be substantial.

5. Senate action: passed with ~~seventeen~~ ^{sixteen} ayes, sixteen nays and two abstentions

6. Senate chair's signature: 

- Forwarded to: President Mark Huddleston, on 5-7-2013
- Forwarded to: Provost John Aber, on 5-7-2013
- Forwarded to: Lisa MacFarlane, Senior Vice Provost for Academic Affairs, on 5-7-2013
- Forwarded to: Kathy Forbes, Registrar, on 5-7-2013
- Forwarded to: all college deans, on 5-7-2013, on email
- Forwarded to: all department chairs, on 5-7-2013