UH Course Evaluation System
Questions & Concerns – revised Oct 15, 2016

*__**It is important to note that this document summarizes the questions, concerns and recommendations of some of the HawCC faculty. It does not attempt to document support for this change.__*

UH Course Evaluation System Memorandum

"It allows students to provide feedback on their learning experiences which faculty can use to inform their teaching practices, to evaluate new teaching methods and techniques, and to demonstrate teaching effectiveness."
- <u>Request:</u> How will the results be handled for courses that are taught by teams of faculty?

"Program directors /department chairs can also use this data in aggregated form to evaluate curriculum and program effectiveness."
- <u>Concern:</u> Feedback collected does NOT provide a sound "assessment" of learning nor effectiveness of the teacher or program. Thus, the ACCJC requires the college to conduct proper assessment of student's achievement in the course learning outcomes. eCAFE and CES are indirect assessment tools and the analyses or conclusions drawn from the results must be placed into context and considered only as a secondary source of information that can complement and provide additional insight to the direct primary evidence of student learning, based on their performance in learning-outcome assessments.
- <u>Concern:</u> Students cannot be forced to respond and thus response rates are generally poor causing the resulting data to be biased.
- <u>Concern:</u> Results of the survey cannot be verified as accurate and thus cannot be considered statistically valid data.
- <u>Concern:</u> How is the program or department determined/assigned? Students from many programs can be enrolled into 1 course. Are the program questions tied to the course or the student? For example, ENG 100 serves many programs. Which program director or department chairs will have access to the CES results of this course? Will they be able to see all data for the course or just the data from the students in their program who took this course?
- <u>Request:</u> Please clarify how program directors /department chairs will "use this data in aggregated form to evaluate curriculum and program effectiveness".
- Also see related requests and concerns below.

"CES will contain up to four distinct tiers, which will be customizable at the campus level: 1) Campus Questions, II) College/School/Division Questions, III) Course/Department/Program Questions, and IV) Faculty Questions."
- <u>Request:</u> Please clarify who will write each tier of questions. Will there be a bank of questions available to choose from? Will the questions focus on said tiers? Or will representatives from each tier design their own questions?
- <u>Request:</u> Will online and vidcon courses have the same questions as face to face courses?

- <u>Request:</u> Please clarify "campuses". Would Palamanui be considered a separate campus?
- <u>Request:</u> Please clarify if tiers I-III will be integrated into each course survey, or if each tier will be its own independent survey.
- <u>Concern:</u> If tiers I-III are integrated into every course survey, multiple concerns arise which include...
  - Biased data collection by sampling from the same individual multiple times, who may not provide consistent results and will artificially skew the data.
  - Survey fatigue by students, answering the same repetitive questions of tiers I-III.
  - An inability for students to distinguish between the tiers and the frustrations about different tiers affect the faculty's results for their course.
- <u>Recommendation:</u> Seeing as the new system reaches beyond the scope of course evaluation, perhaps the name of the system should be revised to reflect the true nature of the system. Otherwise, a course evaluation should focus on the course alone.
- <u>Concern:</u> Students should not be held accountable for anything beyond the faculty/course level.

"It is mobile friendly so faculty can ask students to complete the evaluation on the last day of class on their phones or tablets as well as laptops. Given students' extensive embrace of mobile technology, this is expected to increase student response rates."
- <u>Concern:</u> Some faculty prefer an ability to have a paper version, as they see more participation by students with this format.

"All credit courses that last three or more weeks will be automatically assessed, thus assuring students the opportunity to provide meaningful feedback on all their courses."
- <u>Request:</u> Please clarify how the system will identify which students will be assessed. NOTE: Implementation plan states *"Two weeks prior to the last day of classes, ITS will send a CES link to all students registered in credit courses. Subsequent reminder emails will be sent to those students who do not complete the assessment within a certain period of time."* Thus, students who withdraw from the courses prior to opening CES for each semester will not be able to participate?

"Faculty and unit chairs will receive results of tiers I-IV. Aggregated results from tiers I-III will be shared with others, on campus according to campus-specific policies and procedures"
- <u>Request:</u> Please clarify who *"others"* are.
- <u>Request:</u> Please provide additional information about how the data will be aggregated.
- <u>Request:</u> Please clarify how each tier will be evaluated.
- <u>Concern:</u> Department and division chairs are generally not considered to be a "supervisory" position concerning other faculty. This sets a precedent whereby a colleague, who happens to be in a "chair" role has access to student feedback concerning another faculty within the department or division.
- <u>Concern:</u> Although results will be aggregated, there is a concern of confidentiality and due process. When a course has 1 instructor (faculty or lecturer), the CES is then essentially a faculty observation.
- <u>Concern:</u> There are no guidelines on how Division or Department Chairs are to use this information. Are chairs supposed to read the evaluations and/or take action on the data in any way, and if so, how?

- Concern: As division and department chairs change, who safeguards this sensitive information? In the end, who owns it and controls what is done with it?
- Concern: If the primary purpose of student evaluations is to help faculty improve their teaching, then this policy change may be counter-productive. The results are delivered each semester, without the context and faculty explanation which would enable others to accurately understand and interpret it.
- Concern: There is a difference in framing evaluative questions appropriate for program review and those appropriate for evaluating the quality of teaching.

"It is expected that Chief Academic Officers determine the optimal implementation timeline for each campus and ascertain what types of support needs to be provided to ensure a smooth transition from the previous evaluation system(s)."
- Information is requested about who specifically the *"Chief Academic Officers"* are on our campus.

Implementation Plan for the UH Course Evaluation System (CES)

"6. Faculty will be able to view the percentage of students who have completed CES by logging on to the CES website and are encouraged to provide time at the end of the final day of instruction to allow students to complete CES in class via laptops or other mobile devices, if they have not done so already. This is intended to increase student response rates."
- Concern: Faculty should not be present while students are completing the survey to avoid coercion by faculty to influence the results of the survey.

Other

- Concern: Full evaluation and mitigation of the impacts of the UH CES is impossible without additional information such as the specific questions that will be asked and how the data will be used.
- Recommendation: Time should be given for all effected parties to review and comment on the specific questions prior to implementation.

- Request: Please confirm or clarify the list below specifically detailing how CES is different from eCAFE.
  - CES is mobile friendly for students to use with cell phones, tablets or laptops.
  - CES is not optional, all courses will be automatically assessed.
  - CES will contain questions for students to comment on the department, program or college level.
  - CES results are shared with faculty chairs and unit chairs.
  - CES aggregated results are shared with "others" on campus.

- Request: Please identify which policies and procedures relate to this process.
  - UH BOR Executive policy 9.203 clearly delineates the locus of control for faculty evaluation at campus-level, noting "Faculty review procedures will be developed and maintained by the University Chancellors for their respective campuses" (UH Manoa Senate)

- o UH BOR Policy 1.210 assigns duly authorized campus faculty organizations the "responsibility to speak for the faculty on academic policy matters such as… 1. the initiation, review, and evaluation of instructional, and academic programs; 4. evaluation of faculty…;" (UH Manoa Senate)

- o <u>Concern:</u> Identification of relevant HawCC policies is difficult to ascertain as it is unclear as to the scope of each tier, especially questions regarding the campus.

- <u>Concern:</u> All concerns stated in the UH Manoa's faculty senate resolution opposing the UH system CES are also concerns of some of the HawCC faculty.

- <u>Recommendation:</u> To assess campus matters, administration should find another method of collecting meaningful, unbiased and statistically valid data.