

Course Evaluation Solution

CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, NORTHRIDGE (CSUN) OFFERS AROUND 6,000 CLASSES EACH TERM, EXCLUDING EXTENSION CLASSES, TO A STUDENT BODY OF ABOUT 34,000. THE UNIVERSITY, WHICH HOSTS 3,900 FACULTY AND STAFF, IS RECOGNIZED AS ONE OF THE LEADING INSTITUTIONS IN TEACHER PREPARATION. THE FACULTY CONTRACT REQUIRES THAT INSTRUCTORS BE EVALUATED AT LEAST ONCE EACH YEAR, WHERE EACH DEPARTMENT DETERMINES HOW MANY CLASSES WILL BE EVALUATED FOR EACH INSTRUCTOR. OVERALL, BETWEEN 70,000 AND 100,000 EVALUATION FORMS ARE PRODUCED EACH TERM.

Challenge

- Transition from paper to online faculty evaluations
- Different evaluation forms across multiple academic departments
- Gathering an acceptable response rate
- Evaluations took months to process

CSUN has approximately 80 different evaluation forms that are used to evaluate instructors across 60 separate academic departments. Previously, the university had never conducted online evaluations, primarily because most members of the faculty were skeptical that there would be an acceptable response rate.

The Class Climate solution was powerful enough to change that thinking, however. “Our Faculty Senate accepted the notion that we should explore the concept of conducting these evaluations online,” says Daveen Kay, project manager, California State University, Northridge.

The previous faculty evaluation software was a home-grown program which ran on an IBM[®] mainframe. In December 2003, the mainframe computer was removed, leaving the university searching for new evaluation software. CSUN considered outsourcing the faculty evaluations to another university and evaluated the offerings of several other colleges, other local service vendors, as well as those of software vendors.

“We were immediately impressed by Class Climate, because (1) our academic departments each insisted on controlling the sets of questions posed for the classes in their departments and (2) our Faculty Senate insisted that we have an easy way to transition from paper forms to online questionnaires in the future,” says Kay.

Solution

- All templates and forms were created quickly and easily
- Over 70,000 evaluations were completed, returned and scanned in only three weeks
- A pilot of online evaluations was conducted



In February 2005, CSUN adopted Class Climate for the purpose of conducting the faculty evaluations for that semester. The equipment and software were installed the same month, all 80 evaluation templates were created on the system in March, and over 70,000 paper evaluation forms were printed before the first of April. The spring semester evaluation was largely conducted using paper evaluation forms. CSUN also conducted a pilot of online evaluations for six instructors.

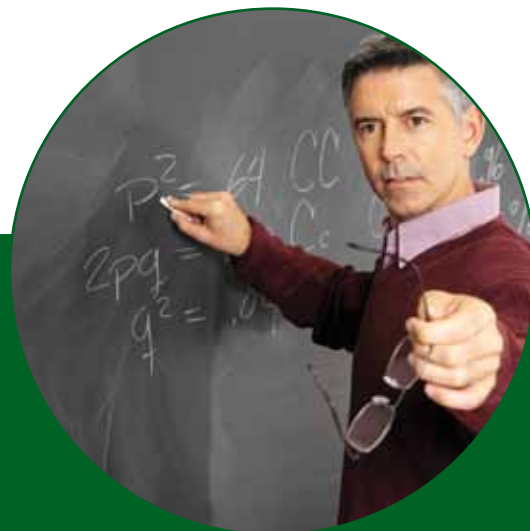
According to Kay, "All the evaluations were completed, returned, and scanned over a three week period, and the evaluation summary reports were printed and distributed to each department. This was the shortest period of time that it has ever taken the campus to complete the course/faculty evaluations—and it was only our first time using Class Climate."

Results

Based on this successful first implementation, CSUN launched another major project using Class Climate later in 2005. Each semester, the College of Education evaluates the field and classroom work of all teaching candidates. Each teaching and nursing candidate is evaluated by a university evaluator and at least one field supervisor, either a master teacher or a nursing supervisor. All evaluations were previously administered using paper forms. During the summer semester, a pilot project was created to evaluate all teaching candidates solely using online evaluations through Class Climate. In the fall term, every student teaching and nursing evaluation was conducted online using Class Climate software.

In conjunction with the Student-Teaching project, the College of Education developed more than 40 new assessment forms in Class Climate that will be used to help assess the overall effectiveness of all teacher preparation programs at the university. These forms will be used online, with the results tabulated and placed into the campus data warehouse for future assessment and accreditation review.

"The ease with which we can develop new evaluation forms and modify system processes is what has enabled us to quickly deploy this technology to our advantage", says Kay. She adds, "We have been able to easily work with this product and Scantron has been more than willing to incorporate most of our many suggestions into the newest release of their software. Forms creation is user-friendly, click and drag, regardless of the types of questions asked."



"THE RELATIVE EFFORTLESSNESS IN PERFORMING ALL TYPES OF EVALUATIONS WITH CLASS CLIMATE HAS GIVEN CAL STATE UNIVERSITY, NORTHRIDGE THE FLEXIBILITY TO DEVELOP AND GROW ALL MANNER OF EVALUATION PROGRAMS, BOTH PAPER AND ONLINE, INTO THE FUTURE. WE ARE VERY HAPPY THAT WE PURCHASED THE CLASS CLIMATE SYSTEM AND HAPPILY RECOMMEND IT TO OTHERS."

DAVEEN KAY, *PROJECT MANAGER*
CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, NORTHRIDGE

Please visit us at www.scantron.com/classclimate for a complete overview of Class Climate's system requirements or call us at (800) 722-6876 for more information.