

## Course Evaluation Solution

LOCATED ABOUT 25 MILES WEST OF PORTLAND, PACIFIC UNIVERSITY ENROLLS MORE THAN 2,700 STUDENTS. THE PRIVATE LIBERAL ARTS AND HEALTH PROFESSIONS UNIVERSITY USES CLASS CLIMATE TO CONDUCT MORE THAN 75,000 COURSE EVALUATIONS ANNUALLY, SAVING MORE THAN 160 HOURS IN STAFF TIME WHILE INCREASING DATA ACCURACY AND ACCOUNTABILITY.

### Challenge

- Processed 15,000 course evaluations taking 160 hours annually using tedious process
- Data accuracy was compromised because of reliance on students to enter course information correctly
- Manual processes for evaluations and reports were time-consuming
- Required both manual and online evaluations

Pacific University processed over 15,000 course evaluations annually using a rigid system of pre-printed forms and a scanner. Each class has a unique course number. Because the questionnaires were standard for all classes, the students entered course information. If the course number was marked incorrectly or omitted, data accuracy and reliability was compromised.

Many campus groups had a vested interest in the survey results. Course evaluations were used by the personnel committee, instructors and administrators for faculty reviews and content improvement.

“We knew the system was flawed but, to change a key practice like course evaluations, many parties had to be consulted,” said Lee M. Colaw, chief information officer and director of university information services for Pacific University.

Pacific University conducted an eye-opening 18-month study that revealed administrative staff spent weeks checking completed forms for errors. More than 160 hours annually were spent pre-processing questionnaires — erasing stray marks, darkening light marks and double checking course codes — before the forms were scanned. Yet, without this time-consuming pre-process, staff found the course evaluation results were largely inaccurate. Once the forms were scanned, the results were photocopied and distributed in hard-copy reports across campus.

“Course evaluations were time consuming, but that was the only way with our old system,” said Colaw.

### Solution

- Course information is imported from student management system and printed directly on forms to increase data accuracy
- Processing completed within hours, not weeks
- Reports automatically generated and emailed to faculty and administrators
- Processing 75,000 paper and online evaluations annually



Once Pacific University realized the course evaluation process not only wasted time but was questionably accurate, it adopted the Class Climate course evaluation system.

With the semester end looming, the university immediately implemented the system — even before the software training. “Due to our own scheduling mistake, we had only 24 hours to put out evaluations and we hadn’t even loaded the software,” said Colaw. “We called Scantron and input the first form within 30 minutes. By the next day, we produced and distributed over 5,000 questionnaires. The ease of use was amazing. We found the interface to be intuitive and, before our training, we were up and running.”

Students, staff, faculty and administrators benefit from Class Climate’s ease of use. Processing is completed within hours, not weeks. The system generates results automatically and immediately emails reports to the personnel committee, instructors and administrators to provide data for faculty reviews and course assessment.

“I became a supporter of Class Climate based on the quality of the system,” said Connie Taylor, executive assistant to the dean of arts and sciences. “The old system was supposed to be automated but with all the preparation we did with the physical forms before scanning, it was more of a manual process. This has been a complete revolution from the way we were processing before. Plus, the support from Scantron has been phenomenal.”

Pacific University currently uses Class Climate to handle 75,000 course evaluations annually. Questionnaires are easily created and generated on paper or online. Now, the university controls accuracy by including course numbers directly on the forms before distribution. After the questionnaires are returned, the results are immediately distributed in a variety of formats.

### Results

“With Class Climate, all our problems just vanished. The course evaluation process is streamlined, flexible and accurate,” said Colaw.

Since implementing Class Climate, data accuracy and accountability have increased. Course delivery and content have improved. Problems and management issues are addressed in a timely manner. Litigation surrounding faculty evaluations has decreased. Administrative staff saves more than 160 hours annually. The IT department is praised for the system and the campus is confident with the data accuracy.

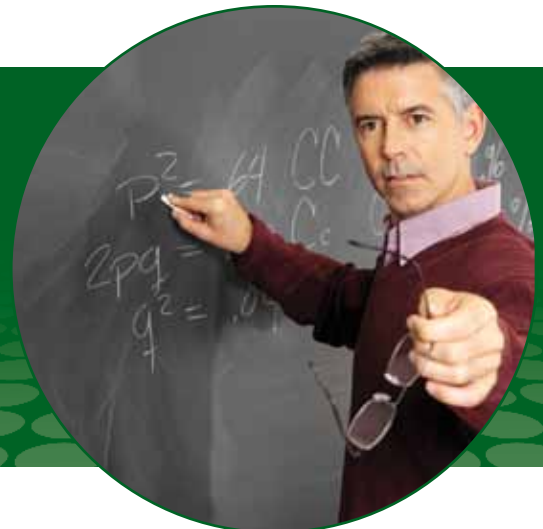
“The faculty care about accuracy,” said Colaw. “With this system, they can double check the numbers and find they are correct. Now they endorse the process.”

In addition, Class Climate brings significant benefits to the campus IT department. “Class Climate adds no overhead to our IT infrastructure. It doesn’t require dedicated servers. It has no impact on network reliability,” said Colaw. “Because it’s so easy to use, it reduces help desk calls for service. We’ve had

no technical issues. It’s easy to maintain, and Scantron’s product manuals and training are exceptional.”

Pacific University expects to process 100,000 evaluations in fall 2007 and plans to expand Class Climate to other departments as its needs grow. It also plans to use data generated by Class Climate for upcoming accreditation reports.

“Many campuses think the amount of time and energy dedicated to course evaluations is insignificant,” said Colaw. “However, staff who process evaluations are often reluctant to tell administrators how much time and labor are involved because they fear it reflects poorly on their performance. At Pacific University, no one realized staff wasted 160 hours annually just pre-processing forms. Automating course evaluations can produce significant savings, and improve the process and results in countless ways.”



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LEE M. COLAW  
CHIEF INFORMATION OFFICER  
PACIFIC UNIVERSITY

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