



December 17, 2015

To: Jose Wudka, Chair  
Riverside Division

From: David Lo, Chair  
Graduate Council

RE: Request for Review: Changes to iEval

At the December 10<sup>th</sup> Graduate Council meeting the Council discussed the request to consider five changes to student teaching evaluations; our response is listed below. In general, there was broad agreement that the number of questions in iEval forms is far too numerous to promote reliable and attentive responses from students, and that the total number should be reduced to approximately ten questions, focused only on specific issues of instructor performance and success in achieving learning objectives.

1) Consider expanding the number of choices on Likert scale from five to seven.

The Council unanimously disagreed with expanding the number of choices from five to seven on the Likert scale. The addition of more points on the scale might provide the potential for more range in the metrics, but there was general agreement that this did not actually provide any specifically useful new information and would instead promote a false sense of precision.

2) Consider rewording the current item about supplemental materials to exclude specifically electronic resources and, at the same time, adding one or two items specifically to address the use of this kind of technology in the classroom.

The Council was in favor of rewording the current item about supplemental materials to exclude specifically electronic resources and, at the same time, adding an item specifically to address the use of this kind of technology in the classroom. This will make it easier to get more specific information on the use of teaching materials.

3) Consider removing most or all of the items related to student behaviors and attitudes. (Assuming that data from these items will not be disaggregated nor used in a more refined way.)

The Council felt it could be important to continue the inclusion of student behaviors and attitudes on the evaluation but suggested putting those questions in another section of the evaluation so that numbers are not misinterpreted. Responses from questions such as these may provide information on the classroom environment but might not be appropriately tied to faculty

teaching ability and so it should be explicit that this is not an assessment relevant to merit and promotion reviews.

4) Consider removing some items about instructor behavior and course materials.

The Council was not in favor of removing items about instructor behavior and course material, as these might be considered among the questions most relevant to the instructor's performance.

5) Consider removing the five items where the text of the question is not provided.

The Council agreed that it made sense to remove the five items where the text of the question is not provided. This option seems to be rarely used since the evaluations are automated electronic surveys and information generated from such specialized questions might not help in overall course evaluations.