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## Faculty Senate: Course Evaluation Question Set Concerns

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Taine- Please distribute the following to the Faculty Senate.

Good afternoon, Faculty Senators-

Today I am reaching out to you to provide some clarity and background on the question set change and transition to eXplorance Blue as our course evaluation software provider.

The original question set in Smart Evals generated many complaints from as early as my first days as Director of Assessment. Accordingly, it was the subject of many discussions among the Student Course Evaluation Committee (SCEC, formerly the SET committee). Exploration of the question set formally began in our January 25th, 2017 meeting as we prepared and reviewed the annual report for the Faculty Senate. By our next meeting, I had received approval to open an RFP to replace Smart Evals. This created an opportunity for the SCEC to change the question set while implementing a new system.

On March 31st, 2017, I provided an established and validated question set to the SCEC for consideration. After a lengthy discussion, several things were decided:

1. The question set was approved unanimously by the SCEC with added provisions.
2. The SCEC requested the addition of a before and after interest level question (Questions 1 & 2)
3. The SCEC requested the 'spoken English' question be clearly identified as a state mandated question.
4. Last, and most important, the SCEC requested a formal survey be conducted of each constituent group to ensure the question set is aligned with their needs. This will be followed up with focus groups and campus presentations. Dr. Donna Bowman has agreed to lead this campus-wide conversation.

On April 11th, 2017, the new question set and all accompanying documents were presented and provided to the Faculty Senate. At that time there were minimal questions or concerns presented. Continuing in the vein of transparency to which I subscribe, on July 25th, 2017 I launched an eXplorance Blue implementation webpage that contained all of the documents I had previously provided to the Faculty Senate in addition to the list of features, timeline, and what to expect. This webpage was covered in my September 12th, 2017 presentation to the Faculty Senate.

The new question set was implemented as planned in eXplorance Blue on November 20th, 2017. It was again discussed in the January 25th, 2018 Faculty Senate meeting.

The RFP for eXplorance Blue ran concurrently through most of these events. That process, while not directly associated with the development of the question set, included conversations about the change to the new questions because that was one of the RFP criteria the committee required. As stated, there were many faculty involved in both the new question set discussion and the RFP process.

In light of constituent concerns, it is apparent to me that more could have been done to communicate the transition to the new question set and seek feedback from the broader campus community. As Director of Assessment, I own that oversight and apologize for any unintended confusion this transition has caused. However, I can assure you that the SCEC and the Faculty Senate have been involved in all of these processes. The cross walk is intended as a guide to help faculty align the two question sets, but should not be interpreted as a one-to-one equivalency table. It was an effort by me and the SCEC to help make the transition as easy as possible.

I will leave you all with a final note. The upcoming study of the question set and the campus conversation is being developed now. Your feedback and input is greatly appreciated and will be critical to improving the assessment of teaching effectiveness at UCA. The SCEC, the Office of Assessment, and I are committed to serving the needs of our faculty and students in as transparent a way as possible. I only ask that if we fall short of your expectations, that you are patient while we listen, learn, and improve our processes to better achieve that goal.

Thank you for your participation in this process.

Brandon Combs, Ed.D.

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"Assessment is a device for change. Change moves at the speed of trust." ~George Kuh~

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