

A Policy Proposal for e-ACE
11 May 2004

BACKGROUND:

College of Engineering policy on Assessment of the Classroom Environment (ACE) was last modified May 12, 1998 when the two-page SPIF evaluation forms were replaced with a one-page, two-sided ACE (assessment of the classroom environment) form.

Side 1 of the ACE form contained the mandatory evaluative questions adopted by the CoE Faculty in a meeting 28 February 1995. Side 1 also contained the following solicitation for written comments: "In the space below please comment on the strengths and weaknesses of the course and its instruction, and suggest how the course might be improved. Your comments are VERY IMPORTANT, as they provide valuable feedback to the instructor, and the College Administration." The statistics from this side were reported to the Dean, the DEO, and the Instructor. The Dean's office kept copies of Side 1 and returned the originals back to the instructor. The written comments were reproduced on a single transcript whose copies were provided to the Instructor, the DEO, and the Dean.

Side 2 of the form contained mandatory formative questions adopted at the same meeting cited above, and any optional questions the Instructor selected. Statistics from Side 2 were reported only to the Instructor.

Due to the costs associated with transcribing student comments, the College of Engineering administration has, for a number of years, encouraged moving from a paper-based ACE system to an electronic ACE system. College of Engineering experiments with an electronic ACE were conducted in the Spring 2003 when all full professors were required to use e-ACE, and the Fall 2003 semester when all faculty members in the college were encouraged to use e-ACE. As a continuation of this experiment, the default method of obtaining teaching evaluations in the current Spring 2004 semester is by e-ACE.

MOTION:

At the advice of the AY2003-2004 Teaching Committee, the EFC offers the following motion dealing with e-ACE policy to the faculty for their approval:

It is moved that the current policy on obtaining Student Perception of Course and Instruction (last amended at the faculty meeting of May 12, 1998) be amended to replace the use of paper ACE forms with the Electronic ACE (e-ACE) system. Consistent with this change:

- From the Fall 2004 semester onward, there will be no further use of paper ACE forms for any course offered within the College.
- All instructors in the College of Engineering will use e-ACE to conduct their assessments of the classroom environment each time a course is offered.
- The e-ACE forms for a course will be accessible by students for a 10 day period that will end prior to the end of finals week. CSS may send reminders to students who have not yet completed the forms during this period.
- Data and comments generated from the mandatory evaluative questions will be reported electronically to the Dean and the DEO.
- All data and comments generated from the e-ACE survey will be reported electronically to the Instructor.
- The mandatory evaluative questions remain as follows:
 1. The instructor was effective.
 2. I acquired a basic understanding of the subject area.
 3. The instructor's oral communication skills were adequate for the course.
 4. The physical facilities were adequate for effective teaching of the course.
 5. Please comment on the strengths of the course and its instruction.
 6. Please comment on the weaknesses of the course and its instruction.
 7. Please provide additional comments on how the course might be improved.
- The mandatory formative questions remain as follows:
 1. The course was well-organized.
 2. Instructor seemed to be concerned with whether I learned the material.
 3. Instructor responded to my questions with clarity.
 4. Prerequisite course work prepared me adequately to handle assignments in this course.
 5. The textbook was helpful for my understanding of the course.
 6. Instructional methods and materials contributed to my learning.
 7. Instructor was available to me outside of class.
- Any additional questions asked by the Instructor will be treated as formative, and the results will be available only to the Instructor.
- CSS is charged with administering and maintaining the data collection and reporting systems that support this policy.