

**SAN JOSÉ STATE UNIVERSITY
ONE WASHINGTON SQUARE
SAN JOSÉ, CA 95192**

S17-2, University Policy, Adopting New SOTE and SOLATE Instruments

Legislative History:

At its meeting of February 13, 2017, the Academic Senate approved the following policy recommendation presented by Senator Peter for the Professional Standards Committee. University Policy F12-6, Evaluation in Effectiveness in Teaching for all Faculty provides that the Student Evaluation Review Board (SERB) will prepare the questions and survey instruments to be used to measure student opinions of teaching effectiveness (SOTES and SOLATES). SERB will then submit these new SOTES and SOLATES to the Professional Standards Committee, and the Professional Standards Committee will bring before the Senate for approval.

**Approved and signed by
President Mary A. Papazian on
March 7, 2017.**

**University Policy
Adopting New SOTE and SOLATE Instruments**

Resolved: That the attached documents following be adopted as the text for revised Student Opinion of Teaching Effectiveness (SOTE) and Student Opinion of Laboratory Teaching Effectiveness (SOLATE) questionnaires; be it further

Resolved: That this become effective for the administration of all SOTES and SOLATES as soon as practicable.

Rationale: F12-6, Evaluation in Effectiveness in Teaching for all Faculty, states:

SERB shall prepare the specific questions and survey instrument to be used to measure student opinions of teaching effectiveness. It shall decide the scale, format, and layout of the instrument, and determine the information that is provided in the reports generated by the surveys. The instrument shall be approved by the Senate upon recommendation of

SERB and the Professional Standards Committee, and may only be amended by SERB.

SERB is a board specifically appointed for expertise on survey research and contains the AVP for IEA as an advisor. Professional Standards and the Senate may accept or reject the survey instruments provided by SERB, but may not amend the text of the survey instrument.

For the rationale explaining the changes to the questions in the SOTE and SOLATE instrument, Professional Standards refers you to the version of this policy passed by the Senate on October 24, 2016, which was itself a modified version of a proposal returned to committee by the Senate on May 9, 2016. The October 24 policy recommendation was returned by the President without signature with several concerns expressed. This rationale is restricted to addressing those concerns:

- 1) There was a typographical error in numbering the questions; this has been corrected.
- 2) There was a minor discrepancy in the phrasing of the open ended questions on the SOTE and SOLATE. This has been corrected.
- 3) There was concern about the new language in the SOTE/SOLATE instructions indicating that the instrument is not designed to provide feedback “on your instructor’s physical appearance.” This was added at the request of instructors who have received inappropriate feedback about their attractiveness and other variables that are either outside of their control and/or inappropriate for comment on the professional evaluation of their work—in some cases bordering on a kind of anonymous harassment. SERB conducted a review of appropriate literature and found that these instructions may be helpful in addressing a known gender bias in student evaluations (MacNell, Driscoll, & Hunt, 2015) and are unlikely to introduce unconscious bias (e.g., Duguid & Hunt 2015). Furthermore, since the teaching evaluation policy (F12-6) lists “comments on personal appearance” among those items that are inappropriate and that may be removed prior to placement in the personnel file, it is in the interest of the University to prevent such comments from being recorded in the first place.
- 4) There was a question about how the data collected from the existing (unchanged) informational question on “undue influence” is used. This is a matter that falls within the teaching evaluation policy’s charge (F12-6) that “Additional technical and implementation details not covered in this policy will be decided by the AVP for IEA in consultation with SERB and the Professional Standards Committee.” The current procedure is that this information is released only on the request of Department Chairs or the faculty member. Typically, such requests only occur when students make independent allegations of improprieties related to the SOTEs and an investigation is conducted.

Professional Standards endorses these changes and reminds the Senate that these revisions are now in their third year of Senate review. The last time the instruments were changed was in 2004.

Approved: 1/30/2017

Vote: 9-0-1

Present: Peter, Green, White, Lee, Reade, Kauppila, Caesar, Hamedi-Hagh, Caesar, Hwang

Absent: None

Approved by the Student Evaluation Review Board 1/25/2017

Vote: 6-0-0

Present: Slusser, Venkatsubramany, Smith, Lee, Eirinaki, Heil

Absent: Strage

Financial Impact: No changes over the previous policy.

Workload Impact: Institutional Effectiveness and Analytics (IEA) will need to update the online questionnaires.

Student Opinion of Teaching Effectiveness (SOTE) Revision

January 2017 Revision

Instructions

This instrument is designed to be a professional evaluation of your instructor's teaching performance. It is NOT designed to measure your reaction to the subject, the facilities (such as the physical conditions of the classroom), or your instructor's physical appearance. Your individual ratings will be anonymous and a summary of items 1-18 will be available to your instructor after grades are turned in. This summary may enhance your instructor's teaching. It will also be used in the evaluation of your instructor for personnel matters such as retention, tenure and promotion. **If the question does not apply to your course, please select "not applicable/no opportunity to observe".**

The instructor:

1. Demonstrated relevance of the course content.
 5. Strongly Agree
 4. Agree
 3. Neutral
 2. Disagree
 1. Strongly Disagree
 - Not applicable/no opportunity to observe
2. Used assignments that enhanced learning.
 5. Strongly Agree
 4. Agree
 3. Neutral
 2. Disagree
 1. Strongly Disagree
 - Not applicable/no opportunity to observe
3. Summarized/emphasized important points.
 5. Strongly Agree
 4. Agree
 3. Neutral
 2. Disagree
 1. Strongly Disagree
 - Not applicable/no opportunity to observe
4. Was responsive to questions and comments from students.
 5. Strongly Agree
 4. Agree
 3. Neutral
 2. Disagree
 1. Strongly Disagree
 - Not applicable/no opportunity to observe
5. Established an atmosphere that facilitated learning.
 5. Strongly Agree

- 4. Agree
- 3. Neutral
- 2. Disagree
- 1. Strongly Disagree
- Not applicable/no opportunity to observe

6. Was approachable for assistance.

- 5. Strongly Agree
- 4. Agree
- 3. Neutral
- 2. Disagree
- 1. Strongly Disagree
- Not applicable/no opportunity to observe

7. Was respectful of the diversity of students in this class.

- 5. Strongly Agree
- 4. Agree
- 3. Neutral
- 2. Disagree
- 1. Strongly Disagree
- Not applicable/no opportunity to observe

8. Showed strong interest in teaching this class.

- 5. Strongly Agree
- 4. Agree
- 3. Neutral
- 2. Disagree
- 1. Strongly Disagree
- Not applicable/no opportunity to observe

9. Used teaching methods that helped students learn important concepts.

- 5. Strongly Agree
- 4. Agree
- 3. Neutral
- 2. Disagree
- 1. Strongly Disagree
- Not applicable/no opportunity to observe

10. Used grading criteria that were clear.

- 5. Strongly Agree
- 4. Agree
- 3. Neutral
- 2. Disagree
- 1. Strongly Disagree
- Not applicable/no opportunity to observe

11. Helped students analyze complex/abstract ideas.

- 5. Strongly Agree
- 4. Agree
- 3. Neutral

- 2. Disagree
- 1. Strongly Disagree
- Not applicable/no opportunity to observe

12. Provided meaningful feedback about student work.

- 5. Strongly Agree
- 4. Agree
- 3. Neutral
- 2. Disagree
- 1. Strongly Disagree
- Not applicable/no opportunity to observe

13. Overall, this instructor's teaching was effective.

- 5. Strongly Agree
- 4. Agree
- 3. Neutral
- 2. Disagree
- 1. Strongly Disagree
- Not applicable/no opportunity to observe

Free-Response Questions:

14. What do you think are the strengths of this instructor's teaching?

15. What suggestions, if any, do you have to further improve the instructor's teaching?

16. If you like, please use this space to elaborate on your responses.

Informational Items:

17. What is your current estimate of your expected overall grade in this course?

- A
- B
- C
- D or F
- Other (Credit/No Credit, Incomplete, etc.)

18. You are a:

- Freshman
- Sophomore
- Junior
- Senior
- Graduate Student
- Credential Only
- Other (e.g. Open University)

19. Did you complete this form without undue influence from other students?

- Yes
- No

20. Did you complete this form without undue influence from the instructor?

Yes

No

Student Opinion of Laboratory and Activity Teaching Effectiveness (SOLATE) Revision
January 2017 Revision

Instructions

This instrument is designed to be a professional evaluation of your instructor's teaching performance. It is NOT designed to measure your reaction to the subject, the facilities (such as the physical conditions of the classroom), or your instructor's physical appearance. Your individual ratings will be anonymous and a summary of items 1-14 will be available to your instructor after grades are turned in. This summary may enhance your instructor's teaching. It will also be used in the evaluation of your instructor for personnel matters such as retention, tenure and promotion. **If the question does not apply to your course, please select "not applicable/no opportunity to observe".**

The lab or activity instructor:

1. Made course requirements clear.

- 5. Strongly Agree
- 4. Agree
- 3. Neutral
- 2. Disagree
- 1. Strongly Disagree
- Not applicable/no opportunity to observe

2. Used grading criteria that were clear.

- 5. Strongly Agree
- 4. Agree
- 3. Neutral
- 2. Disagree
- 1. Strongly Disagree
- Not applicable/no opportunity to observe

3. Was well prepared for class or activity.

- 5. Strongly Agree
- 4. Agree
- 3. Neutral
- 2. Disagree
- 1. Strongly Disagree
- Not applicable/no opportunity to observe

4. Showed concern for student success in the course, and was accessible and responsive to students

- 5. Strongly Agree
- 4. Agree
- 3. Neutral
- 2. Disagree
- 1. Strongly Disagree
- Not applicable/no opportunity to observe

5. Made the class environment safe for students, including demonstration of the proper use of any equipment and techniques.

- 5. Strongly Agree
- 4. Agree
- 3. Neutral
- 2. Disagree
- 1. Strongly Disagree
- Not applicable/no opportunity to observe

6. Helped me integrate the lecture concepts with the class/activity.

- 5. Strongly Agree
- 4. Agree
- 3. Neutral
- 2. Disagree
- 1. Strongly Disagree
- Not applicable/no opportunity to observe

7. Increased my understanding of the subject.

- 5. Strongly Agree
- 4. Agree
- 3. Neutral
- 2. Disagree
- 1. Strongly Disagree
- Not applicable/no opportunity to observe

8. Stimulated my interest in the subject.

- 5. Strongly Agree
- 4. Agree
- 3. Neutral
- 2. Disagree
- 1. Strongly Disagree
- Not applicable/no opportunity to observe

9. Overall, this instructor's teaching was effective.

- 5. Strongly Agree
- 4. Agree
- 3. Neutral
- 2. Disagree
- 1. Strongly Disagree
- Not applicable/no opportunity to observe

Free-Response Questions:

10. What do you think are the strengths of this instructor's teaching?

11. What suggestions, if any, do you have to further improve the instructor's teaching?

12. If you like, please use this space to elaborate on your responses.

Informational Items:

13. What is your current estimate of your expected overall grade in this course?

- A
- B
- C
- D or F
- Other (Credit/No Credit, Incomplete, etc.)

14. You are a:

- Freshman
- Sophomore
- Junior
- Senior
- Graduate Student
- Credential Only
- Other (e.g. Open University)

15. Did you complete this form without undue influence from other students?

- Yes
- No

16. Did you complete this form without undue influence from the instructor?

- Yes
- No