

Technology Fee Concept Paper Proposal Template

Title: Increased Accessibility for Online Instructor Evaluations: PDAs/Mobile Phones, ADA & Reporting

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Sponsoring Organization: Office of the Associate Provost for Information Technology, E-Learning and Distance Education

Purpose: To improve instructional quality at the University of Florida by encouraging higher rates of responses to the official University Online Instructor Evaluation form, and increasing ease of access of the data for instructors.

Impact/Benefit:

At the Provost's behest, the official University instructor evaluation will be submitted solely online by Fall 2011. While there is an existing mechanism for this, the interface does not have an option for small screen devices nor is the reporting interface fully featured for ease of use.

By increasing the devices which the Online Instructor Evaluations can be submitted from, students will be able to fill out instructor evaluations where ever or whenever is convenient for them (waiting for a campus bus, in between classes, etc.), rather than requiring the use of a traditional laptop or desktop computer. This convenience, with the added opportunity for students to immediately respond to announcements and reminders to fill out Instructor Evaluations, should increase the response rate and thus the validity of the evaluation data for instructors.

Additionally on the instructor side, an improved reporting interface will better allow faculty to review the results of their evaluations, both for individual courses and over time. Evaluation data will be available for instructors for at least 10 years so the addition of yearly comparisons will aid in the overall usability of this data. Additional reports will be determined by surveying the needs faculty and administrative members. At minimum, there will be a format to display and download evaluation data in the format required by the University's promotion and tenure process.

As part of these improvements, all interfaces for the Online Instructor Evaluation will be thoroughly reviewed for ADA compliance, as well as applicable state and federal accessibility requirements.

All students and faculty taking credit courses at the University of Florida will benefit from these improvements, both through increased ease of use and improved instructional feedback. An additional benefit will be good publicity for the University - UF faculty and staff will be able to reference a state of the art delivery mechanism for evaluations at various educational and technical conferences. And finally, AP-IT would develop the capability to create and support mobile device interfaces, which could be applied to other university-wide applications that currently exist or are in development.

These proposed features will dove-tail nicely with the planned improvements to the Online Instructor Evaluation to allow Colleges to add college-specific questions, and for administration of evaluations to be easily managed at the departmental level. This application will continue to be supported through the Office of the Associate Provost for Information Technology, so long-term sustainability is guaranteed.