Academic Affairs Committee of the IUPUI Faculty Council
Response to Proposal to Adopt Blue by eXplorance for Online Course Questionnaires
April 2015

The Academic Affairs Committee (AAC) met on March 9, 2015 for an initial discussion of the proposal to adopt Blue as the system for conducting online course questionnaires (OCQs) and the concept of employing a set of campuswide questions at IUPUI. As a result, the AAC had several initial comments and questions (see below). The AAC shared this list with Dr. Melissa Lavitt (Senior Associate Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs, IUPUI) and Dr. Marianne Wokeck (President of the IUPUI Faculty Council [IFC]). The AAC thanks Dr. Lavitt and Dr. Howard Mzumara (Director of the Testing Center, IUPUI) for meeting with the committee to address these questions and concerns. Based on these discussions on March 23, 2015, the AAC reached the following conclusions.

1. The AAC supports implementing the use of Blue for OCQs beginning in fall 2015. One reason for this is the financial constraints in the agreement between the contractor and IU regarding the pilot versus full implementation. Another reason is the positive results obtained so far in the pilots here at IUPUI. A third reason is that Blue will allow school- and instructor-specific items to be included in the questionnaires. Nevertheless, it is important to note there may well be schools with needs that cannot be met by Blue at this time and so other arrangements may be required in these cases.

2. The AAC emphasizes that OCQs administered via Blue need to be available through both Oncourse and Canvas. The AAC was informed that Blue can indeed be used with either system. Since Oncourse will still be available through spring 2016, and because not all instructors have adopted Canvas, it is imperative make this option available so that instructors using Oncourse are able to have their courses evaluated by students.

3. The AAC recommends that schools should continue to use their preferred survey instruments for the 2015-16 academic year. Dr. Lavitt and the AAC agreed that the decision to institute a campuswide set of core questions rests with the faculty, as does the nature of those questions. The AAC has not yet had sufficient time to address this important issue fully and will continue deliberations. At this point, it is reasonable to suggest that the IFC would ultimately need to create a policy mandating the use of campuswide questions and defining the use to which the resulting data could be used. In the event that IUPUI adopts a set of campuswide questions, it is imperative to retain the ability for schools and instructors to include any and all questions of their choice.

4. The AAC suggests that feedback be obtained from the Student Affairs Committee on the use of Blue.

Initial AAC comments and questions about Blue and campuswide course questionnaires:
- The IFC should decide whether or not a campuswide online course questionnaire (OCQ) should be utilized. To be clear, this point is meant to address using a set of core questions that would be used in all questionnaires.
- The IFC and campus administration should work closely together to define the means by which the OCQs are provided to students.
- The planning for and execution of the Blue pilot studies at IUPUI should be as detailed and thorough as at IUB.

- Who selected Blue? Is it actually a good fit for IUPUI?
- The AAC needs more information about Blue in order to assess its utility.
- If there is to be a campus-wide OCQ, the questionnaire must be well devised and delivered and must recognize the diversity of the schools here at IUPUI.
- What will the university do with data collected from OCQs?
- Shifting student course evaluations to an online format resulted in reduced response rates at several IUPUI schools. What are the plans for solving this problem? Will Blue help with this?
- If Blue is linked to Canvas, how will faculty using Oncourse next year have their OCQs administered?
- Should more schools have been involved in the current pilot study for OCQs using Blue?