



WESTMONT

Director of Assessment

To: Steve Julio, Faculty Development Committee Chair
From: Marianne Robins, Director of Assessment
Re: New evaluations proposal
Date: October 22, 2008

As you know, the faculty regularly expresses concerns about the current evaluation forms. The Professional Development Committee attempted to address this issue a few years ago by drafting a different set of questions, but was unable to convince enough faculty members to make use of this instrument –see Alister Chapman's memo from September 2007.

Last Spring, in consultation with the Provost, I launched a pilot study to try out a different set of evaluation forms developed by the IDEA center. The instrument had been recommended to me by two different institutions, and after reviewing the literature available on the IDEA Center website, I felt that this could be very helpful to us, for at least two reasons: the questions were focused on student learning (rather than on the professor's style) and could therefore better indicate how well students learned –as opposed to how much they liked the professor. The evaluations allowed for flexibility in their use: two different forms are available (one could be used for non-tenured faculty, another for tenured and full professors) and there is ample room for extra questions (instructor's or institution's choice) to be included. As you will see, there are many more advantages to these evaluations that I did not anticipate.

I contacted 20 different faculty and 15 agreed to use the evaluations in at least one class. In the end, 12 faculty made use of them in a total of 20 classes. I promised that the results for individual faculty would not be shared. As an example, I can send you, if you wish, the results for my class (History 121). The IDEA center also generates an institutional report (a "group summary report") that allows for comparison with their whole database –this made us look pretty good. I am sending this along with other documents (see list at the end of this report).

I received feedback on the evaluations from 7 of the 12 faculty who used them – including me, that would make 8 faculty. Except for one (whose concern can be easily addressed by using a different type of form available from the IDEA center that leaves a lot of room for comments and includes less 'bubbles') they are all extremely positive. Overall, the faculty appreciated the relevance of the feedback provided (how much progress students have made, specific suggestions for improvement), the ability to articulate and get information on teaching objectives, the availability of adjusted scores (that take other aspects of the class into account to calculate scores), and the summaries provided by the center.

I would add that comparison with other schools (the ones using the IDEA evaluations) is also helpful, not only for individual instructors, but institutionally as well. Another advantage of this tool is related to its administration: Barb Kennedy compared it to the

current tool and argued that it is far easier to distribute, that the time-span between submitting the evaluations and obtaining the results is far shorter (one month, as opposed to four or five months). I requested an estimate of the cost for this tool to be used on campus (see attached information). According to Bill Wright, this would not increase our spending in this area. Finally, two faculty have already requested the IDEA forms (as opposed to the current ones) for their evaluations this semester –I am unable to provide them with the forms since the trial was free last semester, but this was a one-time offer.

I am very excited about the possibility of moving from our current evaluations to the IDEA Center tool. I think it would be a vast improvement for our faculty.

Sincerely,

Marianne Ruel Robins

I am sending more material through the mail, including:

- the two evaluation forms offered by the IDEA Center (<http://www.theideacenter.org/>)
- the group summary report
- a sample report for an individual faculty
- the list of faculty and classes that were part of this pilot project

Estimated Cost

IDEA Student Ratings of Instructions
Westmont College
Sept. 15, 2008



Fall 2008

	Form Fee (Paper)		
	Number Forms	Price/unit	Sub-total
Diagnostic - Paper	4,500	\$0.25	\$1,125.00
Diagnostic - Online			
Short - Paper			
Short - Online			
Sub-Total	4500		\$1,125.00

Survey Fee (Online)		
Number Surveys	Price/unit	Sub-total

Processing Fee		
Number Classes	Price/unit	Sub-total
300	\$4.50	\$1,350.00
300		\$1,350.00

Spring 2009

	Form Fee (Paper)		
	Number Forms	Price/unit	Sub-total
Diagnostic - Paper	4500	\$0.25	\$1,125.00
Diagnostic - Online			
Short - Paper			
Short - Online			
Sub-Total	4500		\$1,125.00

Survey Fee (Online)		
Number Surveys	Price/unit	Sub-total

Processing Fee		
Number Classes	Price/unit	Sub-total
300	\$4.50	\$1,350.00
300		\$1,350.00

Total - Fall & Spring 9000 \$2,250.00 0 \$0.00

600 \$2,700.00

Grand Total **\$4,950.00**

Alternate fee if purchase paper forms one time at lower bulk rate.
 Diagnostic Forms 9,000 \$0.20 \$1,800.00 (compare to \$2,250.00)

*Please note: fees are based on 2008-2009 fee schedule and may change July 1, 2009