

# *Scholarship of Teaching and Learning Grants: Title Page*

## **Understand Student Perspectives on the Course Evaluation Process**

### **Principal Investigator:**

Dr. Loril M. Gossett  
Associate Professor of Communication Studies  
Associate Professor of Organizational Science  
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### **Research Assistants:**

Greg Berka – PhD candidate (OS)  
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Elliot Hamer – MA candidate (COMM)  
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## Proposal Abstract:

This study explores student attitudes about course evaluations. Although scholars have studied the specific metrics used for course evaluations, few have explored how students make sense of this process (e.g., what motivates students to fill them out, do they understand the questions). As UNC Charlotte transitions from paper to online evaluations, this is an optimal time to conduct such a study. Theoretically, this project is grounded in research on organizational member voice, member participation, and organizational feedback systems (Hirschman, 1970; Stohl & Cheney, 2001). At the pedagogical level, this study can help the academic community better understand factors that motivate or discourage students from offering feedback about their classroom experiences on course evaluations. By conducting both surveys and focus groups with students across all colleges on campus, this study should provide a comprehensive understanding of how the faculty and the university might encourage students to productively engage in the evaluation process so that we might better understand the issues that are working or need more attention in the classroom. Outcomes from this study will provide UNC Charlotte with university-specific information about general factors that encourage and discourage student involvement. Additionally, this study will provide specific feedback from students about our transition from paper to online evaluations. Given that the university spends a great deal of money on course evaluations, any insight that might make these more effective (better response rate, more specific feedback, etc) should improve the process and provide better information to both teachers and the administration.

# Budget Request for SOTL Grant

## Year 2012-2013

Joint Proposal?                      Yes    **X**    No

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Title of Project                      **Understand Student Perspectives on the Course Evaluation Process**

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Duration of Project                **Fall 2012-Summer 2013**

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Primary Investigator(s)        **Loril M. Gossett – Associate Professor of Communication Studies and Organizational Science**

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Email Address(es)                **lgosset1@uncc.edu**

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UNC Charlotte SOTL Grants Previously Received (please names of project, PIs, and dates)        **None**

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Allocate operating budget to Department of                      **Communication Studies**

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Account #	Award	Year One January to June
Faculty Stipend	Transferred directly from Academic Affairs to Grantee on May 15	\$3850
911250	Graduate Student Salaries	
911300	Special Pay (Faculty on UNCC payroll other than Grantee)	
915000	Student Temporary Wages	\$12,000
915900	Non-student Temporary Wages	
920000	Honorarium (Individual(s) not with UNCC)	
921150	Participant Stipends	\$ 500
925000	Travel – Domestic	
926000	Travel – Foreign	
928000	Communication and/or Printing	\$1,000
930000	Supplies	\$2,000
942000	Computing Equipment	\$ 500
944000	Educational Equipment	
951000	Other Current Services	
<b>GRAND TOTAL</b>		<b>\$ 19,850</b>

## Budget Attachments

### 1. Attach/provide a narrative that explains how the funds requested will be used.

The funds requested for this study will provide compensation to a number of students involved with collecting, transcribing, and analyzing data for this project. Most of these funds will be used in the summer to support the students who are helping write up of the data ( $4 \times \$2500 = \$10,000$  for Temporary Grad Student Support). The rest of the temporary student funding will be used to compensate students for entering data and transcribing focus groups during the spring ( $2 \times \$1,000 = \$2,000$ ). Finally, the primary investigator (Dr. Gossett) is requesting \$3850 in support for the summer, so she can focus her efforts on this project and get the results out to interested parties and journals for Fall, 2013. If this project is funded, Dr. Gossett will not teach more than one summer class or accept more than two faculty development grants for summer compensation.

With respect to supplies and other incidentals, we are requesting \$500 for additional participant incentives (Target Cards) so that we are able to ensure that we have enough for the study to extend across campus. We were lucky enough to receive funding for \$250 cards from a CLAS Small Grant, but do not think this will be enough if we are to extend the study to all colleges on campus. We are also requesting \$1,000 to support the cost of printing the consent forms, paper versions of the survey, printouts of data for coding, and copies of the final reports for interested parties.

\$2,000 is being requested for supplies that we will use to purchase additional qualitative methods kits (recorders, transcribers, etc.) to make sure all researchers on this project have these tools at their disposal. Qualitative research tools are not available on campus for general student check out and so are limited to what is available in individual departments. Currently the five qualitative equipment kits in the communication department are prioritized for our four qualitative methods courses and student thesis/dissertation projects. This makes it difficult to ensure their availability for large-scale research projects such as this. Each kit costs @ \$550. We would purchase 3 new methods kits with these funds. The additional supplies we need to purchase for this project include basic lab office supplies (binders, folders, tape, etc) and a backup external hard drive to keep our data safe.

Finally we are requesting \$500 to upgrade the qualitative software systems in Dr. Gossett's research lab. This lab is used by students in the methods courses as well as RAs working on Dr. Gossett's projects. Several of the programs we use are out of date (NVIVO, CRAWDAD, etc) and need to be upgraded on the lab computers and Dr. Gossett's own system. These are not programs available on UNC Charlotte's central software package. These programs are purchased by individual faculty members through grants. Dr. Gossett's computer and research lab have outdated Nvivo software which is no longer supported by the manufacturer. The CRAWDAD licenses purchased with previous grant funds have expired. Thus, these funds would be used to update these systems.

## Budget Attachments – continued

2. Has funding for the project been requested from other sources?

Yes  No

CLAS Small Grant provided this project with the resources for an additional recorder, a transcriber, and some funds for purchasing \$250 incentive cards for participants. These resources were needed and are extremely helpful. However, given the scope and time line of this study, we would benefit from having additional equipment available so that the RAs on this team could have constant access to these devices (rather than share with the rest of the communication and organizational science departments).

# Letter of Support



## Office of the Dean

9201 University City Boulevard, Charlotte, NC 28223-0001  
t/ 704-687-0088 f/ 704-687-0089 <http://clas.uncc.edu>

November 7, 2012

SOTL Grants Committee  
Center for Teaching & Learning  
[ctl@uncc.edu](mailto:ctl@uncc.edu)

Dear Committee Members:

I am writing in support of the SOTL proposal submitted by Dr. Lori Gossett of our Department of Communication Studies focused on **understanding student perspectives on the course evaluation process**. Professor Gossett's study is theoretically grounded and should contribute to our understanding of the factors that motivate or discourage students from providing their reactions to their educational experiences through course evaluations.

The study is particularly well-timed given the transition to on-line course evaluations that is occurring in CLAS in the next academic year. Indeed, based on her preliminary research on the topic, Professor Gossett has been working with the group in our College that is preparing for the transition to online course evaluations and that I have charged with making recommendations on how we can improve that process. I believe that the results of this research will prove very valuable not only for CLAS and the UNC Charlotte community but have the potential for impact well beyond our campus as Gossett and her team have identified an important yet understudied topic. I am pleased to recommend this project for your consideration.

Please let me know if you require further information.

Sincerely yours,



Nancy A. Gutierrez, Dean  
College of Liberal Arts and Sciences

## Project Narrative

### **A: Specific Aims of Study**

This project explores how university students make sense of the course evaluation process. Conducting course evaluations at the end of each semester is a time consuming and expensive process for the University. However, these evaluations provide faculty with important information for improving their classes and teaching strategies. It is important to encourage students to willingly complete these forms in order to provide faculty the best possible feedback. In the current literature, few studies examine specific factors that motivate or discourage students from completing course evaluations. Even rarer are studies that collect this data by asking the students themselves. As UNC Charlotte is currently going through the process of transitioning from paper-based to online course evaluations, it seems to be an optimal time and location to explore this topic.

This study combines qualitative and quantitative data to evaluate our research questions. This research model was piloted in Spring 2012 and produced data that was appropriate for answering our research questions. The data we intend to collect includes: previous written course evaluations for the university to determine if there is a change in results (scores, comments, response rate) once we go to online evaluations; experiments in which students complete both paper-based and online evaluations to determine if there are differences in the data; and focus groups in which students discuss their attitudes toward course evaluations.

**The following research questions guide this study:**

- 1.) How do students feel classes should be evaluated? What are students' understandings and attitudes about the process at UNC Charlotte?
- 2.) What do students view as the differences between online and paper evaluations? What are the perceived advantages and disadvantages of each?
- 3.) To what extent are there meaningful quantitative or qualitative differences in how students fill out online vs. paper-based evaluations?
- 4.) What factors influence students to complete (or not complete) course evaluations (e.g., gender of faculty member, gender of student, size of class, peer pressure, rewards)?

We believe the findings from the study will have the potential to greatly enhance the quality of the course evaluation process both here at UNC Charlotte and at other institutions. This study reaches across the entire university and has the potential to provide feedback specific to various colleges and departments that might help different groups more effectively collect feedback from the students within their programs. All students and faculty at the university should be served by the outcomes of this project.



## **B: Literature Review**

### *Primary Areas of Research on Course Evaluations:*

The topic of course evaluations has been studied by a variety of scholars. However, most of these studies are based on the institutional use of feedback and the merits, drawbacks, and improvements of the instrument used (see Sheehan & Duprey, 1999 for a review). Another line of research has examining the quantitative outcome of student evaluations to determine if specific populations of faculty (e.g., gender, race, age) are evaluated differently in the course evaluation process (Basow, 1995; Centra & Gaubatz, 2000; Tatro, 1995). Finally, there are a few studies that have examined faculty perception of the evaluation process and sought their input on how these evaluations should be designed and administered (e.g., Dommeyer, Baum, Chapman, & Hanna, 2002).

### *Student Perceptions are an Understudied Topic:*

While the lines of research discussed above are important, one issue that has received relatively little attention is how students themselves actually make sense of the evaluation process (Ahmadi, Helms, & Raiszadeh, 2001). Some studies have surveyed university students on their perception of the overall teaching evaluation process (Anderson, Cain, & Bird, 2005; Abbot, Wulff, Nyquist, Ropp, & Hess, 1990). Ahmandi et al. (2001) point out that students feel their input should be used in the advancement and salary determination of faculty, and favored the wide-spread publication of the results. Students have also reported a favorable impression for having mid-term evaluations which leave time for responsiveness from their instructors (Abbot, et al., 1990) and also a slight preference of online to paper evaluations when available (Anderson, Cain, & Bird, 2005).

While these studies are interesting, all rely solely on quantitative methods and none fully explore what *motivates* students to complete or not complete course evaluations. Additionally, there is little information available about why students might prefer one format of evaluation over another. The addition of qualitative data (such as interviews or focus groups with students) can provide researchers with additional insight into how and why students complete the evaluations the way that they do.

*Value of the Proposed Study:*

This study seeks to fill a gap in the literature by asking the students themselves what they think of the course evaluation process and what issues they consider when completing these documents. Additionally, because the design of this study incorporates both quantitative and qualitative data, the findings should speak to a wide variety of scholars interested in this topic.

**C: Methods**

PART 1 (SURVEY): Undergraduate students will be recruited through an email solicitation that requests they participate in the study. The email would be sent to every 100<sup>th</sup> student in the directory to create a random sample. We expect a 10-15% response rate of the 20,000+ student population, which creates the estimate of 200-300 participants noted above. Included in the solicitation email will be a link to an online evaluation survey which will be hosted by surveyshare.com, which has been designed to match the overall form and features available on the online course evaluation tool currently being rolled out at UNC Charlotte. To complete the online survey, participants are instructed to consider a class from the *prior* semester and complete the evaluation based on that class.

After completing the on-line survey, the participant is invited to attend an in-person session where he or she will complete a paper evaluation in a classroom setting. After the students are finished completing the in-classroom evaluation, they are asked to complete a questionnaire that includes open-ended questions on the process (i.e. Which do you prefer (on-line or paper)? What changed in the process? How did it affect you to fill out the on-line form first?). At the end of the open-ended question survey, the final questions asks students if they are interested in participating in a focus group on the broader student evaluation process that will be held on a later date.

PART 2 (FOCUS GROUPS): These sessions will allow participants to share their feelings and attitudes on the entire evaluation process. The focus groups will be broken up to two students groups: (1) freshman and sophomore undergraduate student, (2) junior and senior undergraduate students. We are interested to see if there are differences in feelings based on experience. These focus groups will be recorded so that they may be transcribed for later analysis.

INCENTIVES: Participation in both parts of this research study will be encouraged by entering students into a drawing for a large number of \$10 Target gift cards. These drawing will be held every time students attend a session to fill out the paper survey (to compare against their online survey). Drawings will also be held at every focus group session. We believe these frequent drawings will encourage students to participate because we will have small groups at each of these sessions which will increase students' perceptions that they have a chance to win.

PILOT STUDY IN SPRING OF 2012: This two part research design proved effective when piloted with @ 60 students interested in obtaining extra credit in a variety of

Communication Courses. This pilot process helped the research team refine our focus group questions and ensure that our online survey effectively matched the look/feel of the real online system we are rolling out on campus. Approximately half of the students who completed the paper and online evaluations also volunteered to participate in focus groups.

**D: Evaluation**

The data will be analyzed using both quantitative and qualitative methods.

- 1) The results of the on-line and paper surveys will be entered in SPSS software to assess similarities and differences for descriptive information (means, frequencies) between the two evaluation formats. More extensive statistical analysis will also be performed on the data set to determine if meaningful differences exist (e.g., do students in different colleges or of different genders respond to the online and paper in the same way?).
- 2) We will also analyze the qualitative data from course surveys (open ended questions) and conduct a Content Analysis on this data to determine if the change in the channel (online vs. paper) impact the length or nature of the feedback (e.g., positive vs. negative, summative vs. formative).
- 3) The transcribed focus group will be imported into NVivo and CRAWDAD (qualitative analysis software) to facilitate data coding. A version of Glaser & Straus' (1967) constant comparative method will be used to identify common themes in the data and potential differences across different student groups (e.g., freshman vs. seniors; men vs. women; different colleges).
- 4) The entire research team will be involved with the coding and data analysis. Intercoder reliability will be used to ensure rigor in the content analysis process

(Krippendorff, 2003). Negative Case Analysis Techniques (Lindlof & Taylor, 2011) will be used to ensure the rigor of the qualitative analysis of the focus group data.

#### **E: Knowledge Dissemination**

In addition to completing a full report of our SOTL project for the University, we have identified several other outlets where we feel we can best disseminate the knowledge we obtain from this study:

- For Communication Studies– we will submit our findings in article form to
  - The *Journal of Communication Education* - This is a journal whose audience is focused on the best ways to teach/administer communication courses and,
  - The *Management Communication Quarterly* – This is a journal whose audience is interested in how organizations might design communication systems to facilitate member feedback. Information that casts light on the factors that motivate/discourage student feedback may be applicable to other organizational contexts where member input is desired.
- For Higher Education Scholars – we will submit findings in article form to:
  - *The Journal of Higher Education* – This journal that has published several other recent studies on the teaching evaluation process but has not had a piece that fully incorporated the student perspective for this topic.
- For the University of North Carolina at Charlotte Community – we plan to submit:
  - A report to the *Center of Teaching and Learning* (the office on campus dedicated to helping faculty improve their teaching skills) and provide a presentation (if desired) so that CTL may incorporate some of our findings into their future programs, if they find them helpful/relevant.

- A report to the *College of Liberal Arts and Science Committee on Course Evaluations* to provide this body with additional insight into how students make sense of the move from paper to online evaluations. We hope our data will be helpful to this committee, as it continues to consider ways it might improve the course evaluation process in this college.

**F: Human Subjects**

We have already submitted our project to IRB for approval and received feedback from the reviewers. We need to respond to a few questions (e.g., What is the value of video vs. audio recording? Should we include faculty in our research design?). Once we respond to these questions, we expect to have IRB approval and will be able to move forward with a large scale version of this study within a few weeks.

**G: Extramural Funding**

Once we complete this study, we are hoping to apply for a Department of Education Grant and expand our study outside the Charlotte campus. In order to make a strong case for funding, we need to provide evidence that we can conduct a large scale study with important implications for when and how to conduct teaching evaluations.

For our larger study, we would hope to collaborate with other universities operating in different contexts (community colleges, private universities, land-grant institutions, etc) to determine if the factors that motivate students at the UNC Charlotte campus to complete teaching evaluations are similar to students in other contexts. Given the increased focus on teaching evaluations at all levels of the public education process, we believe our study would attract external funding once we can produce a compelling set of initial results.

**H: Timeline**

<b>DATE</b>	<b>PROJECT ACTIVITY</b>	<b>PROCESS</b>
11/1/2012- 12/15/2012	Finalize training and piloting of survey and focus group tools.	All RAs are currently going through training to ensure they understand how to conduct focus groups and how to analyze the quantitative data so that they can hit the ground running at the beginning of 2013.
12/1/2012- 1/15/2013	Obtain names/email address of students to recruit for study from the Department of Institutional Research	We have already had preliminary discussions with the Institutional Research Department and they are able to provide us with a randomized list of students to solicit for our study. We will collect this list and make sure it is cleaned up and ready to send out once school begins in Spring, 2013.
1/15/2013- 2/15/2013	Recruit Survey and Focus Group Participants from the Student Body	<p>Every 100<sup>th</sup> undergraduate student on UNC campus will be recruited via email and given the opportunity to participate in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Online/paper survey experiment</li> <li>b) Focus Group</li> <li>c) Both Survey/Focus Group</li> </ul> <p>Incentives (drawing for \$10 gift cards) will be used to encourage participation</p>

DATE	PROJECT ACTIVITY	PROCESS
2/1/2013- 3/1/2013	Conduct Focus Groups	Students that sign up for Focus Groups will attend a session conducted by graduate RAs
2/15/2013- 4/1/2013	Transcribe Focus Groups	All focus groups will be recorded and then transcribed for analysis
2/15/2013- 4/1/2013	Enter Survey Data into SPSS	Students that complete the survey experiment (online vs. offline) will have their data entered into SPSS so that we can compare the degree to which the answers from the same student may have differed depending on the survey channel (online v. paper). Issues we will examine include variability of answers and length of qualitative comments.
4/1/2013- 6/1/2013	Analysis/Coding of Data (Qual and Quant)	<p>All data will be compared against each other for analysis.</p> <p>Focus group data will be entered into NVIVO and common themes identified (what students think the impact is of online vs. offline evaluations, what sort of feedback they claim to leave for teachers).</p> <p>We will compare these qualitative comments against the survey data we have collected to triangulate our findings and determine if the themes identified in the qualitative data line up with the quantitative data</p>



DATE	PROJECT ACTIVITY	PROCESS
6/1/2013- 8/1/2013	Writing up results	<p>Results of the study will be written up for several different audiences:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Academic Journal pieces for organizational scholars interested in facilitating member feedback through anonymous evaluation (communication and organizational journals)</li> <li>2) Higher Educational Journals examining the design and response rate of course evaluations (focusing on impact of going online with this process)</li> <li>3) Recommendations written from academic audiences (e.g., UNC Charlotte administration and faculty) to provide insight for how to encourage student involvement in the course evaluation process.</li> </ol>

## References

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## Appendix A

### Student Evaluations of Course and Instructor – ONLINE SURVEY EXAMPLE

Welcome to "On-Line Student Evaluation Process" survey, a web-based survey that simulates the instructor evaluation process in an online format. Before taking part in this survey, please read the consent form below. By completing the survey you are indicating your consent to participate in this study. Click on the "Continue to Survey" button at the bottom of the page if you understand the below statements and freely consent to participate in the survey.

#### Consent Form

- This web-based survey is designed to explore student and faculty attitudes, preferences, and perceptions of the course and instructor evaluation process. The study is being conducted by Dr. Loril Gossett, and graduate students David Askay, Greg Berka, and Eliot Hamer with the University of North Carolina at Charlotte. It has been approved by the University Institutional Review Board.
- No deception is involved, and there are no known risks or benefits associated with participation in this study. Participation in the study involves no more than minimal risk to participants (i.e., the level of risk encountered in daily life).
- Participation in the study is broken into two parts. The online survey takes 10 to 20 minutes to complete. The in-class portion will take 15 to 25 minutes to complete.
- All responses are treated as confidential, and in no case will responses from individual participants be identified.
- Participants should be aware, however, that the study is not being run from a "secure" https server of the kind typically used to handle credit card transactions, so there is a small possibility that responses could be viewed by unauthorized third parties (e.g., computer hackers).
- Participation is voluntary. The decision to participate in this study is completely up to you. You may withdraw at any time. Refusal to take part in the survey involves no penalty or loss of benefits to which participants are otherwise entitled, and participants may withdraw from the survey at any time without penalty or loss of benefits to which they are otherwise entitled.

UNC Charlotte wants to make sure that you are treated in a fair and respectful manner. If you have further questions or concerns about your rights as a participant in this study, contact the university's research Compliance Office at (704) 687-3309. If you have questions concerning the study, contact the principal investigator, Dr. Loril Gossett at (704) 687-3699 or by email [lgosset1@unc.edu](mailto:lgosset1@unc.edu).

If you are 18 years of age or older, understand the statements above, and freely consent to participate in the study, click on the "Continue to Survey" button to begin the study.

49er Express - UNCC x UNCC Moodle x Gossett, Lori - Out x academics.georgia x www.celt.iastate.e x Web Survey and Q x Web Survey and Q x

uncc.surveymshare.com/survey/preview/respond?survey\_key=AQAUWWD&current\_page=0&code=6b40c6

Progress

**Class Year**

Freshman  
 Sophomore  
 Junior  
 Senior  
 Graduate Student

**Age**

Select one...

**What is your gender?**

Male  
 Female

**What is your UNCC email address? \*This will only be used internally by the researchers**

**On what kind of device did you first receive (but not necessarily answer) the link to this survey?**

Select one...   
Other:

**On what kind of device are you currently answering this survey?**

Select one...   
Other:

**Instructions: Please consider one specific class you took either last semester (Fall 2011) or this semester (Spring 2012) when answering the following questions.**

**From what college is this course?**

Select one...

Remember, please consider the course referenced above when completing this evaluation.

[Next](#) [Save and Continue Later](#)

Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements:

	Strongly agree 5	Agree 4	Neutral 3	Disagree 2	Strongly disagree 1
My instructor displays a clear understanding of course topics.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My instructor has an effective style of presentation.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My instructor seems well-prepared for class.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My instructor displays enthusiasm when teaching.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
This course has effectively challenged me to think.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements:

	Strongly agree 5	Agree 4	Neutral 3	Disagree 2	Strongly disagree 1
My instructor makes good use of examples and illustrations.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My instructor is readily available for consultation.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My instructor returns papers quickly enough to benefit me.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I feel free to ask questions in class.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The climate of this class is conducive to learning.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements:

	Strongly agree 5	Agree 4	Neutral 3	Disagree 2	Strongly disagree 1
Lecture information is highly relevant to course objectives.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
There is sufficient time in class for questions and discussions.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Grades are assigned fairly and impartially.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
In this course, many methods are used to involve me in learning.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Course topics are dealt with in sufficient depth.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements:

	Strongly agree 5	Agree 4	Neutral 3	Disagree 2	Strongly disagree 1
The grading system was clearly explained.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My instructors' explanations and comments are always helpful.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My instructor is actively helpful when students have problems.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I understand what is expected of me in this course.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
This course provides an opportunity to learn from other students.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements:

	Strongly agree 5	Agree 4	Neutral 3	Disagree 2	Strongly disagree 1
This course material is pertinent to my professional training.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The group work contributes significantly to this course.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I can apply information/skills learned in this course.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Overall, this instructor was effective.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Overall, I learned a lot in this course.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

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Progress

**Outstanding strengths of the course and instruction:**

**Notable weaknesses of the course and instruction:**

**Any other observations, comments, or suggestions:**

## Appendix B

### FOCUS GROUP QUESTIONS

*Students involved with focus groups have completed the sample online and paper course evaluations in the first part of the study*

#### **Question 1:**

Overall, which evaluation process did you prefer? On-line or in-class? WHY?

(Note: Many students may include statement that will address/answer future questions on this list, so make notes of that and be cognizant. That way I can say something like “Samantha mentioned earlier that she feels time pressure to complete in-class evaluations, does anyone else feel that way?” and ask for examples.)

#### **Question 2:**

As we look over the evaluations, what do you think of the questions?

*NOTE – Make sure you have copies of the evaluations handy*

Prompt (Are they easy to understand/answer? Are there any questions you would add/feedback you’d like to give? Are there any questions you would eliminate or change?)

#### **Question 3:**

What do you think is the purpose of conducting course evaluations at the end of the semester?

Prompt (Who reads them? What are they used for? When they are filling them out – who are the students writing to? Has it ever been explained to you – if so – by whom and how?)

#### **Question 4:**

An issue some students are concerned with during the evaluation process is anonymity (they may be concerned that professors can figure out “who said what”). Do you feel either in-class or on-line evaluations are more anonymous?

Sub-question: If not mentioned, ask “Do you feel email reminders that you have not completed the evaluation compromises anonymity in any way?” “Do you feel your feedback is anonymous when you fill out the paper evaluations in the classroom?” Why or why not?

#### **Question 5:**

Do you feel that you took more time completing the in-class or on-line evaluation? Why?

Prompt (do you feel anything that you completed changed from one evaluation to the next? Did the device you used for the online evaluation (phone, laptop, etc) impact how easy/difficult it was to fill out?)

**Question 6:**

In general, do you usually complete course evaluations when they are handed out in class?

Prompt (why or why not? Why do you think some students fill them out and others don't?)

**Question 7:**

IF you do complete the course evaluations, do you generally complete the open-ended questions? Do you feel you are more likely to complete those on-line or in-class?

**Question 8:**

If you had to estimate it, how much time does it take you to complete evaluations now?

If all evaluations were moved to an on-line format (i.e. there is no paper-based/in-class option) where you were given two weeks towards the end of the semester to complete evaluations, what percentage of classes do you estimate you would fill out evaluations for?

Why not all classes? Which classes would you more likely to complete evaluations for?  
(Prompt: Those that you liked or disliked).

**Question 9:**

When completing the evaluation in-class, do students in your class talk during the evaluation completion process? If so, what do they say? Does this influence your evaluation?

Prompt (Do you feel that you have enough time to complete the evaluation in-class? What gets in the way OR makes it easier to fill them out in class? )

**Question 10:**

If evaluations were on-line, do you feel email reminders would increase the likelihood that you complete the evaluation? Wait for answer.

Prompt (What do you feel would make you more likely to complete the on-line evaluations? What gets in the way OR makes it easier to fill them out online?)

**Question 11:**

Many of us have memories of a specific evaluation that we completed in our past. It may be something you did differently than the rest of the class, a time you were overly harsh, or maybe just a funny evaluation. Can you please share your most memorable evaluation?

**Question 12:**

Is there anything else you would like to add regarding on-line vs. paper evaluations or regarding the evaluation process as a whole? Any suggestions you would make?

***THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME!***