

eSET Timing Pilot Proposal
Faculty Senate -- October 11, 2012

Requests have been made to modify the closing date of eSET. The requests fall into three categories: 1) close before finals; (2) close after finals but before grading week; and (3) close at the end of grading week, with access to grades blocked until evaluations are completed. Because adjusting the eSET closing date may have unanticipated effects in response rates and scores, it is important to have data to make an informed decision and not become prematurely “locked into” a decision that may adversely impact faculty. Thus, the Office of APAA will conduct a pilot study in the Fall 2012, Winter 2013, and Spring 2013 to investigate the potential effects of eSET closing dates on student response rates and eSET scores. Data analysis will include statistical comparison of the response rates between terms and changes in scoring trends between terms. Preliminary data show that closing eSET after finals but before grading week statistically significantly reduced the participation rate ($p=0.0001$) (Table 1). As a rule-of-thumb, high response rates reduce bias and increase confidence in the results because the sample becomes more representative of the population.

Table 1. Response rates relative to eSET closing date.

Term	Answered	Declined	Incomplete	Evaluation Start Date	Evaluation End Date	End of Term	Grades Posted	Notes
Fall 2011	67% (n=101,042)	22% (n=32,872)	12% (17,732)	11/21/11	12/16/11	12/09/11	12/14/11	Evaluations ended and holds removed after grades posted (grades were blocked until student completed evaluation)
Winter 2012	66% (89,363)	24% (32,403)	11% (14,515)	03/07/12	03/30/12	03/23/12	03/26/12	Evaluations ended and holds removed 03/30/12, after grades posted (grades were blocked until student completed evaluation)
Spring 2012	58%* (71,069)	22% (27,253)	19% (23,646)	05/30/12	06/18/12	06/15/12	06/18-22/12	Evaluations ended and holds were removed 06/18/12, before grades posted but after finals

* Represents a statistically significant change in response rate $p=0.0001$

We currently have two terms of data with the close date at the end of grading week (with grades blocked until evaluations were completed) and one term of closing eSET following finals, but before grading week. We propose to implement the following data collection schedule:

- Fall 2012 – trial #2 close after finals but before grading week
- Winter 2013 – trial #1 close before finals
- Spring 2013 – could either do a second trial closing before finals or one more trial closing at the end of grading week. This decision can be based upon the results, so we target the study to have the most needed/valuable data.