

# Instructor and Course Evaluation at Purdue

## **The Purdue Instructor Course Evaluation Service (PICES) System**

PICES is a course- and instructor-appraisal service that provides a structured, computer-assisted method for easily generating and scoring questionnaires to collect student opinions about their instruction. This handout provides an overview of the new service, including procedures for ordering, and a description of the instructor report.

The new teaching evaluation service encourages departments to develop their own questions, and assistance with this process is available through the Center for Instructional Excellence. To avoid extra charges, departments are restricted to fitting the items on the front of the standard PICES survey form. Departments that wish to may develop and order customized answer sheet formats through IDP at cost. They may also print their own questionnaires on plain paper and use standard IDP test answer sheets for student responses.

It is imperative that departments interested in developing customized PICES answer forms or department-printed questionnaires consult with IDP well in advance of their use. This is to ensure that the answer sheets can be read by IDP's optical scanning equipment and that IDP will be able to retrieve and store the required information from the demographic items and the two University required core items. The data from customized forms will be returned in an electronic format to the department for their analysis and reporting.

To assist departments in developing questionnaires, a catalog of items is also available. Questions from the catalog can be selected on the "PICES Item Selection Form" and included with department-written questions which will be printed on the questionnaires. In addition, instructor-supplied questions specific to an individual course can be added, although they will not be printed on the standard PICES questionnaire: instructor questions must be handed out separately and answered on the form as "Instructor-supplied question #1," etc. A total of 36 lines of 100 characters each may be included on any standard PICES form.

## **Selecting Items for Summative Evaluation**

To use the standard PICES system, departments or individual faculty may select up to 36 items from the Item Catalog using the "PICES Item Selection Form," available on request. Choices can be recorded on the item selection form by darkening the numbered spaces that correspond with the desired items. The new standard demographic questions and the two University-wide common items are preprinted on the questionnaires. Preprinted items do not affect the total of up to 36 that may be selected. However, the total does include those items required by a department. Items written and required by a department also can be printed on the questionnaire.

Course-specific items supplied by the instructor—using a five-point scale of Strongly Agree to Strongly Disagree — also may be included on PICES survey forms. Those items will appear on the form as "Instructor-supplied item number 1-25" and are counted in the total of up to 36 items. The person administering the questionnaires must provide students with a separate page that contains the specific wording for instructor-supplied items. The use of instructor- or department-supplied items should be discussed with IDP staff members before completing the item selection form.

In team-taught courses, departments may want to provide separate questionnaires for each instructor, containing only instructor-related items. Course-related items can be presented on another form. PICES forms are available in four different colors, so some color-coding is possible to help control confusion among those handling the questionnaires.

Open-ended questions also can be used with PICES. A box is provided on the back of the standard PICES survey form for students to respond to open-ended questions or to make other comments or suggestions. The person administering the questionnaires must provide students with directions for completing this part of the survey. Faculty and departments wishing to have open-ended questions that are not submitted to IDP may give these to

students on a separate piece of paper. The faculty or department in this case process their own results.

All of the completed item selection forms for a department should be returned to IDP by the person designated to coordinate evaluation activities for that area. The surveys will be computer-generated on optical scanning sheets and returned to the department to be administered according to the guidelines outlined in “Standardized Procedures for Student Evaluation of Instruction.”

### **Submitting Completed Surveys for Summative Evaluation**

In accordance with the recommendations of the faculty committee, evaluation forms should be administered by a person other than the instructor. Those instructors utilizing PICES are to have their surveys submitted to IDP for processing, again by a person other than the faculty member or teaching assistants associated with the course. The PICES forms should be accompanied by a “Request for Instructor and Course Evaluation Report” available from IDP. *Please note that either the item selection form or the report request form must be signed by the Department Head or his/her designee.* This requirement is designed to emphasize the need for the department to be involved in the data collection and submission processes, and to identify the departmental representative who is to receive a copy of the report.

### **Interpreting the PICES Report**

IDP will generate two summary reports for each packet of student summative evaluation forms submitted with a Request for Instructor and Course Evaluation Report. The summary reports will be returned to both the instructor and the department head or designee after grades for the course have been submitted. The original student evaluation sheets will be returned to the department for distribution to the instructor, subject to the policies of the department.

At the present time, IDP can provide only limited support for customized analyses and reports beyond the standard reporting described here. These issues should be discussed with IDP personnel well in advance of the time when such analyses will be needed. Departments may conduct their own analyses of scanned data and IDP can transfer course-specific data files to departments for this purpose. A variety of data file formats are possible, e.g., Excel, CSV, etc.

Results will be reported in a computer printout that summarizes the student responses. The first part of the report indicates the demographic makeup of the class, including such factors as the grades the students expected to receive. The body of the report contains the evaluation items plus descriptive statistics that indicate level of performance for each item. The item statistics include response frequencies (which tell how many students selected each response), response percentages, and the median response (which marks the midpoint of the responses).

Student characteristics are listed as frequencies. Example 1 illustrates the way the required demographic information is reported. Departments may add additional demographic questions to custom-ordered sheets or to the standard form as department- or instructor-supplied items.

#### **Example 1.**

SAMPLE INSTRUCTOR REPORT						9/3/2000	
YOUR CLASS		YOUR SCHOOL		EXPECTED GRADE		COURSE REQUIRED	
FRESH	1	AG	1	A	1	Required for major/minor	2
SOPH	1	CFS	1	B	1	Required for school/Univ.	2
JR	1	ED	1	C	1	Elective	3
SENIOR	1	ENGR	1	D	1		
GRAD	1	LA	1	F	1		
OTHER	2	MGMT	1		OR		
		PHARM/		PASS	1		
		NURS/HLS	0	FAIL	1		
		SCI	0				
		TECH	0				
		VET MED	0				
		UNDECLARED	1				

Example 2 shows the body of the report containing a listing of the items originally provided by the departments and/or the items selected from the catalog, the department- and instructor-supplied items, if any, and the University-wide common items that all users automatically receive. Each item is followed by a summary of student responses that includes response frequencies and percentages plus the median response. The example below illustrates how these responses are summarized and displayed.

**Example 2.**

**SAMPLE PICES ITEM REPORT**

		(5)	(4)	(3)	(2)	(1)	
		SA	A	U	D	SD	MDN
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I highly recommend this course.	No.	2	1	2	1	1	3.2
	Pct.	29	14	29	14	14	
Exams are fair.	No.	1	1	2	1	2	2.7
	Pct.	14	14	29	14	29	