Student Evaluation of Courses and Lecturers (SECL) System

Centre for Excellence in Teaching and Learning
Acknowledgements

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Appendix 5 (a) & (b)

Photos of Prize Giving Ceremony for Students and Departments (School of Veterinary Medicine) in Semester 1 & 2 2016/17

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Foreword by the Campus Principal

Teaching and learning is central to the strategic mission of the St. Augustine Campus of the University of The West Indies and is a distinguishing feature of our regional University. The new Student Evaluation of Courses and Lecturers (SECL) System is therefore a welcome initiative, as feedback from students to our lecturers on the course content, delivery effectiveness and learning experiences is essential in the process of quality enhancement in our classrooms. Responsiveness, consistency and timeliness of reporting and feedback are key indicators that will take our University and Campus forward.

I would therefore like to take this opportunity to encourage all staff and students to support this important process, in keeping with our Campus’ commitment to quality and excellence, particularly in the area of teaching and learning. I would also like to commend the Director and staff of the Centre for Excellence in Teaching and Learning (CETL) for their dedicated efforts at ensuring that the UWI, St. Augustine Campus continues to not only meet quality assurance standards, but to surpass them through a process of continuous improvement of our teaching and learning.

Professor Clement Sankat
Pro Vice Chancellor and Campus Principal

Appendix 4

Example of PowerPoint Presentation

Dear Student,
The evaluation process has started. We would appreciate your feedback on your lecturer and course. Please take a moment now to login to your UWI email account, find the evaluation email, then copy and paste your username and password into the required fields and then click sign in and proceed to complete your evaluations. Each evaluation should take 10-15 minutes to complete.

Thank you for your co-operation.
UWI-CETL Team
Foreword by the Deputy Principal

This booklet is a welcome tool in the arsenal of support mechanisms necessary for the improvement of teaching and learning at The University of the West Indies, St. Augustine Campus. It is of absolute importance as a guide to the process of evaluation of faculty by students, which is analysed and the results disseminated by the Centre for Excellence in Teaching and Learning.

The location of this process of analysis of student evaluation of faculty within the Centre for Excellence in Teaching and Learning highlights the value that the University places on teaching and learning. It also underscores its desire to ensure that members of faculty take every opportunity to improve their pedagogical techniques and that they do so taking into account the opinions, perceptions and experiences of the students that they teach.

Best practices among progressive tertiary educational institutions indicate that the narrow focus on publication for promotion and tenure is giving way to an expanded space for the inclusion of teaching as an important criterion of assessment for advancement. Student evaluation reports provide the foundation for further movement in this direction by the University of the West Indies, St. Augustine Campus. The importance of this booklet as a guide for faculty on how to use the reports to develop their skills and personal attributes for effective teaching cannot be overstated.

It is also an important companion document; a must read for all administrators involved in the implementation of student evaluations to ensure the integrity of the process.

I would like to thank the Director and staff of the CETL for its commitment to quality by ensuring that attention to procedure and by extension to quality of output is addressed through publications such as these.

Professor Rhoda Reddock
Deputy Principal
**Introduction**

This booklet provides information and guidelines to all staff members of The UWI, St. Augustine about the Student Evaluation of Courses and Lecturers (SECL) system, which commenced in the 2010-2011 academic year. The evaluation process is implemented by the Centre for Excellence in Teaching and Learning (CETL) and is scheduled for each semester.

The purpose of the SECL system is to provide feedback to Lecturers and other relevant staff members on students’ classroom and/or learning experiences and learning opportunities as can be garnered from their perceptions. Each Lecturer is individually evaluated and feedback reports are provided on the students’ course experiences to him/her as well as the Head of Department (HOD) and the Dean of the Faculty.

The SECL system is a strategic tool for Lecturers who should use the feedback information to improve students’ learning opportunities and address student matters in their teaching that impact student learning. It is anticipated that HODs, and in some cases, Deans will provide Lecturers with the requisite assistance and guidance to improve students’ learning experiences.

**Use of the SECL Reports**

The SECL reports can be most effectively used for developmental purposes primarily aimed at helping Lecturers develop their teaching skills and personal attributes which impact teaching effectiveness. These include communication efficacy, student engagement, and creation of facilitating learning environments. Table 1 summarises actions that may be taken on receipt of the SECL reports, and indicates the attendant value and/or importance of taking these actions.

Following these suggestions will not only impact the quality of student learning experiences at the institution, but will also address steps in the quality assurance process that distinguishes The UWI as a higher education institution of best practice in teaching and learning.
Table 1. Possible Ways of Using the Feedback Provided in the SECL System

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Possible Actions</th>
<th>Importance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Lecturers note perceptions and concerns of their students.</td>
<td>Provides feedback on the students’ class experiences. While students may take the opportunity to report negatively on lecturers, Ramsden (2003) and other higher education researchers show that most of the time students use the opportunity to provide an accurate picture of their experiences. Lecturers must take into consideration what the majority of students perceive.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Lecturers and Heads/Course Coordinators hold discussions relevant to student concerns.</td>
<td>This helps in identifying and articulating the experiences and/or problems that impacted students’ perceptions. There is opportunity to distinguish problems outside the purview of the lecturer from those under his/her control. Corrective steps can be taken in either event.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Lecturers (with guidance, if necessary from HODs/Course Coordinators) set new and realistic goals for students and themselves</td>
<td>Often all problems cannot be addressed at once so setting goals will allow a system for prioritizing. In addition, this underscores the deliberate and systematic enterprise that is teaching. However, setting teaching goals is a skill and the input of the Heads of Departments will be critical in this regard.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Lecturers and HODs/Course Coordinators identify teaching skills gaps.</td>
<td>Opportunity to determine when lack of appropriate teaching skills is indicated e.g. how to teach large classes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. HODs/Lecturers make arrangements for relevant training.</td>
<td>Once the problems have been identified the HOD can arrange for or recommend appropriate training either individually or as a department. Lecturers can attend workshops or consult with the CETL or other relevant entity for assistance.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Lecturers subsequently modify/adjust selected teaching strategies/ways of engaging students.</td>
<td>The SECL system allows for changes in teaching the courses subsequently, e.g. the following semester. (Lecturers also need to obtain feedback during the course to make adjustment to their teaching – this often requires some training).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Compare subsequent student perceptions and performances.</td>
<td>This provides the lecturers with feedback on whether teaching and assessment strategies modified/employed worked, i.e. closes the feedback loop.</td>
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</table>
The SECL Process

The SECL process is initiated by the electronic submission of questionnaires to students for each course, which they complete to indicate their perceptions about their course experience and view of their course lecturer. The SECL process usually commences in the third week of the semester and engages the CETL staff well into the following semester. It involves obtaining lists of all courses being offered by each Department/Faculty, assigned Lecturers, numbers of students in each course and other relevant data. This information is obtained from the Departments and is considered extremely important. If a Department supplies incorrect information, then this will reflect in the Lecturers reports and the courses they teach.

SECL Online System

The SECL system online version utilizing software called CoursEval has fully replaced the traditional paper-based version in Academic Year 2016/17. The process is outlined on page 9. All criteria for the online process must also be met as outlined on page 10. All Deans, HODs, Teaching staff, Department administrators and registered students have an account where they can login and access their respective content each semester.

The CETL does the processing of all questionnaires and submits reports to the relevant Lecturer, his/her HOD and the Dean through the software, as agreed at the meeting of Extended Campus Management Committee held on 11th, September, 2011.

The steps involved in this process are itemised in the context of the semester timeline in the section titled SECL Process Timeline on page 16. Details of the SECL online process is outlined hereunder.

Example of Online SECL Report
Appendix 2(a)

Administrative Responsibilities of the Department

As with the paper-based SECL process, each Department is responsible for initially providing accurate departmental information early in the reporting cycle. The information required for EACH course is as follows.

1. Course Code
2. Course Title
3. Full Name of Lecturer(s)
4. No. of Students Enrolled Per Course
5. Head of Department
6. Dean

The information must be sent via email to the Research Team at the CETL at secreports@sta.uwi.edu by the 3rd or 4th week of the relevant semester.

After this information is supplied, together with corresponding student listings obtained from Campus Information Technology Services (CITS), it is then exported to the CoursEval database software where individual accounts are created and updated for all users each semester. Users include all Teaching staff, Students, Principal, Deputy Principal, Deans, HODs and Department Administrators involved in the SECL process.

There are two components to the SECL questionnaire— a quantitative component the responses to which is based on a Likert scale, and a qualitative component which provides open-ended responses to the questions. Therefore, two types of reports are generated from the SECL process, one that relates to the quantitative section of the form and the other relevant to the qualitative section. The reports are as follows:

Example of Online SECL Report
(1) **Quantitative** – Analysis of the rating scale questions in Section 1. This section utilizes the following Likert scale:

1. Strongly Disagree
2. Disagree
3. Neutral
4. Agree
5. Strongly Agree
6. Not applicable

(2) **Qualitative** – The students’ responses to the open-ended component of the questionnaire are sent in total to the Lecturer, HOD and Dean. This very valuable component of student feedback provides deep insight into students’ course experiences and should be treated as the invaluable tool that it is. Consideration of students’ comments should underpin the discourse among Lecturer, HOD, and Dean.

A Condensed Analysis report is generated as a PDF file (Adobe Reader format). This report is accessed by the relevant Lecturer, HOD and Dean via the CoursEval software portal.

All courses and departments must aim to achieve a $\geq 35\%$ overall response rate. In order to achieve to the foregoing Departments must meet the following criteria.

**Criteria for Using the Online SECL**

1) Each Department must delegate an Administrator (AA) who will commit to the process or another staff member for example a Secretary or Clerical Assistant who can work in their absence and provide an accurate listing as stated on page 9

2) A student liaison/representative must be assigned for each course or year group. He/she must communicate with the Department Administrator regularly regarding the start and end time of the process as well as the response rates for each course. In turn, the liaison must update the students accordingly and encourage them to complete the online SECL before the end date whilst monitoring the response rates

3) The AA or student liaison must go to each class 10/15 minutes before or after and ask students to: login in to their UWI email account, search for the Online SECL notification email (follow instructions contained in the email) and complete the online SECL for their respective course (s). Lecturers must be consulted on a suitable day/time to execute this.

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**Section II**

Please use PENCIL ONLY to answer the following questions

1. What did you like BEST about this course?

2. What did you like LEAST about this course?

3. How do you think this course could be improved?

(Answer this question if applicable)

4. How do you think the following course components could be improved?
   - Laboratory work/practical activities:
   - Tutorials:

5. Any other comments:

**THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME AND EFFORT!**

Back page of student COURSE evaluation form for general purposes.
Appendix 1 (a)

4) Each Department must be responsible for updating all lecturers on all SECL activity. This includes, the method, start and end date of the SECL process for each Semester and lastly the response rates for each course. If a response rate is low for a course the Administrator must notify both the lecturer and student liaison accordingly.

5) Although CETL sends reminders to the students to complete the online SECL, it is also the responsibility of the Department to ask Lecturers and student liaisons to remind the students to check their email addresses and complete the online questionnaire. All Lecturers must be supportive of the online SECL process.

5) All Lecturers must embed a message into myeLearning asking students to check their UWI email accounts and complete the online questionnaire. Together with flyers in Appendix 3.

6) The AA must add flyers provided by CETL (this serves as reminders for students to check their UWI email addresses) to the Department’s notice board when requested.

Advantages of the Online SECL process

The first benefit of using the online system is the faster completion of the reports. The online SECL reports are available two weeks after examination results have been released, whereas the hard copy SECL reports are completed within six months. This gives teaching staff a chance to make relevant changes to their course design and delivery for the next Semester. Another major benefit of the online SECL process is that all HODs and teaching staff will have an account where all reports are stored and can be accessed at any time. This will also provide particular HODs to examine perceptions of students’ experiences across the Department in addition to their perceptions about individual courses.

Challenges of the Online SECL process

Achieving a high response rate is a major challenge for the Online SECL. Both the Department and CETL must work together to find ways to motivate and encourage students to check their UWI email accounts and complete the online SECL questionnaire. Recommendations on how to increase response rates is outlined on page 19.
Navigating through the Online SECL Software

The online SECL process occurs once each Semester (twice a year). When the survey becomes live it will remain active for three to four weeks. Within that period a series of activities occur. These activities are illustrated next.

Firstly, before the survey becomes live all Lecturers will receive two emails. One email (See Figure 1) contains individual login details such as username and password. It is recommended that all account holders change their password upon first login.

Figure 1 Login Screenview Sample

The second email contains course details with student listings (See Figure 2). Upon receipt of emails all Lecturers must verify the information provided and contact the CETL Research team at seclreports@sta.uwi.edu should any problems arise.

Figure 2 Course Details Screenview Sample

Appendices
FAQS

Which staff members are evaluated?
Full time and part time lecturers only.

Can a guest lecturer be evaluated?
No, a guest lecturer should not be evaluated.

If there is more than one lecturer per course or module, should they be individually or collectively evaluated?
Each lecturer should be individually evaluated per course or module.

Are Theses supervisors and Projects evaluated?
No, they are not only courses.

I am new to this process how do I access my CoursEval account if I have one?
Please contact any member of the CETL Research Team Ms. Kim Inniss or Mr. Marc Garcia via seclreports@sta.uwi.edu and your login details will be sent to you via email.

Next, click on the link circled in Figure 3 to access the site, this will open the CoursEval portal.

Figure 3 Highlighted Login details Screenview Sample

Then, copy and paste your username and password contained in Figure 1&3 and place into the required fields in Figure 4 and click sign in.

Figure 4 CoursEval Portal where username and password will be copied and pasted Screenview Sample
After logging in, all teaching staff will be able to view a list of each course taught and their corresponding response rates (when the survey is active).

Figure 5 CoursEval Portal course details and response rates Screnview

Both Administrators and HODs will be able to access response rates for all courses within their department (See Figure 6) whereas Lecturers will only be able to view response rates for their course(s) only (See Figure 5).

Figure 6 CoursEval Portal Administrator and HOD Screnview

For a video illustration on Navigating through the CoursEval software please refer to the following guide for logging in and viewing response rates https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qvv2UYIHCC0 and accessing reports https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KVi6n3lurQ.

**Reports**

All online SECL reports are completed and accessible two weeks after examination results have been released. All departments must provide the relevant information listed below in week 3, so that the students' are able to complete the questionnaire before classes end for the semester.

**Tips for increasing response rates for Departments**

In addition to managing the SECL online process, the CETL research team also work together with Marketing and Communication to promote the process namely through advertising on social media platforms such as Facebook and Twitter; via email on What's On; creating flyers and videos (for all users). However, assistance from AAs, Lecturers, student liaisons are also needed to disseminate information and to further promote the process. Each course should aim to achieve a response rate of ≥ 35%. As mentioned previously obtaining this rate can be challenging and below are a few recommendations on how this can be achieved.

- Students tend to be more motivated to complete their evaluations once their voice is being heard and acted upon, therefore Lecturers must communicate the value of course evaluations with their students. Thus, it is important to highlight changes made to the course based on previous feedback and how useful it is for improving course design and delivery, this way students would know the impact of completing their online SECL and accept the process. Student liaisons must also communicate with their class-mates with regards to the start time, end time of the online SECL process and encourage them to complete their evaluations.

- Schedule 10-15 minutes before or after class for students to complete the evaluation using their phone, tablet, laptop or PC. Wi-Fi is needed. A student liaison/representative or AA should direct this exercise

- The Lecturer via the Department can reward students for completing their evaluations, this can be done by; giving tips for an upcoming exam if the response rates increase by a certain percentage etc. or to give an additional review session

- Promote course evaluations through; myelearning placing a slide or PowerPoint illustration (Appendix 4); playing a one minute video https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=i550MQE7b0s or https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1qgxeFWIgs during class time

- Prizes are awarded to one student per faculty (once they have completed all their evaluations) as well as to departments with the highest response rates.
Heads of Departments

✓ Ensure that the designated SECL Administrator has the correct email address for all Lecturers on file
✓ Ensure that each Lecturer liaises with the AA or student liaison to schedule 10 – 15 minutes a week for each class to complete the online evaluation
✓ View instructional video on how to Navigate through the CoursEval software https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qqv2UY1HCC0 and https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KVt6n3IurQ
✓ Check your email, login to your account and change your password
✓ Ensure that all lecturers have verified the information listed such as course names, course codes and students’ enrolment are correct
✓ Ensure that AAs have placed the advertisement provided by CETL on the notice board and/or added to department social media account (if any)
✓ While the survey is live ensure that Lecturers show PowerPoint slide/Flyer and they schedule time for the AA or student liaison to conduct the exercise within each Semester. Lecturers must alert students during class each week and encourage them to complete the survey explaining the usefulness of feedback
✓ Survey reports for each Lecturer and course will be available 2 weeks after examination results
✓ Survey Reports must be saved electronically and in a central area such as the y: drive, easily accessible for future HODs.

Students

✓ Ensure that you are registered for your course(s)
✓ Check UWI email account for login details, verify that the correct course information is provided and proceed to change the default password to a more memorable one.
✓ View video on how to use the CoursEval software https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=i550MQE7b0s or https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1qgxeFtYtqs
✓ Login
✓ Complete survey during specified time
✓ Check for prizes after the survey is closed.

Accessing Reports

All Lecturers will be able to view their individual reports for each course evaluated. Each HOD will have access to each Lecturer’s report within their department and lastly each Dean’s will be able to access each lecturer’s report for all departments within their faculty. All reports (in PDF format) will become available two weeks after examination results have been released. Each HOD must save the reports electronically and in a central area such as the y: drive, so that future HODs would be able to access. Please note that Department Administrators would not have access to reports due to confidentiality.

Figure 6 illustrates a CourseEval portal Screenview for both AAs and HODs containing the Departments’ name, number of reports or courses evaluated for a particular semester and the overall response rate for the department. Each department must achieve a ≥35% overall response rate. In order to see a detailed list of each course being evaluated and the corresponding individual response rate, click on the number listed below # Reports. Figure 7 (the final step) is a detailed list of all courses and their respective response rate. All users will not be able to view report(s) while the survey is live and will be notified via email when the reports become accessible.

Figure 7 Individual course details and respective response rates.
Online SECL Time-line schedule for Department Administrators

A suggested timeline to facilitate timely administration of the online SECL is found on Table 2. It is recommended that the timeline be accommodated by Departments.

Table 2 Schedule for Online SECL process

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Responsible Party</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Email to Department administrator to request information: course title; course code; name of the lecturer; and number of students enrolled</td>
<td>CETL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6-7</td>
<td>All lecturers are sent two emails containing login details such as username, password and students listings (which must be confirmed). Any errors must be communicated right away to the CETL Research team via email. CETL Research team will correct errors before survey becomes live.</td>
<td>*Department</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Survey open for students to complete. All Administrators must notify all lecturers, their HOD, students and student liaisons of this. Administrators must also review the Criteria for the Online SECL process on pages 10 -11.</td>
<td>CETL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Reminder emails sent by lecturer/administrator to students to complete survey</td>
<td>*Departments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11-12</td>
<td>Survey closes</td>
<td>CETL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&gt;13</td>
<td>Email notification sent to Lecturers, HODs and Deans when reports are available for viewing. Prizes are awarded to one student per faculty as well as to the Department that has achieved the highest response rates</td>
<td>CETL</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* = Administrative Assistant/designated administrator

CETL’s Responsibilities

The CETL, through a designated research team, is responsible for administering and managing the online SECL process. This is done by setting the online survey activation start and end date, requesting department information, creating the surveys and user accounts, providing software support to users, monitoring response rates, distributing reports and communicating with all users throughout the process ensuring an overall effective SECL system. Other users responsibilities are outlined on page 17 & 18.

Summary Check List & Guide for each Online SECL User during the process

Lecturers

✓ Ensure that your AA has the correct email address for you on file (particularly for part-time staff)
✓ Check your email from CETL and ensure that the information listed such as your course name, course code and students enrolment are correct
✓ View instructional video on how to navigate through the online evaluation software https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qqq2UY1HCC0
✓ Display Flyer or PowerPoint slide to students during class each week while the survey is live Appendix 3 & 4
✓ Allow time in class for survey completion (liaise with your designated department administrator to schedule a 10-15 minute period)
✓ Survey reports will be available two weeks after examination results.

Administrators

✓ Upon request submit information on course code/course name/FULL lecturer name and email address to secreports@sta.uwi.edu
✓ Post flyers (received from CETL) on department notice board/social media account(s) (if there is one) for students to view at the start of the evaluation process (9th week of semester)
✓ View instructional YouTube video on how to navigate through the CoursEval software on page 14.
✓ Check your email, log in to your account and change your password (if you have not done so already)
✓ After you have logged in you are to monitor the response rates for each Lecturer/course in your department. We ask that you liaise with each Lecturer and set aside 10 –15 minutes during class time to ask students to complete the survey using any electronic device such as laptop/pocketable phone (WI-FI is required).

Student Liaisons

✓ Communicate with the relevant department AA to schedule the evaluation exercise
✓ Communicate with students regarding the start and end time of the process. Ensure response rates are ≥ 35% per course.