FS0809res-2
Resolution on Ad-Hoc Committee on Teaching Evaluations

The Faculty Senate affirms the paramount importance of the accuracy of the campus teaching evaluation system, both for the continual improvement of teaching and for accuracy in administrative procedures and consumer information.

Recognizing that rapidly changing technologies and public interests continually alter the teaching environment, the Senate further charges the President to appoint an ad hoc faculty committee to review and recommend to the Faculty Senate such improvements in the current system as the committee may find appropriate.

Status of Student Evaluations of Faculty Instruction, November 19, 2008

Student response sheets are processed by a scanner, which produces "batches" containing data from up to 1000 scan sheets. Each semester there are approximately 25 batches of scan sheets. The batches are uploaded into a database. Faculty are able to view their teaching evaluation results through the CET web site, by running a script which accesses their data from the database.

IT has identified and corrected three instances of batch mis-handling which affected the Fall 2007 and Spring 2008 evaluations:

1. For the Fall 2007 semester, it appears that a batch was uploaded twice into the database. The result was that a number of courses showed more students having evaluated the course than were actually enrolled.

2. For the Spring 2008 semester, it also appears that a batch was uploaded twice into the database.

3. Also for the Spring 2008 semester, a batch or more of student response sheets was scanned but not uploaded into the database. The result was that a number of courses showed no students having evaluated the course, when in fact the courses were evaluated.

IT has produced new tools which check for duplicate uploading of batches, generate internal reports which show what batches actually were uploaded, and contain other logic checks which greatly reduce the opportunities for incorrect processing of scan sheets.

The database for the Fall 2007 and Spring 2008 evaluations have been re-generated using the new tools, and the problems identified above have been corrected. In the cases where

batches were uploaded twice, evaluation scores are unchanged (each student response sheet was counted twice, but the average response remains the same). In the cases for Spring 2008 where batches were not uploaded, evaluation scores are now available.

There will remain isolated problems caused by mis-routing of scan sheets, incorrect course or instructor numbers provided to students, incorrect scan sheet "bubbles" filled in by students, and other mistakes related to human handling of evaluation sheets.

The scripts which generate the reports used for Outstanding Teaching awards are being rewritten, and the selection process for those awards will take place when the rewrite is complete.

Faculty are encouraged to check their teaching evaluations for Fall 2007 and Spring 2008, and report any concerns to Dr. Allan Pringle, CET chair, at pringle@mst.edu.