Case Study: Bossier Parish Community College

Challenges

Increasing enrollment put increased pressure on Bossier Parish Community College’s paper-based course evaluation process and the staff that supported that process. Costs associated with paper course evaluations were growing along with enrollment, and it often took another full semester to process surveys and deliver results to faculty and administrators. Additionally, online courses were multiplying which further suggested the paper-based evaluation process was becoming obsolete.

Prior to implementing EvaluationKIT, Bossier Parish Community College tested an in-house course evaluation software solution for conducting online course evaluations as a means to reduce the resources required and administrative overhead associated with conducting course evaluations. Because the homegrown solution didn’t offer seamless integration into BPCC’s Blackboard Learn™ learning management system, evaluations were time-consuming to set up and administer, and without features to automatically remind students they had surveys to complete response rates were disappointing. “Additionally, it would take a week or more of staff time just to print individual course reports and deliver to individual faculty, killing plenty of trees in the process,” says Kathleen Gay, BPCC’s Dean for the Division of Educational Technology.

Still convinced that an online course evaluation system could be the most effective way to deal with administering course evaluations to their growing student body, BPCC set out to find a software solution that would be simple to set-up and administer, but also offer compelling features to drive student participation in surveys.

Solution

To meet its online course evaluation objectives, BPCC decided to pilot EvaluationKIT for all online courses in the Spring of 2012. BPCC was looking for a course evaluation system that would help achieve an acceptable rate of return, at least 50% or greater. The solution also needed to be cost effective, meaning the system needed to pay for itself by eliminating paper costs (surveys and reports) and reducing the amount of staff time needed to administer course evaluations each term. Additionally, the administration at BPCC wanted a solution that would allow the departments to collect student feedback on additional questions, above and beyond the standard college questions, and combine all of the feedback into useful, actionable information. Finally, the process for distributing the results needed to be effortless on the part of staff and convenient for those receiving results – deans and department chairs – so they’d be more likely to use the information.

“EvaluationKIT was the one solution that not only offered the core features and functionality we were looking for, but did so at an affordable price...plus they offered to let us pilot the software for a full semester absolutely free.”
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Implementation

As with any technology implementation, BPCC was anxious to minimize the time spent on implementation and especially interested in making as light a footprint as possible on internal IT staff resources. Because EvaluationKIT is designed specifically around the course evaluation process for a college or university, initial set-up was a breeze and complete within a week of BPCC receiving initial training. Additionally, the turnkey integrations offered by EvaluationKIT made connecting the system to BPCC’s Blackboard system extremely straightforward, a process that took the campus Blackboard administrator about an hour to complete.

Results

By implementing EvaluationKIT, Bossier Parish Community College has been able to address the challenges of scaling their evaluation process cost-effectively to meet the demands of increasing enrollment. Additionally, thanks to EvaluationKIT’s unique Response Driver technology, response rates for the initial semester reached record levels.

- BPCC saved time with turnkey data integration that allowed for course, instructor, and student information to flow directly from Blackboard into EvaluationKIT.
- Results of course evaluations could be made available immediately after the survey period, saving months of administrative time and empowering instructors and deans with insightful information immediately after the term.
- Response rates surpassed the previous year’s average of 35% the very first day surveys were opened, and ended on an all-time high, averaging 80%.
- EvaluationKIT paid for itself by replacing paper processes and eliminating the need to buy and process scannable forms.

Key Takeaway

Ultimately student success and retention at BPCC will benefit from the improvements in course evaluation administration. The accuracy and breadth of feedback will be improved, the speed with which feedback is analyzed and distributed will increase, and these will be accomplished while saving costs and resources. This means deans have more timely data, and richer information, which will allow them to make changes, enhancements, and improvements more quickly – bringing improvement to quality faster.

Key Quotes:

“Deans have more timely data, and richer information, which allows them to make changes, enhancements, and improvements quickly – bringing improvement to quality faster.”

“Ultimately student success and retention will benefit from the improvements in course evaluation administration.”

- Kathleen Gay, Dean Educational Technology

About EvaluationKIT: Headquartered in Denver, CO, EvaluationKIT supports the online course evaluation process for students, faculty, and administrators each year, helping to streamline the process and conserve campus resources. We are so confident in the success of our solution that we offer a free pilot program to qualified colleges and universities, who can then try EvaluationKIT before committing to a license. For more information, please visit us at www.evaluationkit.com.