# Increasing Response Rates and Eliminating Paper SETs with Bossier Parish Community College

## The Challenge

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 student evaluations of teaching [SETs] 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 Watermark Course Evaluations & Surveys, Bossier Parish Community College tested an in-house course evaluation software solution as a means to reduce the resources required and administrative overhead associated with conducting course evaluations. Evaluations were time-consuming to set up and administer, and response rates were disappointing. Though course evaluations were conducted digitally, results were distributed to faculty and administrators manually. "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.

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

## The Solution

BPCC was looking for a course evaluation system that would help achieve an acceptable rate of response of 50% or greater. Other requirements included:

▸ Simple setup

▸ Easy integration with Blackboard Learn

▸ Cost effective

▸ Flexibility to accommodate additional questions

▸ Robust reporting capabilities

▸ Effortless for users and administrators of the system

▸ Digital distribution of results to stakeholders

After evaluating available systems, BPCC decided to pilot Course Evaluations & Surveys for all online courses.

BPCC was anxious to minimize the time spent on implementation and especially interested in making as light a footprint

### Fast Facts

**TYPE**
Community College

**ENROLLMENT**
5,800 students

**SURVEYS ANNUALLY**
75,000

**LMS**
Blackboard Learn™

**Achieved response rates of 78%-100%, up from 35%**

**Paper savings alone offset the cost of Course Evaluations & Surveys license. No more buying bubble sheets, printing reports, etc.**



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as possible on internal IT staff resources. Initial set-up was a breeze and complete within a week of BPCC receiving initial training. Additionally, the turnkey integrations offered by Course Evaluations & Surveys made connecting the system to BPCC's Blackboard system extremely straightforward, a process that took the campus Blackboard administrator about an hour to complete.

## The Win

By implementing Course Evaluations & Surveys, Bossier Parish Community College has been able to cost-effectively address the challenges of scaling their evaluation process to meet the demands of increasing enrollment.

Course Evaluations & Surveys paid for itself by replacing paper processes and eliminating the need to buy and process scannable forms. In addition, BPCC saved time with turnkey data integration that allowed for course, instructor, and student information to flow directly from Blackboard into Course Evaluations & Surveys.

> " Course Evaluations & Surveys was the one solution that not only offered the core features and functionality we were looking for, but did so at an affordable price. "
>
> **Kathleen Gay**
> **Dean of Educational Technology**

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%.

## Looking Ahead

Course Evaluations & Surveys will be an important tool supporting BPCC to meet the needs of a changing student body. With the ability to distribute a wide range of course evaluation and survey questions and analyze results immediately, faculty and administrators will be better equipped with the insights they need to inform decision making.

> " 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 of Educational Technology**

## About Us

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