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Social Science Testing Lab Survey

Spring 2004 Survey

* PLEASE NOTE *

As you know, the tasks of administering Social Science tests was previously done by 2 coordinators, one for written and one for computer. Now, both of those functions are completed by a single coordinator.

In addition, testing now takes place in our newly remodeled "lab space" on the 4th floor.

Needless to say, things have changed dramatically beginning just 2 terms ago, in the Fall of 2003. Expectations and procedures on the part of students, instructors, and staff, although different than before, can hopefully result in the same or better quality of service, now and in the future.

It is very important that we get your feedback in order to better serve the students who use the lab and the instructors who are serviced by this facility. Thank you, in advance, for taking the time to complete this survey.

1. How do you use the testing lab? CHECK ALL THAT APPLY

written testing (pencil/paper/scantron)		50.0%	(9)
computer testing		55.6%	(10)
makeup testing		94.4%	(17)
drop in testing (after class for slow tester completion)		33.3%	(6)

2. As you know, it is necessary to fill out a form to ensure that testing occurs in the way you intend.

Whe Regine, the testing lab coordinator, receives your filled-out form, you RECEIVE and email confirmation of the information you enter. This becomes her "work ticket", the way by which she organizes the lab calendar, your specific file folders, and the way she "instructs" the lab aides.

Did you fill out the online testing center request form (<http://teach.lanecc.edu/childsr>) in order to use the testing lab?

Yes		88.9%	(16)
No		11.1%	(2)
TOTAL		100.0%	18

3. If you answered "Yes", is it difficult to access the form?**If you answered "No", why did you not fill out the form?**

#	Response
1	easy but i would not have remembereed to do it unless prompted by e-mail
1	I did not know I needed to fill form out for 1 or 2 makeup exams. I deliver test and student personally.
1	I only did it at the beginning of the term. I don't recall any difficulties.
1	I prefer hard copy forms. They are easier for me than online form
1	It is not difficult to access.
1	It was not difficult to access the form.
4	no
1	no, it seems to be very easy to access the form.
1	No, though it does not seem to cover all eventualities well
1	No.
1	Not at all. Perhaps make a bit more technologically streamlined (# of tests selected from popup that would make appropriate number of date fields)
1	Not difficult at all.
1	The form has been easy to access, and easy to use. Receiving a copy of my form by email has been tremendously helpful.
1	The form is easy to complete. I especially appreciate the reminder at the beginning of each term.
1	Too busy with begininng of the term stuff. I'll fill it out ASAP.

4. You may not know that the new testing lab was largely funded with the new student tech fee money (TACT - for computers) with the caveat that the department cooperate with other instructors from departments across campus who would like to use, but do not have, a testing facility within their own location.

With the growing number of instructors who decide to use the new testing lab each term, completing this online form is an organizational necessity and procedural requirement.

Do you have any suggestions for the online form(s)?

#	Response
1	"use a separate course # for each prep, unless you will be treating classes in the same prep differently." <-Tthis statement is a little confusing. Shouldn't it say to use a separate description--the course number is going to be the same. Also, shouldn't it say to use a separate form and description for preps unless they are going to be treated the SAME? The new abbreviated form seems easier to fill out--thanks.
1	It would be nice if the on-line form had a pull-down menu to make filling out the form quicker. For instance,a pull-down menu so one could mark: Make-up test, hold for one week HS 333 Your Name, etc. Or: Midterm, hold for two weeks, HS 222, etc. It would still require time, but it would be faster.
1	Keep doing whatever you are doing and make it part of the "culture" of the department
1	My only suggestion would be to add one more section on the form for a 5th exam. I give 5 exams a term, and there are only 4 sections for specific exam instructions.

3 no

1 No, although it is unclear to me if Regine wants a different form for each class or if a single form with different class information is ok.

1 No.

1 None -- whatever meets the needs of the lab coordinator and aides is fine by me.

1 Not so much a suggestion as a question: Is it necessary to fill out an online form when bringing students in who were slow completing an exam in class? I am assuming not. Let me know if I'm wrong. Regarding make-up exams: I must admit, I have not been filling out the online form for those. They occur irregularly and infrequently. I attach typed instructions to the exams when I put them in Regine's box. This is convenient (for me) and assures that the instructions and exams start off in the same place. Going online for make-ups adds one more step to the process and is less convenient. Having said that, I would, of course be willing to do otherwise if it more effectively serves the needs of the lab.

1 there should be a separate form for telecourses vs regular courses

5. While the testing lab is now being run by half the number of classified employees it took to run it before, the commitment to serve students and instructors is of the highest importance. The testing lab hours have actually been EXPANDED this year, including being open on strategic Saturdays during the term.

Are you and your students satisfied with the testing lab operating hours?

Yes		88.9%	(16)
No			(0)
!Other I don;t use lab enough to comment		5.6%	(1)
!Other Not only satisfied, but amazed that you have managed to do this.		5.6%	(1)
TOTAL		100.0%	18

6. To be sure that materials are placed in the WRITTEN testing lab correctly it is necessary to give them first to the lab coordinator, Regine. If you have used the written lab for any form of testing (scheduled/makeup/completion), are you satisfied with the process of how the testing materials are handled? (eg. placing it in testing lab coordinator's mail box, handing to lab coordinator, NOT the lab aides, directly)

Yes		61.1%	(11)
No		16.7%	(3)
Not applicable to me (I don't use written testing)		16.7%	(3)
TOTAL		94.4%	18

7. If you answered "No" to the above question, what changes would you suggest?

Response

1 I answered yes above, but do have a comment. As a part-timer, it can be difficult to get exams to Regine before I need that exam to be posted. I often work at home, and occasionally, I forget to bring a copy of my exam a day or two before that exam needs to be posted. It would be helpful to know hoe much time Regine needs before posting an exam.

1 Problems include that last-minute phenomenon when you need a test in there but Regine is not around, and MANY times, my students have been told there was not an axam because the file was in the wrong place or the lab aide didn't look carefully enough. This is particularly a problem when student come from remote locations after hours to take a test

1 See above, but, okay, I can go by the rules.

1 Tests have been lost, aids have been unable to find series as well as single tests. I would suggest getting colored hanging folders and or colored file folders for each instructor. Maybe by color coordinating and flagging, as they do in medical offices (in simpler fashion) things won't get lost.

8. To better serve students who come in to take tests, faculty are being asked to more accurately determine their test starting and stopping dates and times. Of course these can be changed with a direct communication to the testing lab coordinator (NOT a student lab aide) through email or in person.

In order to reduce the amount of paperwork that the lab coordinator and lab aides have to go through, paper tests are typically returned as quickly as possible to your mailbox after students have taken them (after the faculty submitted deadline).

Are you satisfied with the process of the tests being returned to you?

Yes  77.8% (14)

No (0)

Not applicable to me (I don't use written testing)  16.7% (3)

TOTAL  **94.4%** **18**

9. One of the most formidable challenges in running the testing lab with the highest quality of service to students AND TEST SECURITY for faculty, is the training of the student lab aides.

As you may also know, the turnover rate for these employees is quite high, as lack of Learn and Earn funds, Workstudy requirements/cutbacks, and the very nature of the 10 week term come into play. As a result, student lab aides do NOT know all of the instructors by name and/or face. However, student lab aides DO KNOW the filing system set up by Regine, the testing lab coordinator.

In order to maintain test security and accountability, it is important that ONLY the lab aides or Regine access the files while they are in the filing cabinet in the testing lab. Instructors can have Regine add to, pull, or review their files at any time, but doing so directly has already resulted in problems such as missing tests and other confusion, not to mention distraction in the lab.

With this in mind, are there any improvements you would like to see in the testing lab?

Response

1 Even though we have given Regine the tests and the proper process has been followed, the aides have time and time again placed completed tests in the wrong folders. Maybe there needs to be ongoing review of the filing system with aides and if they cannot follow the system, maybe they shouldn't be there.

1 Have lab aides continue to "scan" and walk the room more often (if possible).

1 I think there needs to be more communication between student workers regarding make-up exams. There have been times when I have email Regine to make a make-up test available, but lab aids don't keep track of that make-up exam. This has never been an issue with Regine. Instead, the lab aids just don't check both the regular exam file and the make-up exam file. Perhaps there could be a daily changes notebook, which each aid could read as they begin their shift.

1 If there is not already a file folder that contains records of all the tests available, then there should be. The instructor can pick up the form, fill it out, and submit it with the tests, and then it gets placed in the folder, so there is no chance of students being turned away when a test is actually there. It can also note where it should be filed, decreasing organizational difficulties. Also, There needs to be a place where students sign in the TIME they took the test. The can be critical information for instructors.

1 If you are saying I cannot go in before class and ask the aid to remove a completed make up test from my folder and hand it to me, then I disagree with the procedure. Timing is better if it is okay to do this.

1 It appears to work fine from my perspective.

1 no

1 No, I let Regine run it.... no problem.

1 No. It seems very reasonable (and wise) to limit knuckleheaded faculty direct access to the files.

1 None.

1 Security cameras to be able to settle accusations of cheating as opposed to having to rely on say-so of student lab aids. This can turn into a he-said, she-said situation which would be solved by an inexpensive low-res camera with tapes that are reused daily or weekly. Also, a fake security camera might discourage students from attempting to cheat.

10. Computer tests are, by far, much easier to administer than pencil and paper tests. There are no files to misplace, no papers that students may mistakenly write on, and no ability for tests to be "stolen" and test integrity and security compromised.

All of the finer points of "testing" students are controlled by the instructor directly, from the convenience of his/her office computer, with absolutely no printing and graphics deadlines/lead time to worry about. This includes the test start and stop days and times, which student L# are allowed to take the test, allowing for "makeup" tests, or students who miss the test deadlines, getting their scores whenever they want, having test item analysis at their fingertips, and easy importation into their existing Excel gradebooks, if they have them.

This said, are there are any problems that you instructors using TestPilot and computer testing are having? Do you have any suggestions to "solve" them? Training needs? covered by the previous items?

#

Response

1 all previous glitches were minor, and seem to have been solved now

1 I am just now learning TestPilot.

1 I don't use the computer lab because I'm not sure how to do so. A training or consultation service would be helpful.

1 I have used test pilot for my HUM 100 telecourse and am VERY pleased with the results. So efficient, secure, convenient, etc. That being said, I would like to point out a few potential advantages of written testing in the classroom: 1) students can

ask for clarification/explanation from an "expert" (their instructor) as they take the exam (afterwords is obviously too late). 2) students end up with a hard copy of the exam that can help them better review and understand missed concepts the very next class session after taking the exam when I put aside time to return and discuss the exam. 3) This allows for timely, heartfelt (and often blunt) feedback from each specific class regarding topics covered on the exam, relevancy of exam questions, suggestions for improvement, etc. 4) A hard copy of the exam is obviously quite handy for students to have on hand when preparing for the comprehensive final. 5) writing a new exam for every class, every term is clearly more work for the instructor. I would suggest that it is also clearly more effective for the students. Exams are likely to be more relevant to each specific term (unique topics covered, nature of the students, "personality" of the class, etc). 6) Exams can potentially be so much more than just testing devices; they can be powerful learning tools as well. Please don't misunderstand, after my very positive experience with online testing with my telecourse, I find the prospect of applying the technology to my lecture courses quite seductive. I am a lazy butt by nature and can see clear advantages. However, I am still struggling with the distinction between effective vs. efficient testing/teaching methods and trying to keep an open mind as my tolerant co-workers continue to educate me. Blah, blah, blah, pardon me for running on at such length with my special little thoughts on this topic.

1 I need more training, but have no time....

1 Initially, this might require term by term trainings/updates. Once instructors decide to use TestPilot full time, they most always "get the hang of it" themselves (trial and error)

1 It would be useful to have problems with tests sent via email, as I generally see email messages before phone messages and check email at home more often. Also, when a student is turned away because the test is unavailable or the deadline had expired, it would be nice to have the student contact information along with the test they were attempting to take.

1 None.

1 Training would be great. The testing seems to work fine, but i don't know how to do the excel and item analysis stuff.

11. It might amaze you, but MANY of your students do NOT know their instructors' name when they come in to take an exam, either written or computer. Of course, this makes it difficult for lab aides to serve them.

Students must know their class/subject, instructor name, L number, and the test name that they are taking in order to be served. What suggestions can you offer for either the lab coordinator, other instructors, or both, that will help us to better serve students when they come to use the lab?

#

Response

1 Besides ID, you could require them to bring a print out of their schedule to confirm that they are enrolled in the course they are accessing, and to verify all the other relevant info.

1 I give students (before the first exam) a sheet of paper that lists all of the pertinent information (my name, class, exam dates, lab hours, need for L# and photo ID, etc) that they need for the exam. I've seen many of them carry it with them to the exam, which I assume means it's useful. It may also be helpful to have a "wall of shame" -- small photos of instructors so that students can point to their instructor (sadly, I'm not sure this will solve ALL of the problems, but it would likely solve many of them).

- 1 I will put this information in my syllabus and explain to my classes. This might become a department-wide syllabus "requirement", just as the Disability Services paragraph is a campus-wide requirement. Be sure teachers from OTHER departments who use the lab do the same.
 - 1 I would guess they already have a class schedule handy... If not a sign posted up front... know your instructor's name might help...
 - 1 It is not the lab coordinator or aides problem. Or the instructors. Maybe the student needs a wake-up call and feedback that they need to take charge of their own business.
 - 1 Perhaps a huge sign on the lab door and/or above the lab aide's desk that says something to the effect of, "DO NOT EVEN THINK ABOUT ASKING TO TAKE AN EXAM UNLESS YOU HAVE YOUR L# AND INSTRUCTOR'S NAME" Or something to that effect. Lab people would silently point to it. Or perhaps, the same sentiments expressed on a little card that could be handed to the student? Electro-shock therapy? Faculty obviously play a role in this process. Clear instructions on the syllabus and verbal reinforcement before each exam couldn't hurt.
 - 1 Perhaps having a list of instructors names would help students. Sometimes a student cannot tell you the correct name, but they will recognize the correct name when they see it. I do tell my students that they need to know my name for exams in the lab!!
 - 1 place sign outside of lab to address the requirements. include requirements on syllabi and post requirements on instructors/general bulletin boards. Strict enforcement of the rules.
 - 1 Put up a series of pictures of instructors so they can identify the correct professor. Any student not having ID, pencil or knowing their L#, simply be refused to take a test. Another possibility is for instructors to issue a test taking ticket in class that must be taken to the lab which will identify teacher and test to be taken. Could easily be just a small piece of paper with appropriate information on it. No ticket, no test.
 - 1 Suggest instructors tell students the first day and in syllabi that when they go in for testing they will need photo I.D., L number and instructor and class name. Also, instructors could make sure to name their tests with the full name of their class, i.e. "REL 203 - Religions of the Middle East - Test 1" as opposed to just "REL 203 - Test 1". This will help students identify the correct class as class names are easier to remember than course numbers.
- 12. Take into consideration everything you've experienced with the testing lab, both now and practices in the past.**

Are there any problems that you or your students have had with the lab that have not been covered by the previous items?

#

Response

- 1 A test was lost... but now it's found. No, considering all they do, they do a great job!!!!
- 1 Aides talking on cell phones, aides talking among themselves loudly, students talking amongst themselves, obvious cheating (observed personally on several occasions) bathroom breaks allowing for the possibility of cheating, aides visiting with friends who come in, aides not roaming the modules, books and papers on table tops while tests are being taken, eating (loudly) and just plain unprofessional behavior. For me, security is a major issue which may require me to give tests in class again because I believe there has been excessive amounts of cheating. I have

lost three different exams, they have been taken from the lab which means I have to reconstruct new tests.

1 Continue to expand hours if/when appropriate

1 I've had a number of students come to me to ask about test questions that they weren't sure about, while pulling out a piece of paper that they'd written the questions on while they were in the lab and carried it out with them. Of course, these are all good students (no one else cares that much about the answers), but creatingt studnets could be taking questions out of the lab to share with other students. This is a big concern to me and yet, I know there are limitations in the lab, especially because some instructors allow notecards and some do not, and there are many people to watch. Not sure what a solution might be, but are "notecard" users placed in a different area than "non-users" so that at least a quick scan would show if something was amiss? I'm not sure this is the solution, and also I realize that cheating can't be eliminated entirely, but it would be nice to minimize the possibility in some way.

1 No, Regine is always responsive. She is always around and she is doing a good job from my point of view.

1 No. It works great! Thank you Regine and staff.

1 No. This is a good survey. I appreciate the opportunity. While I have had a few "glitches" this year, they have primarily come from learning new systems. Overall, I am more confident with the new lab operations. Thanks!

1 Not really. I very much appreciate all the hard work and effort Regine and her worker bees put into making the testing lab run smoothly and effectively. Regine clearly makes choices, changes and decisions with the best interests of the students in mind. What a refreshing point-of-view. I am truly thankful to have her here.

1 Quality of certain lab aides in knowing where (untaken)written tests are. I have been contacted a number of times, told there were no tests left, come over to the lab only to find that there actually tests still there, but either misplaced or the lab aide didn't know where to look.

1 Students have complained that lab aids talk too much with friends while students are taking exams. I have also had ssveral students show up to take a make-up exam, but the lab ais tells them that the exam is not in the lab. When I go to the lab to check that for myself, the aids only check the regular exam file. When I ask them if they checked the make-up exam file, they say no. When I ask them to check, they find the exam right where it should be. Perhaps aids could check both files automatically? Also, aids have not always given students all parts of my exams, even when students tell the aid that there are 2 sections to the exam, and the student even points to the second section of the exam in the exam file! I think, overall, that aids need to take more initiative when helping students. (Some aids have been great about this, while others have been really apathetic.)

1 There was an occasion where I announced in class that I was extending the deadline to Saturday but forgot to notify the lab or extend the deadline in the test settings. Several students made a special trip to the college and were turned away. I don't anticipate this happening again, but it might be useful to have the option of allow unauthorized students to take the exam with a notation that it was after the deadline or that the student's L number was not in the class list (sometimes students register late in the term because of problems with past due accounts or just add late after I've imported the class list into testpilot).

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