

# Re-engineering the Faculty Communication Proficiency Survey

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### **ABSTRACT**

The System Academic Affairs Office of a Midwestern research university annually surveys undergraduate students attending each of its four campuses, to assess student satisfaction with the communication abilities of instructional faculty. The survey recently was re-engineered in an attempt to improve the quality of survey results. This research discusses this re-engineering effort.

## **Outline**

- Introduction
  - o Survey
  - o Team
- Re-engineering Objective
- Previous Survey Instrument
- New (Re-engineered) Survey Instrument
- Key Steps in the Re-engineering Process
- Summary
- Next Steps
- Q&A



# The UM Faculty Communication Proficiency Survey

- A System Academic Affairs Office annual survey of U/G students, all four campuses.
- To access student satisfaction with the communication abilities of instructional faculty.
- Results are intended to be relevant and useful to System Academic Affairs, Campus provosts, academic deans, and academic department chairs.
- Administered in Spring semester to students enrolled as U/G's the preceding Fall semester.
- Has been conducted annually for 10+ years.
- Has had the assistance of the System IR Office since inception.
- Has been an on-line (Web-based) survey for the past ?? years.



**RE: Faculty Communication Survey** 

Mxxxxx, Pxxxxx X (S&T-Student)

Sent: Thursday, April 09, 2009 10:58 AM

To: UM VP ACAD FacCom Survey

What exactly is the purpose of this survey?

**Pxxxxx** 

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**RE: Faculty Communication Survey**UM VP ACAD FacCom Survey

**Sent:** Thursday, April 09, 2009 11:33 AM **To:** Mxxxxx, Pxxxxx X (S&T-Student)

Pxxxxx,

I'm new to this annual survey project this year. The project has been ongoing for quite some time. Its intent, I understand, is to assess student impressions of the communication proficiency of UM faculty (to see what those impressions are now, and to see whether these impressions are changing or have changed over time). UM is keenly aware that students have many choices as to where they initially choose to pursue their higher education and where they subsequently choose to continue and complete their higher education, and so is very interested in learning all that it can about whatever might impact their classroom experiences here at any of the four UM campuses.

However, I'm simply a statistician. I'll forward your note to Dr. Kandis Smith, UM Vice President of Academic and Student Affairs. This is Dr. Smith's project. I'm certain Dr. Smith can provide a much more complete answer to your question.

Thanks again for taking the time to complete the survey.

Ronald D. Thompson, Ph.D. Associate Institutional Research Analyst UM Office of Institutional Research and Planning

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**From:** Smith, Kandis M.

**Sent:** Thursday, April 09, 2009 12:27 PM **To:** Mxxxxx, Pxxxxx X (S&T-Student)

**Cc:** Thompson, Ronald D. (UM Inst. Research)

**Subject:** RE: Faculty Communication Survey

### Pxxxxx,

We have been doing this survey for ten years. Based on the results of the survey, we work on making changes to improve the classroom experience for students. We have implemented several programs over the years to help faculty become better teachers. We developed a program for new faculty called the New Faculty Teaching Scholars Program. We also developed a program to help international faculty with their communication skills. As we make these changes we continue to do the survey to see if the changes are making an impact and to see if there are other areas in which we might find ways to improve the experience for students.

I hope I have answered your question and thank you for taking the time to do the survey and help us understand.

## Regards,

Kandis M. Smith, Ph.D. Assistant Vice President for Academic and Student Affairs University of Missouri

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## The Team:

- UM System Academic Affairs
  - o [Interim] VP
  - Assn't VP (Kandis Smith, Project Owner & PI)
- UM System IR&P
  - o Director
  - Assoc Director
  - o Sr IR Analyst
  - Assoc IR Analyst (R.D. Thompson, Proj Manager & IR Functional Lead)
- MU Assessment Resource Center
  - Assoc Director
  - Sr Project Coordinator (Paula McFarling)
  - Sr Project Coordinator
  - Project Coordinator
  - o Programmer/Analyst



# The Charge:

Re-engineer the Survey to generate results that are less ambiguous and more useful to academic administrators.



# UM-System Survey of Faculty Communication Proficiency

Please take a few minutes to complete this survey. This information will allow us to understand your classroom experiences last semester and will help us move forward in improving student educational experiences.

- OI agree to take this survey.
- I do not agree to take the survey.



# UM-System Survey of Faculty Communication Proficiency

## This question is required.

Please take a few minutes to complete this survey. This information will allow us to understand your classroom experiences last semester and will help us move forward in improving student educational experiences.

- I agree to take this survey.
- OI do not agree to take the survey.

# UM-System Survey of Faculty Communication Proficiency

1. How many courses were you enrolled in during the 2007 Fall semester: (Please use the numbers at the top of your keyboard.)

2

# UM-System Survey of Faculty Communication Proficiency

2. To the best of your knowledge, how many of these courses were taught by:

Graduate teaching assistants (GTAs): 1

UM-System
Survey of Faculty Communication Proficiency

2a. How many of these GTAs were:
native speakers of English?
non-native speakers of English?

Continue

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Survey of Faculty Communication Proficiency

3. How many of these courses were taught by:
Faculty members: 1

Continue

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Survey of Faculty Communication Proficiency

3a. How many of these faculty members were:

native speakers of English?

non-native speakers of English?

Continue



# UM-System Survey of Faculty Communication Proficiency

4. Of all the courses you took in Fall 2007, how many courses were taught by instructors whose inability to communicate effectively in any way impeded your learning of the course material:

(Please use 0 for none)

1



# UM-System Survey of Faculty Communication Proficiency

5. Please report, to the best of your ability, the NAME of the course where the instructor's inability to communicate effectively impeded your learning of the course material.

If no course, select "continue."

1<sup>st</sup> Course Name: ABCDE

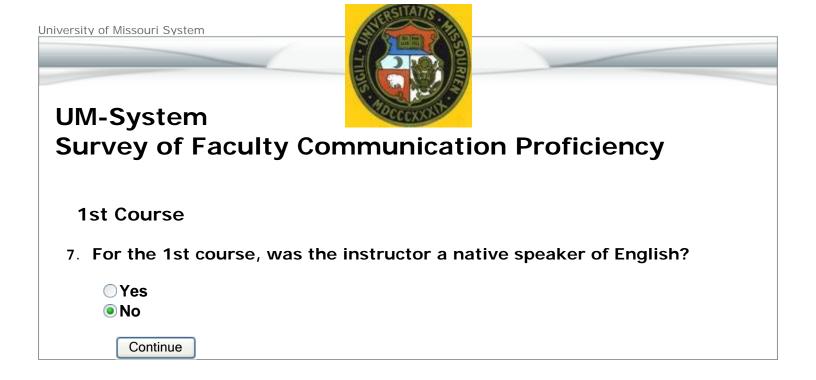
**○** Graduate Teaching Assistant

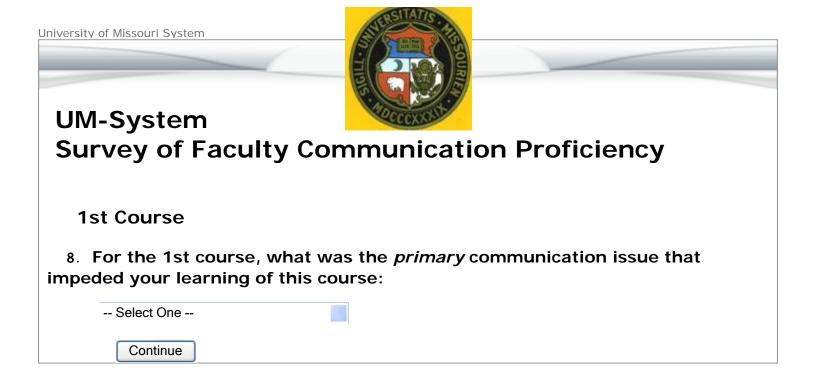
Continue

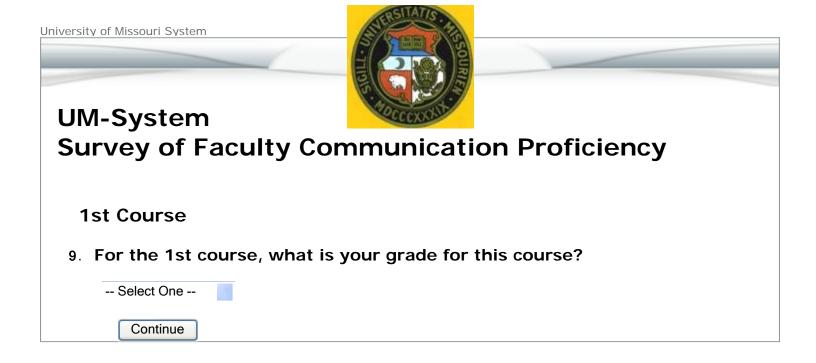
UM-System
Survey of Faculty Communication Proficiency

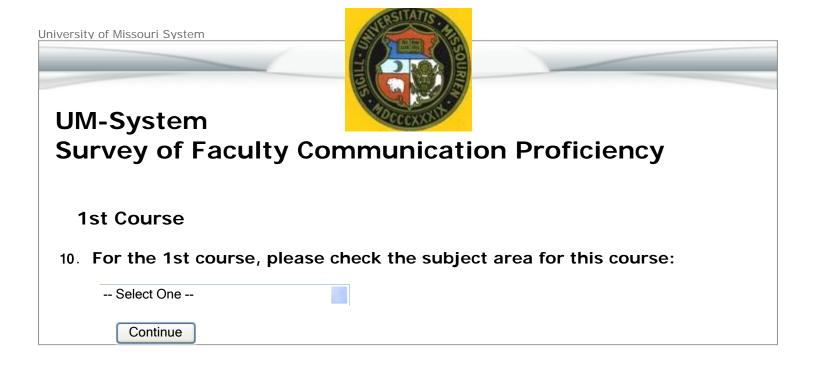
1st Course
6. For the 1st course, was the instructor a

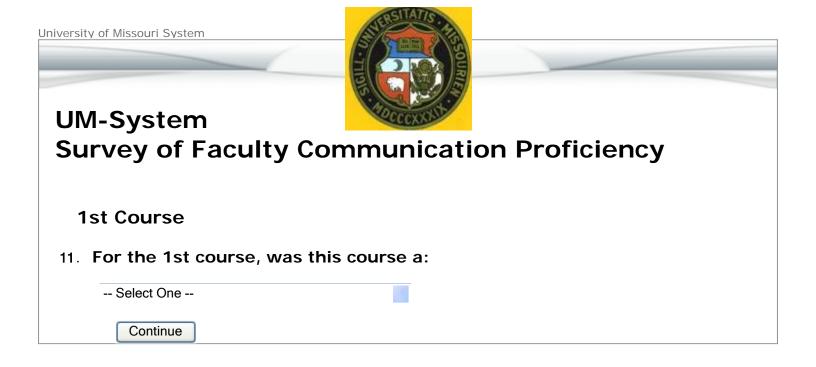
Faculty Member













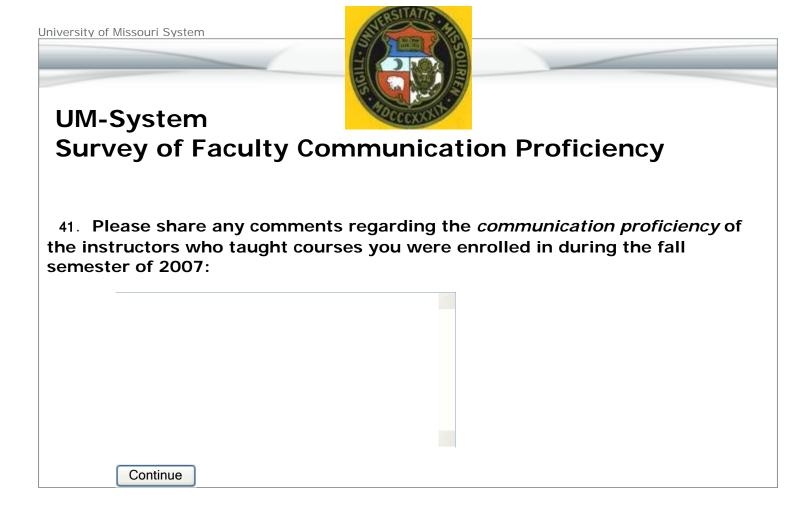
# UM-System Survey of Faculty Communication Proficiency

12. Please report, to the best of your ability, the NAME of the course where the instructor's inability to communicate effectively impeded your learning of the course material.

If no course, select "continue."

2<sup>nd</sup> Course Name:







# UM-System Survey of Faculty Communication Proficiency

# Thank you for your participation

If you have questions or concerns about the survey, please contact Kandis Smith at <a href="mailto:smithka@umsystem.edu">smithka@umsystem.edu</a> in the Office of the Vice President for Academic Affairs (573-882-6396).

If you have any questions about your rights as a recipient of this request you may contact the Institutional Review Board at 573-882-9585.

For technical difficulties contact Paula McFarling at 1-800-366-8232 or at umcarcresearch@missouri.edu.



# The Charge:

Re-engineer the Survey to generate results that are less ambiguous and more useful to academic administrators.

# The Challenges:

- Student recall of course/section numbers and instructor ranks (etc.) is unreliable.
- Courses often have components (e.g., lecture, lab, recitation) taught by different instructors.
- "Useful" depends on administrative level: VP, provost, dean, chair.

## **Our Solution:**

Retain an on-line (Web-based) delivery, but exploit UM Institutional databases as much as possible, and ask only critical questions.

# **Critical Questions:**

- 1. Is your instructor's communication ability impeding your learning?
- 2. If yes, then why/how?
  - a. Ineffective use of class discussion
  - b. Ineffective use of lecture
  - c. No constructive feedback
  - d. Couldn't answer questions clearly
  - e. Heavy accent was hard to understand
  - f. Instructor's poor listening skills
  - g. Lack of rapport with students
  - h. Spoke too rapidly
  - i. Spoke too softly
  - j. Lack of patience
  - k. Poor command of English
  - Lack of clarity in explanations
  - m. None of the above



#### Table 2.

Faculty Communication Proficiency Survey 2009 (Pertains to UM courses taught FS2008) Survey Period Mar 12 - Apr 13, 2009

#### Data Fields Contained in the Final Raw Data File.

NOTE: In this file, each row corresponds to student-course-section-component. (So, for example, there are multiple rows per student, almost certainly.) If a student has submitted his survey, then he will have given a response to each component of each section of each FS2008 course he was enrolled in. Each row represents a student's response(s) to one of the course-section-components he was enrolled in in FS2008.

#### Course Fields

INSTITUTION
DESCR\_TERM
UM\_C\_CAMPUS
UM\_CLASS\_JRSD

UM\_ACAD\_GRP\_DESCR College or School UM\_ACAD\_ORG\_DESCR Department

SUBJECT e.g., CHEM (as in "CHEM 115" or "CHEM 0115")
CATALOG\_NBR e.g., 115 (as in "CHEM 115" or "CHEM 0115")

UM\_S\_DESCR e.g., Elements of Chemistyr I

CLASS NBR

COMPONENT Lecture, Lab, Recitation, etc.

**CLASS SECTION** 

MEETING\_TIME\_START
MEETING\_TIME\_END

FACILITY\_ID BLDG\_CD ROOM

BLDG Most recent name of campus building that has building code BLDG\_CD.

TIMESTRT MEETING\_TIME\_START, re-formatted for on-line display.

TIMEEND MEETING\_TIME\_END, re-formatted for on-line display.

DAYS Meeting days re-formatted, for example, as MTuWThFSaSu.

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MidAIRTalk 20091111 FinalRawDataFileFields a



#### Course Fields (continued)

IFCSDEPT Indicates whether this course belongs to one of the "identified" departments.

NFAC No. faculty listed for this component of this section of this course.

NSTU No. students enrolled in this component of this section of this course.

NFCSSTU No. of surveyed students enrolled in this course-section-component.

Instructor Fields (IMPORTANT: These fields should be used here only if NFAC = 1).

NAME

**EMPLID** 

INSTR\_LOAD\_FACTOR

UM\_OCC\_CODE

UM\_OCC\_DESCR

SEX

**ETHNICITY** 

ETHNICITY\_DESCR

CIT STATUS

CIT\_STATUS\_DESCR

TEN\_STAT

TEN\_DESCR

RANK

RANK\_DESCR

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#### Student Fields

**STUDENTID** 

FIRST\_NAME Student's first name.

LSFM NAME Student's full name: Last, Suffix, First, and Middle.

EMAIL Student's UM e-mail address.

IN\_STATE Indicates whether this student is a MO resident.

METRO Indicates whether this student resides in greater St. Louis or Kansas City.

AGE

SLEVEL Student Level (frosh, soph, junior, or senior).

FNAME

**RANDOMNO** 

SSO ID

students

IFCSSTU Indicates whether this student is a surveyed student (i.e., whether he satisfies

certain criteria and took at least one course in at least one of the "identified"

Random number. Unique identifier. Used for randomly selecting pilot test

departments.

IUMSPSTU Indicates whether this student was enrolled in SP2009 at the same UM campus

as he was enrolled in in FS2008.

#### **Response Data**

AGREE\_DISAGREE

**IMPEDED** 

PRIMARY\_ISSUE

SECONDARY\_ISSUE

**CLASS\_COMMENT** 

FINAL\_COMMENT

COMPLETED

SYSTEM\_MESSAGE

IRSPNS Indicates whether this student submitted a survey.

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### Thompson, Ronald D. (UM Inst. Research)

From: Kandis Smith [FacComSurvey@umsystem.edu]
Sent: Wednesday, March 11, 2009 11:27 AM
To: Thompson, Ronald D. (UM Inst. Research)

**Subject:** Faculty Communication Survey

# University of Missouri Faculty Communication Survey 2009

#### Dear Ronald,

Please take a few moments to complete this confidential survey. Your responses will help us better understand your Fall Semester 2008 classroom experiences, which will help us improve the quality of the educational experiences of all University of Missouri students. You probably will complete this survey in five minutes or less.

Although we encourage you to respond, please note that you are under no obligation to do so, nor will there be any penalty if you choose to decline to answer any questions. Your participation is completely voluntary. You must be at least 18 years old to participate, and you are free to withdraw from participation at any time without penalty. There are no risks involved other than those encountered in everyday life.

### Confidentiality

When you click the link to begin this survey you will be asked to log in. You will log in with your **UM e-mail** address (<a href="mailto:thompsonrd@umsystem.edu">thompsonrd@umsystem.edu</a>) and your **UM password**. By logging in you provide this website with the information it needs to display the list of courses you took in Fall 2008.

Your responses will remain confidential. Personally identifiable data will **not** be reported, and responses from all students will be aggregated (i.e., "summed") before being reported.

#### **BEGIN THE SURVEY**

#### **Contacts**

If you have questions or concerns about this survey, please contact Dr. Kandis Smith, UM Assistant Vice President for Academic and Student Affairs, at FacComSurvey@umsystem.edu or at (573) 882-6396.

If you have any questions about your rights as a recipient of this request, please contact the Campus Institutional Review Board (Campus IRB) at (573) 882-9585.

For technical difficulties, please contact Paula McFarling at <a href="mailto:umcarcresearch@missouri.edu">umcarcresearch@missouri.edu</a> or at 1-(800)-366-8232.



## **Faculty Communication Survey 2009**

Below is a list of courses our records show you took during Fall Semester 2008. For each course, please complete the following statement:

My course instructor's ability to communicate **[impeded / did NOT impede]** my learning in this course.

Course	Course Title	Day	Time Bldg/Room	Impeded	Did NOT Impede	I did NOT take this course	
COMMUN 2100	MEDIA COMMUN IN SOCIETY (LEC)	TuTh	11:00 GEOSCI 123 11:50		$\bigcirc$	•	
SPAN 1100	ELEMENTARY SPANISH 1 (LEC)	MTuWTh	15:00 A&S 202 15:50			0	
ENGLSH 1810	INTRO FILM: BEGINNG- 1945 (RSD)	TuTh	11:00 CENTER 1220 12:15		$\circ$	0	
Continue							
Download	CSV File						
<u>Download</u>	Student Id List					17% complete	



## **Faculty Communication Survey 2009**

ENGLSH 1810

INTRO FILM: BEGINNG-1945 (RSD)

TuTh 11:00-12:15 **CENTER 1220** 

•	What was/were	the pr	rimary o	communica	tion iss	ue/s tha	at impede	ed your	learning	in :	this
	course?										

--- Please Select ---

(Primary issue)

and

--- Please Select ---

(Other issue)

• Please share any additional comments regarding the communication proficiency of your instructor for this course:

Continue

**Download CSV File** 

**Download Student Id List** 

67% complete



## **Faculty Communication Survey 2009**

• Please share any final comments regarding the communication proficiency of the instructors who taught courses you were enrolled in during Fall Semester 2008:

Submit Your Responses

THIS CANNOT BE UNDONE

Download CSV File

Download Student Id List

83% complete



### Faculty Communication Survey 2009

Thank you for your participation.

Log out, please, by closing all your browser windows and quitting your browser.

#### Contacts

If you have questions or concerns about this survey, please contact Dr. Kandis Smith, UM Assistant Vice President for Academic and Student Affairs, at FacComSurvey@umsystem.edu or at (573) 882-6396.

If you have any question about your rights as a recipient of this request, please contact the Campus Institutional Review Board (Campus IRB) at (573) 882-9585.

For technical difficulties, please contact Paula McFarling at 1-(800)-366-8232 or at umcarcresearch@missouri.edu.

**Download CSV File** 

Download Student Id List

100% complete

TABLE 1.

Faculty Communication Proficiency Survey 2009 (Pertains to UM courses taught FS2008)

Survey Period Mar 12 - Apr 13, 2009 <sup>1</sup>

#### **Summary of Survey Activity**

	No. Studen	ts Surveyed		No. Students Who Responded (AGREE_DISAGREE = 0 or = 1)						
	All Students	Students Enrolled in SP2009 <sup>2</sup>	No. Undelivered Surveys <sup>3</sup>	No. Students Did NOT Submit Survey <sup>4</sup>	No. Students Submitted Survey	TOTAL				
1104 4	0.636	0.022	401	262	1 201	1.564				
UM_1	9,636	9,032	481	263	1,301	1,564				
UM_2	2,676	2,390	5	20	321	341				
UM_3	3,730	3,428	1	31	657	688				
UM_4	2,955	2,551	87	43	340	383				
TOTAL	18,997	17,401	574	357	2,619	2,976				

### NOTES:

- 1 The survey period commenced with the initial mass e-mail, sent Thu 03/12/2009 at ~11:30 a.m. The first reminder mass e-mail was sent Tue 03/31/2009 at ~11:30 a.m. The second and final reminder was sent Wed 04/08/2009 at ~01:30 p.m. The survey period ended when the survey app was turned off Wed 04/15/2009 at ~9:30 a.m. Response data were downloaded 04/15/2009 at ~05:10 p.m.
- 2 SP2009 enrollments are from PS\_UM\_CENSUS\_ENRL on 04/17/2009 (when UMSL had not yet been frozen).
- 3 Data for Undelivered Surveys correspond to activity which occurred after the second reminder was e-mailed.
- 4 These students either declined to participate (AGREE\_DISAGREE = 0), or agreed to participate (AGREE\_DISAGREE = 1) but did NOT complete and submit a survey (i.e., did NOT click the <SUBMIT> button) on the survey.

TABLE 4.c. Faculty Communication Proficiency Survey 2009
(Pertains to UM courses taught FS2008)
Survey Period Mar 12 - Apr 13, 2009

Summary: UM\_3 Student Impededness, Identified Courses Only, by Department 1,2

	No.	Median	Median No.	Median No o. Responses	Total	No.	Response	No.	No. Impedes	Most Pre	evalent Prii Impeded	mary Reason for ness <sup>5</sup>
	Courses 3	Course Enrollment		Responses per Course per Course Enrollment (%)	Enrollment 4		Rate (%)	Impedes	per No. Responses (%)	Code(s)	Freq(s)	Freq This Code per No. Impedes (%)
UM_3												
UM_3 Dept_01	114	37	6	16.8	4,211	711	16.9%	146	20.5%	2	31	21.2%
UM_3 Dept_02	106	19	4	16.1	2,356	389	16.5%	54	13.9%	2	15	27.8%
UM_3 Dept_03	138	10	2	17.2	1,932	349	18.1%	56	16.0%	2	14	25.0%
UM_3 Dept_04	113	14	2	15.6	2,402	431	17.9%	65	15.1%	2	16	24.6%
All Four Departments	471	16	3	16.7	10,901	1,880	17.2%	321	17.1%	2	76	23.7%

#### NOTES

- 1 "Identified" UM\_3 courses for the 2009 Faculty Communication Proficiency Survey are any course offered by the Departments Dept\_01, Dept\_02, Dept\_03, and Dept\_04.
- 2 The surveyed population for the 2009 Faculty Communication Proficiency Survey consists of students who satisfy the following criteria: They (1) must have been full-time, degree-seeking UM undergraduates in Fall Semester 2008, (2) must have been least 18 years of age during FS2008, and (3) must have taken at least one of the "identified" courses during FS2008. All students in the surveyed population were sent a survey announcement. (That is, this is a census.) To be included in these analyses, a student must have completed and submitted a survey (i.e., he/she must have clicked the <submit> button on his survey questionnaire). NOTE: These analyses consider "identified" courses only.
- 3 Only "identified" courses having at least one surveyed student enrolled. (See Note 2, above.)
- 4 Enrollments of surveyed students in "identified" courses, only. (See Note 2, above.)
- 5 Codes for reasons for impededness:
  - 1 Ineffective use of class discussion
  - 2 Ineffective use of lecture
  - 3 No constructive feedback
  - 4 Couldn't answer questions clearly
  - 5 Heavy accent was hard to understand
  - 6 Instructor's poor listening skills
  - 7 Lack of rapport with students

- 8 Spoke too rapidly
- 9 Spoke too softly
- 10 Lack of patience
- 11 Poor command of English
- 12 Lack of clarity in explanations
- 13 None of the above
- 14 No other issues. [This code is valid for the survey item "Other Reason," only.

TABLE 5.c.1. Faculty Communication Proficiency Survey 2009
(Pertains to UM courses taught FS2008)
Survey Period Mar 12 - Apr 13, 2009

Summary: UM\_3 Student Impededness, Identified Courses Only, UM\_3 Department of Dept\_01<sup>1,2</sup>

	No.	Total	No.	Response	No.	No. Impedes	Most Pre	evalent Prin Impeded	mary Reason for ness <sup>5</sup>	Most Prev	ralent Seco	ndary Reason for ness <sup>5</sup>
	Courses <sup>3</sup>	Enrollment <sup>4</sup>	Responses	Rate (%)	Impedes	per No. Responses (%)	Code(s)	Freq(s)	Freq This Code per No. Impedes (%)	Code(s)	Freq(s)	Freq This Code per No. Impedes (%)
UM_3												
UM_3 Dept_01	114	4,211	711	16.9%	146	20.5%	2	31	21.2%	12	32	21.9%
Ranked Faculty Other Faculty <sup>6</sup> GI/GTA/GRA Unknown <sup>7</sup>	39 26 0 43	1,008 1,381 1,822	162 223 326	16.1% 16.1% 17.9%	37 35 74	22.8% 15.7% 22.7%	2 2	10 7 14	27.0% 20.0% 18.9%	12 12 12	8 9 15	21.6% 25.7% 20.3%

#### **NOTES**

- 1 "Identified" UM\_3 courses for the 2009 Faculty Communication Proficiency Survey are any course offered by the Departments Dept\_01, Dept\_02, Dept\_03, and Dept\_04
- 2 The surveyed population for the 2009 Faculty Communication Proficiency Survey consists of students who satisfy the following criteria: They (1) must have been full-time, degree-seeking UM undergraduates in Fall Semester 2008, (2) must have been least 18 years of age during FS2008, and (3) must have taken at least one of the "identified" courses during FS2008. All students in the surveyed population were sent a survey announcement. (That is, this is a census.) To be included in these analyses, a student must have completed and submitted a survey (i.e., he/she must have clicked the <submit> button on his survey questionnaire). NOTE: These analyses consider "identified" courses only.
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- 9 Spoke too softly
- 10 Lack of patience
- 11 Poor command of English
- 12 Lack of clarity in explanations
- 13 None of the above
- 14 No other issues. [This code is valid for the survey item "Other Reason," only.]

6	Includes faculty	who have been	denied tenure, f	faculty who are	NOT eligible for tenu	re, and "other" faculty

7 Includes courses taught by a single faculty member who is NOT specified, as well as courses taught by more than one faculty member



# **Key Steps in the Re-engineering Process**

- ↓ UM AA meets with UM Provosts to learn concerns.
- ♣ Oct 2, 2008. AA meets with UM IR.
- ♣ IR analysts separately develop recommendations.
  - o discuss ideas with MU Registrar.
  - o discuss ideas with ARC.
  - o discuss ideas with UM DoIT.
- ♣ IR presents recommendations to AA; AA and IR agree on approach; IR functional lead is appointed.
- ♣ AA and IR begin working with ARC.
  - o AA decides scope.
  - o AA and IR develop Survey layout and logic.
  - o IR generates student roster with detailed course lists.
  - ARC computes cost estimate.

## (continued)

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# **Key Steps (continued)**

- ♣ AA gives go-ahead; AA submits IRB renewal; AA, IR, and ARC agree on timeline; ARC commences programming Survey Application.
- Project receives IRB approval.
- AA and IR discuss with UM Registrars.
- ♣ IR requests and receives DoIT ISAM approval; ISAM notifies the campuses.
- ♣ ARC and IR conduct initial test (using staff and ~4 students from each campus).
- ♣ ARC and IR conduct pilot test (using ~100 students from each campus)
- Mar 12, 2009. Active survey period commences!



# **Summary**

- Objective: Re-engineer the Survey to generate results that are less ambiguous and more useful to academic administrators.
- Outcome: Team-based approach led to a simple, straightforward process that produced a survey instrument that met the objective (and, in addition, proved to be a kinder, gentler, and less painful survey for students to take).

# **Next Steps**

- Conduct the SP2010 Survey.
- Develop specific suites of reports to correspond to the various academic administration levels.