

A History of SPTE
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With the advent of the emphasis on teaching evaluation in the early 1970's, the Liberal Arts and Sciences Teaching Improvement Committee (LASTIC) was formed. Among other assignments, the committee developed a questionnaire to provide formative information for instructors. There were no plans at the time for the questionnaire to have summative uses. The committee developed a fifty-item questionnaire (LASTIC). Accompanying the LASTIC instrument was another form (the comment sheet) designed to gather open-ended feedback for the instructor.

Faculty found the nature of the feedback provided by this instrument not to be easy to use. I attended a meeting of the committee to which interested faculty were invited. I volunteered to factor analyze the instrument and develop a new presentation of feedback from the instrument. Over the next few years, we developed separate norm bases for each college and each division of the Fairmount College.

Prior to 1984, the faculty member using LASTIC (later SPTE) carried out the administration of the instrument. He/She would ask a student in the class to administer the instrument, but often the individual surveys were returned to the instructor. In 1985, the administration asked the Social Science Research Laboratory to take over the administration of the instrument. From that point to date, SSLAB proctors have administered the instrument. The instructor is no longer involved.

As the instrument was now being used for summative purposes, the LASTIC committee requested that the name be changed. In 1985, the Dean's Council approved the changing of the name to the Student Perceptions of Teaching Effectiveness (SPTE) instrument. The following year, we revised the open-ended comment sheet and began administering SPTE.

In June 1988, there was a statistical update to the SPTE profile. We evaluated the stability of scales and found they were stronger and better defined than previously reported. We then computed new norms.

We then examined the relationship between class size and the proportion of students taking the class primarily because it was required with the scales and items. We found that motivation to take the class was related to several scales and well as a relationship between class size and Rapport. We then started statistically correcting the scores to eliminate these potential biases. We refined the factor names and redesigned the profile.

In 1994, we revised the comment sheet. Pittsburg State University (**KS**) began using SPTE. In 1995, the profile was again revised emphasizing percentiles which was against our advice. We also started administering the instrument to summer classes.

In 1995, I decided to direct my research toward teaching evaluation. My research group began the long needed revision of SPTE. We reduced the administration time by about 10 minutes, added a four item *a priori* motivation scale, added two validity items¹, deleted items that weren't related to any of the scales and added several new items. We tried out the new form on a variety of classes that volunteered to use both forms. In the fall of 1996, the current form was used for the first time. In addition, for the first time, we corrected all scores for *a priori* motivation (how much you wanted to take the class before you took it) and the number of students filling out the form. That fall we again revised the comment sheet.²

In 1998, we began the development of the ESPTE (the experiential version applicable to practica and other classes of that type). Because of the small number of such classes, we just now have enough data to possibly produce feedback for users of that form. In the fall of 1997, we began offering a SPTE interpretation guide for faculty wanting more

¹ If a student fails either of these two items, their questionnaire is discarded.

² We had an item that asked what you liked the best about the instructor, which generated some interesting responses as you might guess. We changed it to 'What did you like about the course and/or instructor.' This seems to have stopped the inappropriate responses.

information.

In the fall of 2002, we began a major study of the relation of open-ended comments to the numerical scores and examined several statistical issues with SPTE. The distributions of teaching evaluation scores are negatively skewed; i.e. there are substantially more high scores than low scores. This causes percentiles to be more than a little misleading. Upon completion of that study, we revised the profile such that it relates directly to the quality of the open-ended comments. We feel that this revision is much more reflective of an instructor's actual performance than the percentiles. Tenure, promotion and salary increments reinforce it's use.

With the current emphasis on online learning, we are in the process of developing a form for online use. This has been a slow process as we need a lot of data to do this. We developed a temporary form which is currently in use:

1. Started with all SPTE data eliminating items not appropriate for online classes. e.g., 'I went to class with enthusiasm.'
2. Factor analyzed the remaining items.
3. Added several items related to online classes and as data came in, we factored them separately.
4. Added open-ended items applicable to online classes.
5. Waited for data to come in.

As response rate is a significant problem with online evaluation³, it has taken a while, but we now have barely enough for an all online analysis, at least a first attempt.

Changes you should expect (hopefully this semester (Fall 18) if not, next semester) if you use the online SPTE:

1. You will no longer get two separate profiles as the added online items were included in the analysis.
2. Some of the factors we will report will be a bit different.
3. Separate norms won't occur until we have approximately 300 online classes (minimum) from a college or division. Once that is achieved, separate norms will start automatically.
4. The reported comments will continue as they have in the past.

That is where we are today.

³Current response rate is about 25% for the online form and 95% for in the in class form.