

Student Association Takes Formal Stance on Release of Surveys

BINGHAMTON, NY 2/11/09 -- On Monday night, the Student Assembly took an official stance on the proposed release of survey data to the student body. Since this past summer, Vice President for Academic Affairs Peter Spaet has been working to have these survey results made available to students.

In passing Assembly Resolution S09-2/R, titled "Rate My Professors 2.0," the Student Association (SA) officially requested that the University release compiled results of various surveys. These surveys were used to evaluate student perceptions of their courses and instructors, for the benefit of fellow students who intend on enrolling in a course with that same professor in the future.

The legislation, authored by CIW Assembly Representative Daniel Rabinowitz, authorizes Spaet to continue meeting with involved administrators, as well as the Faculty Senate's Educational Policy and Priorities Committee, in order to secure the release of these surveys. A copy of this resolution is included below.

For more information, please contact SA Vice President for Academic Affairs Peter Spaet at 607-777-4297 or vpaa@sa.binghamton.edu.

The Student Association at Binghamton University is a student run government operating within the State University of New York at Binghamton for over fifty years. Considered one of the most effective student governments in the nation, the SA acts as the main facilitator of student activities on campus, as well as a major contributor to the services students use day in and day out. For the most recent SA news, visit our website at sa.binghamton.edu.



S09-2/:R

Rate My Professors 2.0

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Sponsors: Adam Shamah (Mountainview), Mary Leonardo (OC3)

Whereas Binghamton University assesses student perception of courses and professors through the use of Student Opinion of Teaching (SOOT) Surveys; and

Whereas these surveys are completed entirely by students on a voluntary basis, and then compiled into composite reports by University offices, such as the Office of Institutional Research; and

Whereas students researching available courses – for registration or any other purposes – are substantially limited in the information available to them; and

Whereas the compiled results of SOOT Surveys would constitute a superior source of information than that which is currently available for such purposes; and

Whereas alternatives currently used for these purposes (including websites such as ratemyprofessors.com) are inherently unreliable and susceptible to bias and/or tampering; and

Whereas, in addition to serving as a superior source of such information, having the compiled results of these surveys released to students would provide an incentive for students to complete these surveys accurately,

Therefore be it resolved that the Student Association formally requests the release of SOOT Surveys for courses currently approved under the permanent course designation, as well as those being taught as experimental or topics courses during the Spring 2009 semester.

Further be it resolved that the Student Assembly directs VP for Academic Affairs Peter Spaet to take appropriate measures in furtherance of the release of these surveys; and

Further be it resolved that these measures shall include, but not be limited to, meeting with any involved administrators; continuing to discuss the issue in the Faculty Senate's Educational Policy and Priorities Committee; and – if necessary – seeking the release of these surveys pursuant to the New York State Freedom of Information Law.

Further be it Resolved that if it is not feasible to have a preponderance of these surveys made available by the start of the upcoming course registration period, then it is recommended that this be attempted as a 'pilot program' in select departments, until it can be further expanded.