

Board of Trustees Washtenaw Community College

DISCUSSION

4800 E. Huron River Drive
Ann Arbor, Michigan 48105-4800

Subject:
Explorance\Blue Contract

Date:
April 27, 2021

BACKGROUND

In 2016 Washtenaw Community College sought a solution for replacing the Student Opinion Questionnaire (SOQ) online. The College had a homegrown solution for delivering SOQs online for distance learning courses and campus courses were being manually evaluated by a paper process. The homegrown software was unreliable and the response rate for online courses was low. The College desired to replace the SOQs for all sections but needed to overcome the response rate challenges. The homegrown software had limited features for encouraging student responses.

The Center for Interactive Teaching and Learning (CiTL) collaborated with Institutional Research to conduct an RFP in late December 2016. Explorance Blue (Blue) was the only vendor that could offer a platform that had Blackboard integration and the features to improve response rates. In winter 2017, the College piloted Blue software with Distance Learning sections and response rates immediately increased to 86%. In fall 2017, the College fully executed online SOQs in all course sections. The success of placing the SOQs fully online saved the college labor time and supply/printing costs.

The College has expanded the use of the software to make data integration with other systems more seamless with an add-on product, Data Integrity Gateway (DIG). Some of the most valuable feedback from students is the qualitative text analyzed using the tool Blue Text Analytics. In 2020, CiTL collaborated with Human Resources to implement performance appraisals online using Blue. The college has also leveraged the use of the software to administer internal surveys to faculty and staff.

RECOMMENDATION

That the Board of Trustees approve a 3-year contract for Explorance Blue feedback/course evaluation software not to exceed \$152,048.19 (\$50,682.73 billed annually) with annual renewal options.

A ROLL CALL VOTE WILL BE TAKEN

Prepared by: Dr. Kimberly Hurns
Title: Executive Vice President of
Instruction & Academic Affairs

Recommended by: 
Rose B. Bellanca, President
