December 23, 2014

Stephen Jordan, Ph.D.
President, Metropolitan State University of Denver

Dear President Jordan,

On October 13, 2013, you presented a charge to the Student Ratings of Instruction Task Force that you formed that fall, asking that the Task Force review issues related to the use of Student Ratings of Instruction, including student comments, in the faculty evaluation process. The attached document is the Final Report of the work of the Task Force.

The recommendations contained in the Final Report were approved by the Task Force by a vote of 12-2. The two members who did not vote in favor of the recommendations wrote a statement of dissent, entitled “SRI Task Force Recommendations Response,” included immediately following the recommendations of the Final Report.

You will note that three recommendations call for additions to the Handbook for Professional Personnel.

We hope that you and others in the University community will find the attached document useful concerning this topic. Please let us know if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Luis Torres and James L. Simmons, Co-Chairs
Student Ratings of Instruction Task Force

cc: Vicki L. Golich, Ph.D.: Provost and Vice President for Academic and Student Affairs
Layton Curl: Chair and Professor of Psychology
Joan Foster: Dean of the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, Professor of Biology
Debbie Gilliard: Chair and Professor of Management
Winston Grady-Willis: Chair and Professor of Africana Studies
Madison Holloway: Professor of Management
Elizabeth Kleinfeld: Associate Professor of English
Kishore Kulkarni: Professor of Economics
Ruth Ann Nyhus: Chair and Professor of Human Performance and Sport
Lisa Ortiz, Associate Professor of Journalism and Technical Communication; Vice President of Faculty Senate (2013-2014)
Sheila Rucki: Associate Professor of Political Science, President of Faculty Senate (2014-2015)
David Ruch: Professor of Mathematics
Jane Chapman-Vigil: Professor of English, Chair, Center for Faculty Development (2013-2014)
Peter Vigil: Associate Professor of Early Childhood Education (participated in 2013-2014)
This document presents to the MSU Denver community the results of the work of the SRI Task Force ("Task Force"), formed by President Jordan in the Fall of 2013. The Task Force was charged with making recommendations about how Student Ratings of Instructions should be used, including how student comments should be treated in faculty evaluations.

Twelve of the 14 members of the Task Force voted in favor of the recommendations contained in this Final Report. Two members of the Task Force voted against these recommendations.

This document contains the following:

- Nine general recommendations;
- Five recommendations concerning implementation of the general recommendations;
- An “SRI Task Force Recommendations Response” submitted by Professors Sheila Rucki and Lisa Ortiz; and
- A summary of the relevant chronology leading up to the creation of the Task Force along with a description of the Task Force’s deliberations, including a description of the contents of the Task Force’s Website, a description of the processes used by the Task Force, including the presentation of an Interim Report, and a list of members of the Task Force.
The SRI Task Force (“Task Force”) was charged to review and make recommendations about how Student Ratings of Instruction should be used, including how student comments should be treated in faculty evaluations.

Items 1 through 9 below are the Task Force’s general recommendations, and items 10 through 14 are recommendations for their implementation:

**General Recommendations:**

1. All student comments for all courses taught during all years should be included in Digital Measures (including for years for which a portfolio is not required). These comments covering the following evaluation periods will be available to reviewers:
   - From year one through tenure;
   - Since the last comprehensive review, including promotion; and
   - For the 5-year Post Tenure Review.

   At the conclusion of each of these multi-year evaluation periods specified here, these comments will no longer to be included in a faculty member’s portfolio.

2. Evaluations should continue to use the current student ratings of instruction instrument, containing the two questions: “The course as a whole was (excellent, very good, good, fair, poor, very poor),” and “The instructor’s contribution to the course was (excellent, very good, good, fair, poor, very poor),” with corresponding rating scores ranging from 6 to 1, respectively.
As is present practice, each of the above questions should allow an area for students to provide comments.

3. Student comments are primarily for the use of the faculty member, and the department chair and Dean. Other levels may review student comments and other supporting documents, as needed, to reach their recommendations.

4. Faculty shall include in his or her portfolio narrative for each evaluation period specified above a discussion indicating he or she has read, reflected upon, and addressed student comments.

5. As direct supervisors, department chairs are encouraged to read a significant sample of student comments.

6. Whenever comments, either positive or negative, are quoted, paraphrased, or summarized in a letter by any level of review, references in the letter to comments must be evidence-based, must be based on the best professional judgment of the reviewer, and must be representative or illustrative of the major trends that the comments show. If quotations are ever employed, they must be used with caution, to avoid “cherry picking” unrepresentative comments, or even give such appearance.

7. The following principles concerning bias in comments should be adhered to:

Reviewers must take care and show sensitivity when evaluating both the numerical SRIs and the subjective student comments (to the extent that they may be reviewed by individual reviewers) that may be related, explicitly or implicitly, to personal characteristics of faculty members. To
the maximum extent possible, overt or subtle statements or other signs of racism, sexism, ageism, heterosexism, cisgenderism, or xenophobia should be completely ignored. In reviewing numerical SRIs, care should be taken to ignore patterns that may emerge regarding scores for ‘Faculty Contribution to the Course’ which may reflect personal bias. Examples include SRI scores that appear lower (or higher) than other criteria of faculty evaluation might suggest (e.g., peer observations, faculty narrative, or supplemental materials supplied by students such as letters of appreciation). In reviewing subjective student comments, appropriate sensitivity should be maintained when observing even the slightest hint of bias about any personal characteristics of faculty members, as opposed to substantive comments that relate directly to the “Course as a Whole” and “Faculty Contribution to the Course.”

8. A standing committee housed in the Center for Faculty Development should be established, for the purpose of reviewing, from time to time, issues and concerns that arise within the University community concerning Student Ratings of Instruction issues.

9. All evaluations for all courses at the University should be conducted online only, with each comment shown with the SRI rating and corresponding number score the student has selected for that specific question.

Recommendations for Implementation:

10. The Task Force recommends the creation of “Instructions for Portfolio Reviewers,” to be made available to all reviewers at all levels through the Academic and Student Affairs’ website, and through appropriate training materials and workshops for reviewers. The Task Force recommends that these Instructions contain the following provisions:
A. Student comments are primarily for the use of the faculty member, and the department chair and Dean. Other levels may review student comments and other supporting documents, as needed, to reach their recommendations.

B. As direct supervisors, department chairs are encouraged to read a significant sample of student comments.

C. Whenever comments are reviewed, reviewers must follow the provisions of the Handbook for Professional Personnel, Section V.D.1.b, concerning possible biases contained in comments.

D. Whenever comments, either positive or negative, are quoted, paraphrased, or summarized in a letter by any level of review, references in the letter to comments must be evidence-based, must be based on the best professional judgment of the reviewer, and must be representative or illustrative of the major trends that the comments show. If quotations are ever employed, they must be used with caution, to avoid “cherry picking” unrepresentative comments, or even to give such appearance.

11. The Task Force recommends the creation of a new Section V.C.1.b(2)(c) in the Handbook for Professional Personnel as follows:

“Shows that the faculty member has read, reflected upon, and addressed student comments contained in his or her SRI evaluations in a relevant narrative”;
12. The Task Force recommends the creation of a new Section V.D.1.b in the Handbook for Professional Personnel as follows:

“Must take care and show sensitivity when evaluating both the numerical SRIs and the subjective student comments (to the extent that they may be reviewed by individual reviewers) that may be related, explicitly or implicitly, to personal characteristics of faculty members. To the maximum extent possible, overt or subtle statements or other signs of racism, sexism, ageism, heterosexism, cisgenderism, or xenophobia should be completely ignored. In reviewing numerical SRIs, care should be taken to ignore patterns that may emerge regarding scores for ‘Faculty Contribution to the Course’ which may reflect personal bias. Examples include SRI scores that appear lower (or higher) than other criteria of faculty evaluation might suggest (e.g., peer observations, faculty narrative, or supplemental materials supplied by students such as letters of appreciation). In reviewing subjective student comments, appropriate sensitivity should be maintained when observing even the slightest hint of bias about any personal characteristics of faculty members, as opposed to substantive comments that relate directly to the “Course as a Whole” and “Faculty Contribution to the Course”;”

13. The Task Force recommends the creation of a new Section V.D.1.c in the Handbook for Professional Personnel as follows:

“Must adhere to the requirements of Section V.D.1.b above, and also the provisions of the Academic and Student Affairs’ “Instructions for Portfolio Reviewers”;
14. Because the Task Force recommends that all Student Ratings of Instruction at MSU Denver be conducted online, the Task Force recommends that a campus-wide group be established to evaluate options on how to implement this recommendation. This newly-formed group should include academic, administrative, and Information Technology Services representatives. The Office of Technology Services has provided the Task Force with a preliminary draft document entitled “Online Student Ratings of Instruction: Initial Technical Findings and Alternatives,” dated October 22, 2014, which begins to address technical issues about converting to an Online system. This document is found at http://www.msudenver.edu/media/content/sri-taskforce/documents/ITS-SRI_Technical%20Findings.pdf.
SRI Task Force Recommendations Response

We have reviewed the final recommendations of the SRI Task Force from 15 December, 2014, and are not able to endorse them in whole. We believe that this task force has worked diligently, especially the co-chairs who should be commended for taking on this difficult and contentious task. However, we cannot endorse the totality of the final recommendations. We do support the statement on race, ethnicity, and gender bias, with the caveat that it is rooted in research and analysis of quantitative, not qualitative, SRI data. We also endorse the proposal in Recommendation #1 that comments be purged from review portfolios after each major review, again with the caveat that it would be preferable that the comments not be included for purposes of summative review at all but if they are to be included they should expire. Unfortunately, we cannot agree with the overarching recommendation that SRIs be included for summative review and made available to all levels of review.

History
The report accurately reflects that this Task Force was created by President Jordan in part because of the actions of the Faculty Senate. In February of 2013 the Senate did vote overwhelmingly to exclude comments from evaluation portfolios. A review of the audio tapes of this meeting shows that the primary concerns of the faculty at that time were that the comments could be taken out of context and used to target faculty whose teaching otherwise meets standards and a difference of opinion about whether the Faculty Evaluation Task Force (FETF) or the faculty as a whole intended comments to be included as part of the SRIs used for summative evaluation. Setting aside the issue of the intent of the FETF into which neither we nor the faculty at large has any insight, the idea that SRIs can be misused was expressed again on the floor of the Senate this semester, suggesting that the intervening year has not necessarily reduced this concern. Given this history, it seems to us that, at a minimum, this committee has an obligation to address those concerns.

Response to the Recommendations
In the proposal at hand there are two primary mechanisms for responding to these faculty concerns. The first is the bias statement in Recommendation #7. We agree that this bias statement is important, although we feel it is important to note that the research presented to the Task Force supporting this recommendation focuses on numerical SRI scores, not the qualitative written comments that are the concern of the faculty.

The second mechanism is the admonition in Recommendation #10 D that comments used by reviewers should be “evidence based,” subject to the “best professional judgment of the reviewer” and be “illustrative of the major trends that the comments show.” This recommendation is problematic on several points and is the reason that we are unable to endorse the report from the Task Force in its entirety.
Negativity Bias
The constraint on the use of written comments makes a number of assumptions about the ability of reviewers to select comments that are illustrative of trends and/or their capacity to distinguish valid evidence in these circumstances. The Task Force was presented with peer-reviewed research suggesting that individuals tend give greater weight to, and have a stronger memory of, negative information.¹ No countervailing research was presented. The weight of this research suggests that the “best professional judgment” standard is not an adequate barrier to the over-representation of negative comments; there is no evidence presented that making individuals aware of potential negativity bias reduces it. At best, given the overwhelming evidence, any standard that allows reviewers to pick from a group of comments to consider as “evidence” will tend to skew the reviewer’s perception of the candidate negatively.

Illustrating Trends with Comments
There was much discussion in the Task Force meetings about the percentage of SRI rating sheets that include comments and whether the comments tend to track with the quantitative data, that is to say if the comments and the quantitative data tend to tell the same story about the faculty person. There was no data presented about MSU Denver in particular but the peer-reviewed research suggests two things: first that the quantitative and qualitative data on any given SRI sheet is likely to be complimentary (e.g. students who rate a faculty person highly on the Likert Scale are also likely to make positive written comments, if they make any comments at all). Secondly, those written comments that vary strongly from the median quantitative score are likely also attached to quantitative scores that, by definition, also deviate from the median. Thus, they are considered to be neither reliable nor valid measures of teaching effectiveness and should be given less weight than the written comments that are attached to SRI forms with a quantitative score that is at or near the median score.²

These finding suggest two things. First, any legitimate trends that are identified in the comments are already evident in the quantitative SRI data. Thus, and given the risks of negativity bias discussed above, the inclusion of comments if done well will add little insight into the candidate and, if done badly, is likely to result in “trends” that are neither valid nor reliable, given the quality of the data.

Second, the evidence also suggests that the expectation that any level of review read the comments for summative purposes is an unnecessary burden on the time and resources of the reviewers.

Addressing the Concerns of Faculty
All of the above assumes that summative reviewers are approaching the comments in good faith. While we also assume this to be true in the vast majority of cases, we cannot assume it is universally true. Faculty resistance to the inclusion of written comments in the summative review process cannot be understood unless we are willing to take on the possibility that comments can be misused and

¹ The research supporting this conclusion is available at the Task Force web page.
² In the meetings where this research was discussed, non-specific concerns were raised about the research but no alternative research was presented and the concerns were never fleshed out into testable hypotheses so this research remains as the only available evidence on this point.
engage in a frank discussion of this possibility. If we stipulate for a moment that the review process can potentially be used in unethical ways, we must then ask ourselves what kinds of protections the proposed policy provides. If some reviewers, for reasons of their own or because of the effects of negativity bias, approach the written comments in order to demonstrate a failure to meet standards in teaching not in evidence in the quantitative data, no admonition about using their “best professional judgment” will provide any redress to the faculty member under review. There are no mechanisms in place to sanction the misuse of comments and, given that the standards for use are irretrievably subjective, there is little ground to even challenge any use to which the comments are put.

Other Issues

Using Qualitative Data to “Rescue” Faculty
In the Task Force deliberations, members of the committee expressed the opinion that frequently comments are used to support faculty rather than to punish them. As members of the faculty, we also find this problematic. If comments are being used to retain faculty who are performing below standards in the classroom, and at variance with the trends reflected in the quantitative SRI data for that individual, we should be asking the same questions and express similar reservations about the use of comments in summative evaluations. We should be in the business of evaluating faculty to ensure that our students are receiving instruction that meets the standards of this University, not picking comments to either punish otherwise effective teachers or reward those who are not performing at standards. It may be that the SRI tool is not the best mechanism for evaluating faculty; we suspect that is why it is only one of several indices of teaching effectiveness included in the evaluation process and in departmental guidelines. Using comments to tease out satisfactory performance that is not in evidence in either the quantitative data or in the other measures of effectiveness is, it seems to us, to misuse the tool.

Gaining a Fuller Understanding of Classroom Performance
Many members of the Task Force who are engaged in summative evaluation of faculty expressed a desire to have access to the comments in order to get a “fuller” or more accurate understanding of the classroom performance of the individual under review. However, no evidence was presented that the impression created by the additional information is better than the one presented by the quantitative data alone. That it is different does not necessarily make it better or more accurate. In fact, if we extrapolate the research that was presented to the committee to this question we could reasonably conclude that any different picture created by the new information is likely less valid and reliable.

Summative versus Formative Review
A quick review of the material available at the web page suggests that this committee has used research that speaks to the formative value of written comments on SRIs to extrapolate that they also have a summative value. The entire committee, us included, agrees that the comments perform an important formative role in improving instruction for individual instructors. The committee seems to reflect this conclusion in Recommendation #4 that instructs faculty to include a “discussion indicating he or she has read, reflected upon, and addressed student comments” in the portfolio narrative. This

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language describes a formative approach to the comments. The question we must ask is whether including these comments for summative review supports this formative value. It seems to us that if comments are to be part of a summative review process, the faculty is incentivized to either get good comments or to discourage students from making comments at all. Either of these options subverts the formative value of the comments. By endorsing the use of comments for summative review purposes, the committee may be creating the unintended consequence of depriving faculty of a valuable tool to improve course delivery.

Conclusions
In the end, we believe the Task Force should compare the genesis of its charge with the proposal produced. Dr. Jordan convened the Task Force as a result of conflicting interpretations of the proposal from the Faculty Evaluation Task Force and concern expressed on the floor of the Senate about the inclusion of written comments in review portfolios. The proposal at hand does not effectively address faculty concerns, creates perverse incentives that undermine the formative value of the tool, does not seem to be rooted in research on this particular issue, and effectively adds an additional burden to the faculty in the form of an additional element added to the teaching narrative in the portfolios.

Thank you for this opportunity to respond to the report. If you have any questions or would like to discuss this further, please let me know.

Sincerely,

Sheila M. Rucki
Lisa Ortiz
Introduction:

This “Executive Summary and Final Recommendations...” document is the result of the deliberations by the Student Ratings of Instruction (SRI) Task Force, formed by President Jordan in the Fall of 2013 to consider and make recommendations about possible inclusion of student comments gathered during the course evaluation process, specifically concerning the faculty review process for Retention, Tenure, Promotion, and Post-Tenure Review. The Task Force’s first meeting was held October 10, 2013 (the date it received its charge from Dr. Jordan), and continued to meet until December 2014.

Relevant Chronology:

In August 2010, a Subcommittee of the Faculty Evaluation Task Force issued recommendations to the larger Task Force concerning possible revision of the Student Ratings of Instruction (SRI) process. The Subcommittee recommended the use of two “global” questions for summative evaluation purposes:

1. “The Course as a Whole Was: Very Poor-Poor-Fair-Good-Very Good-Excellent,” and
2. “The Instructor’s Contribution to the Course Was: Very Poor-Poor-Fair-Good-Very Good-Excellent.”

The selected rating would receive a corresponding numerical score, from “Very Poor” receiving a “1,” “Poor” receiving a “2,” and so on, to “Excellent” receiving a “6.” The pilot form for Fall 2010 provided a box for student written comments after each of these two questions.
In its “Report to the Faculty” of April 2011, the Faculty Evaluation Task Force recommended, “SRIs (numerical scores and comments from section I of SRI instrument) from all courses taught, with the exception of field experience courses, required for all portfolios.” That “Report to the Faculty” adopted the draft form piloted by the Subcommittee Fall 2010.

Following the deliberations of the Faculty Evaluation Task Force, the new “portfolio” system replaced the “dossier” system beginning Fall 2011. Following that initial year, in preparation for the incorporation of student comments, beginning Fall 2012, all SRI forms from all of a faculty member’s courses, including written comments, began to be scanned and uploaded as PDF files in faculty portfolios in the Digital Measures electronic portfolio system. Student written comments became available to reviewers beginning for the Fall 2012 semester. That practice has continued through the current Fall 2014 semester.

As a response to the incorporation of student comments into faculty portfolios, on March 11, 2013, Professor Kamran Sahami, then-President of the Faculty Senate, via letter to Provost Vicki Golich, stated the following:

This letter is to inform you in writing that the Metropolitan State University of Denver’s Faculty Senate passed the following resolution at its general assembly on February 6th 2013 by a vote of 77 to 1 (98.71% in favor) and again on March 6, 2013 by a vote of 58 to 7 (89.23% in favor).

Whereas the inclusion of written SRI comments in Post Tenure Review portfolios was not discussed nor agreed to in a process of shared governance, and whereas knowledgeable faculty have expressed well-reasoned concerned, and whereas the Faculty Senate RTP Committee has requested their removal, be it therefore resolved that the Faculty Senate General Assembly requests the
discontinuance of written SRI comments being automatically included in Post Tenure review portfolios and all other review portfolios and that all future Handbook changes be put through the official Handbook change process. [Emphasis in original]

In response to this letter, on May 10, 2013, President Stephen Jordan wrote a letter to Dr. Sahami responding to Dr. Sahami’s letter of March 11, saying in relevant part:

The Provost and I have reviewed both resolutions, your proposed changes to the Handbook for Professional Personnel to eliminate the use of qualitative student comments for summative purposes, as well as supporting data to give me a history of this process.

In this review, we verified that using qualitative comments for summative purposes was a component of the overall changes in the Faculty Evaluation system recommended by the Faculty Evaluation Taskforce in the Summer, 2010. After being presented to Faculty Senate in Oct. 2010, piloted in all three schools and campus-wide forums were held, an FAQ was created and distributed by the Faculty Evaluation Taskforce. The first set of changes—related to probationary faculty and tenure—was subsequently voted on by the entire full-time tenured/tenure-track faculty in the Spring, 2011 and approved by the Board of Trustees in June 2011.

Then, in Fall 2011, the Faculty Evaluation Task Force addressed evaluation issues related to promotion to Full Professor, Post-Tenure Review, and Emeritus Status. Another Faculty Evaluation Task Force-developed FAQ which included comments on the use of SRI’s was distributed to each faculty member through the dean of their school in Fall, 2011. It was subsequently voted on by the entire full-time tenured/tenure-track faculty, and approved by the Board of Trustees in Spring, 2012.
After a careful review of this information, it is clear that appropriate processes for implementing Handbook changes were followed. And, because the University opened the voting to all tenure-line faculty, I do not believe Faculty Senate—even as a representative body—has the authority to override an all-faculty vote. This would contradict our shared governance process that the MSU Denver culture so highly values. An action to remove SRI’s, and lacking objective evidence, would be premature.

President Jordan further stated that the recommendations by the Faculty Evaluation Task Force were adopted by the Board of Trustees in 2012. He indicated that since the recommendations had not yet been fully implemented, and that there was no evidence of problems caused by SRIs or student comments in faculty evaluations, the changes would remain in effect. He concluded by saying that should subsequent evidence call into question the SRI format and process, he would agree to look further into the matter, consider possible revisions, and return the matter for a vote of the faculty.

Following the issuance of this letter by Dr. Jordan, he subsequently established the current “SRI Task Force,” which held its initial meeting on October 10, 2013, at which President Jordan gave the charge to the Task Force. He charged us with making recommendations on the uses of student comments in the faculty evaluation process, and he further emphasized there were no limitations on the scope of potential recommendations.

A summary of President Jordan’s charge to the SRI Task Force is at http://www.msudenver.edu/sri-taskforce/.

**SRI Task Force Website:**

A website was subsequently created by the Task Force, which includes relevant documents concerning this issue and the Task Force deliberations. The homepage is http://www.msudenver.edu/sri-taskforce/. Its contents are as follows:
• A list of task force members (Note: Prof. Peter Vigil served during 2013-14 school year and is on sabbatical Fall 2014): http://www.msudenver.edu/sri-taskforce/members/

• News to the MSU Denver community about the formation of the Task Force: http://msudenver.edu/newsroom/news/2013/august/27-sritaskforce.shtml

• Issues & Solutions: A letter from the Faculty Senate RTP written on October 8, 2013 to the Task Force, which raised 8 points in opposition to the use of written student comments in the summative faculty review process: http://www.msudenver.edu/sri-taskforce/issuessolutions/

• A Draft Statement dated February 18, 2014 on “Race, Ethnicity, Gender, and Other Bias Issues”: http://www.msudenver.edu/sri-taskforce/issuessolutions/commentbiases/


• An email from Task Force Member Layton Seth Curl dated March 24, 2014 entitled “Email Submitted to Summarize Oral Suggestions”: http://www.msudenver.edu/sri-taskforce/issuessolutions/oralsuggestions/

• An undated Proposal from Task Force Member Sheila Rucki concerning a possible framework for recommendations by the Task Force: http://www.msudenver.edu/sri-taskforce/issuessolutions/proposal1/


• A “Statements on Other Schools’ Websites about SRI Numbers and Student Comments,” as an attachment to the “Response prepared by Jim Simmons” described above: http://www.msudenver.edu/sri-taskforce/issuessolutions/response1/appendix/

• “A Literature Review on Student Ratings of Instruction”: http://www.msudenver.edu/sri-taskforce/literature/.
• A compendium of “Colorado Colleges and Universities Course Evaluation Information”: http://www.msudenver.edu/sri-taskforce/literature/coloradoevaluations/.

• A list of the dates of most meetings, including such documents as agendas and meeting minutes: http://www.msudenver.edu/sri-taskforce/meetings/


Process:

During its deliberations, individual Task Force members reviewed significant information about issues concerning the faculty evaluation process generally, and the application of student comments within such evaluations, including the following:

• Student evaluation processes at other Colorado public higher education institutions;

• Some of the literally thousands of studies of the student evaluation process in academic literature:

• Websites from selected other colleges and universities concerning their comparable practices;

• Documents from the Faculty Senate from the 2014-15 academic year showing senators’ priorities of campus issues;

• Various documents submitted to the Task Force by individual Task Force members;

• Results of two polls of Task Force members of issues under consideration; and
• Information provided by Information Technology Services concerning the availability and technical feasibility of converting to an all-Online SRI process.

Interim Report:
Of note is that an “Interim Report” was sent to Dr. Jordan on July 23, 2014, with two unanimous preliminary recommendations reached by the Task Force. The first of the two recommendations concerned the issue of possible bias in student evaluations, including in student comments, and how to prevent biased written comments from negatively affecting the review of a professor’s performance. A Subcommittee of the Task Force studied this issue, which led to our recommendation for a statement in the Handbook for Professional Personnel concerning possible biased statements (this recommendation is dependent on the final outcome of the SRI Task Force’s initial charge). The second interim recommendation is that all student ratings of instruction should be conducted Online only and use identical instruments. This interim report indicated that the Task Force had planned to conclude its charge by the end of Spring 2014 but felt further deliberations were necessary. That letter is found at http://www.msudenver.edu/sri-taskforce/issuessolutions/drj-letter1/.

SRI Task Force Members:
Task Force Co-Chairs:  Luis Torres, Deputy Provost
James Simmons, Professor of Aviation and Aerospace Science

Task Force Members:
Layton Curl:  Chair and Professor of Psychology
Joan Foster:  Dean of the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, Professor of Biology
Debbie Gilliard:  Chair and Professor Management
Winston Grady-Willis:  Chair and Professor of Africana Studies
Madison Holloway: Professor of Management
Elizabeth Kleinfeld: Associate Professor of English
Kishore Kulkarni: Professor of Economics
Ruth Ann Nyhus: Chair and Professor of Human Performance and Sport
Lisa Ortiz: Associate Professor of Journalism and Technical Communication; Vice President of Faculty Senate (2013-2014)
Sheila Rucki: Associate Professor of Political Science, President of Faculty Senate (2014-2015)
David Ruch: Professor of Mathematics
Jane Chapman-Vigil: Professor of English, Chair, Center for Faculty Development (2013-2014)
Peter Vigil: Associate Professor of Early Childhood Education (participated in 2013-2014)