

## *TAKING THE PDAQ FURTHER: SOME THOUGHTS FROM THE RESEARCH TEAM*

### **a) suggestions concerning the expansion of the PDAQ:**

#### **a.1) type of faculty**

**NUNO:** I think the most important thing to consider is whether or not the faculty member is interested in obtaining more information about her/his class. The PDAQ is a highly versatile tool, that can yield surprisingly rich information, but all of that would be to no avail if the faculty member is being “force fed” the information. Furthermore, because the PDAQ is highly dependent on feedback from the instructor, it would be wise to select faculty that would be willing to provide feedback in a constructive manner. So my first instinct would be to select a small group of faculty members that have already expressed an interest in learning more about their class. I would echo my colleagues’ comments concerning the use and understanding of basic statistics: it is necessary for the instructor (or for the TA/RA) to have a basic understanding of descriptive statistics and, ideally, some knowledge of inferential statistics as well. In any case, I think that attitude goes a long way, and if a faculty member is willing to learn more, than there are no limits to what she/he can do, and hopefully the PDAQ can contribute to a more positive learning and teaching experience.

**LISA:** Type of faculty: I think if a faculty knows basic statistics or has a TA/RA who knows basic statistics, he/she can certainly use PDAQ! However, I would say be careful with small-size class, due to the concern with "sample size". Yet, answers to qualitative questions are still valuable feedback even in small classes. Of course, what is "small" can be tricky. If an instructor is mainly concerned with more descriptive statistics, class size is much less of a concern. It is only when inferential (the regression and SEM stuff) statistics are used that class size can be an issue.

**CAREEN:** I think that the PDAQ can be used by faculty/instructors who are familiar with statistics, but also with those who are not. Those who are not can simply ask open ended questions and interpret the results accordingly. I also think that the PDAQ can be used by “seasoned” faculty/instructors who are interested in rejuvenating a course and by new

faculty/instructors who apprehensive about their ability to attain student trust. In essence, I see the PDAQ as a highly flexible tool that cross-cuts all levels of teaching expertise. It is empowering for new faculty and rejuvenating for veterans, easily quantifiable but open to qualitative interpretation, if the questions are steered appropriately.

### **a.2) type of class that would benefit the most from implementing the PDAQ**

**NUNO:** In theory, the PDAQ can be used in any type of class. But because the PDAQ was originally designed to address issues that arise in classes that have objective types of evaluation (quizzes, exams, etc.), I would discourage its use in project-based classes (not that it cannot be used, but it would take a considerable investment and effort in order to do it successfully). What is more, classes that have a greater number of quizzes/exams etc., will benefit more, as the PDAQ will provide more opportunities to fine tune class progress. Lastly, I would be wary in using the PDAQ in very small classes (e.g., 20 or less), due to the necessity of running a number of statistical tests. Naturally, the instructor may choose to modify the PDAQ in such a way as to weigh qualitative analysis more heavily and in that case the PDAQ can be used in classes of any size.

**LISA:** Type of class: personally, I think it partially depends on how "flexible" PDAQ can be. If an instructor can add/delete/change questions on the PDAQ with a good extent of freedom, it has great potential to be used in a wide range of classes. But overall, those classes that have tests and/or written projects that take a good share of the final grade can use the PDAQ. I feel the PDAQ not only empowers students but helps instructors to improve the quality of tests and written projects. With this in mind, I think the PDAQ can be especially helpful for newly developed exams/quizzes and written projects.

**CAREEN:** I think the PDAQ is highly flexible. The key for the instructor is to be in tune with the class. Material grows stale, so I think it is a tool that can be used every semester or once every couple of years. Students will tell you when your material is becoming stale, you can use the PDAQ to listen. How often you decide to listen depends on your teaching philosophy.

**b) a reflection from the RA:**

**YOUNG:** As a research assistant for Dr. Yarnal, part of my assistantship hours were assigned to the PDAQ project. I participated in this project through in three stages: preparation, implementation, and data entry. During the preparation stage, I attended the PDAQ meetings in order to understand the purpose and process of project. Also, I prepared the copies of the signed consent forms and the PDAQ questionnaires. During the implementation stage, I went to the classes involved in the PDAQ project and collected data concerning students' perceptions about the quizzes. After collecting students' responses, I entered the data into an Excel file and students' expected grade onto ANGEL. For each quiz, it took approximately one and half hours to enter the data.

In addition to my main role in this project, I was partly involved in the discussion meetings about the results of PDAQ. In this reviewing process, I confirmed that the PDAQ is an efficient way to encourage greater interaction between the instructor and students. It also helped instructors to understand how students perceived the difficulty of the task and, at the same time, allowed students to evaluate their performance compared to the demands of the course. Given that the PDAQ is a fairly simple task to conduct and implement, I believe it has great potential to improve the quality of class.