Resolution 33-05

A Resolution Regarding Implementation of a Institutional Course Evaluation Website

Authored by: Vincent Belcastro, 4th-year Management Information Systems Student; Senator Ciera Thomas, Franklin College of Arts & Sciences

Sponsored by: Senator Allison Fine, Access & Opportunity; First-Year Senator Kinya Williams; Senator Bradley Howard, Franklin College of Arts & Sciences; Senator Mennah Abdelwahab, Grady College of Journalism & Mass Communication; Senator Morgan Lilly, At-Large; Senator Kate Foral, College of Public Health; Senator Aliya Elmore, Franklin College of Arts & Sciences; Senator Jared Isaacs, Franklin College of Arts & Sciences; Senator Juliet Eden, Odum School of Ecology; Senator Zane Malas, Terry College of Business

Abstract: This resolution seeks to implement a course evaluation website that displays grade distributions for each course taught by every professor at the University of Georgia in order to provide unbiased feedback for students to utilize in course selection.

WHEREAS, one of the purposes of the Student Government Association is to "advocate on behalf of the students' academic, social, and cultural welfare";[1] and,

WHEREAS, many students rely on direct or indirect feedback when making course scheduling decisions; and,

WHEREAS, one major platform employed by students to make scheduling decisions is Rate My Professors, a website that enables individual to 'rate' professors and classes; and,

WHEREAS, an article published in *Stanford Technology Law Review* on the dangers of online rating sites found that "unfair evaluations or personal information taken out of context can lead to misjudgements and misunderstandings, potentially causing serious harm";[2] and,

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[1] *Constitution of the Student Government Association at the University of Georgia*. University of Georgia Student Government Association, sga.uga.edu.

[2] Cheung, Anne SY & Schulz, Wolfgang. "Reputation Protection on Online Rating Sites." *SSRN, Stanford Technology Law Review*, vol. 21, no. 310, 27 Sep. 2018, ssrn.com

WHEREAS, a formal online evaluation conducted through an institution "no doubt offers more valid assessments of instructor performance";[3] and,

WHEREAS, evaluations provided on Rate My Professors are often influenced by secondary characteristics that are irrelevant to the quality of instruction, notably class easiness and professor attractiveness;[4] and,

WHEREAS, using institutional data on grade distributions which is not polluted by opinions of unverified origin offers a more objective evaluation of classes and professors; and,

WHEREAS, critique.gatech.edu, a website hosted by Georgia Institute of Technology that shows grade distributions by course code and professor, received over 8000 visits in a 90-day period;[5] and,

WHEREAS, 94.5% of students surveyed expressed that they would be extremely likely or very likely to use a similar grade distribution service;[6] and,

WHEREAS, 92.9% of students surveyed indicated that such a grade distribution service would be very useful or extremely useful compared to other available services used in evaluating course selections (i.e. Rate My Professors);[6] and,

WHEREAS, 82.1% of students surveyed conveyed that they have no issues with the implementation of such a grade distribution service.[6]

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, the 33rd Senate of the Student Government Association, on behalf of the student body, thanks the University of Georgia for their continuous dedication to student success; and,

THEREFORE, BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, the 33rd administration recommends that the University of Georgia implement a website containing grade distribution data sorted by course code and professor similar to that used by Georgia Institute of Technology.

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[3] Legg, Angela M. & Wilson, Janie H. "RateMyProfessors.com offers biased evaluations." *Taylor & Francis Online*, *Assessment & Evaluation in Higher Education*, vol. 37, no.1, 18 Nov. 2010, pp. 89-97, https://doi.org/10.1080
[4] Felton, James, et al. "Attractiveness, Easiness, and Other Issues: Student Evaluations of RateMyProfessors.com." *SSRN*, *Assessment & Evaluation in Higher Education*, vol. 33, no. 1, 2008, pp. 45-61, doi.org/10.2139
[5] Appendix A: Web Traffic Data for critique.gatech.edu
[6] Appendix B: Qualtrics Survey Data on Student Interest for Grade Distribution Database

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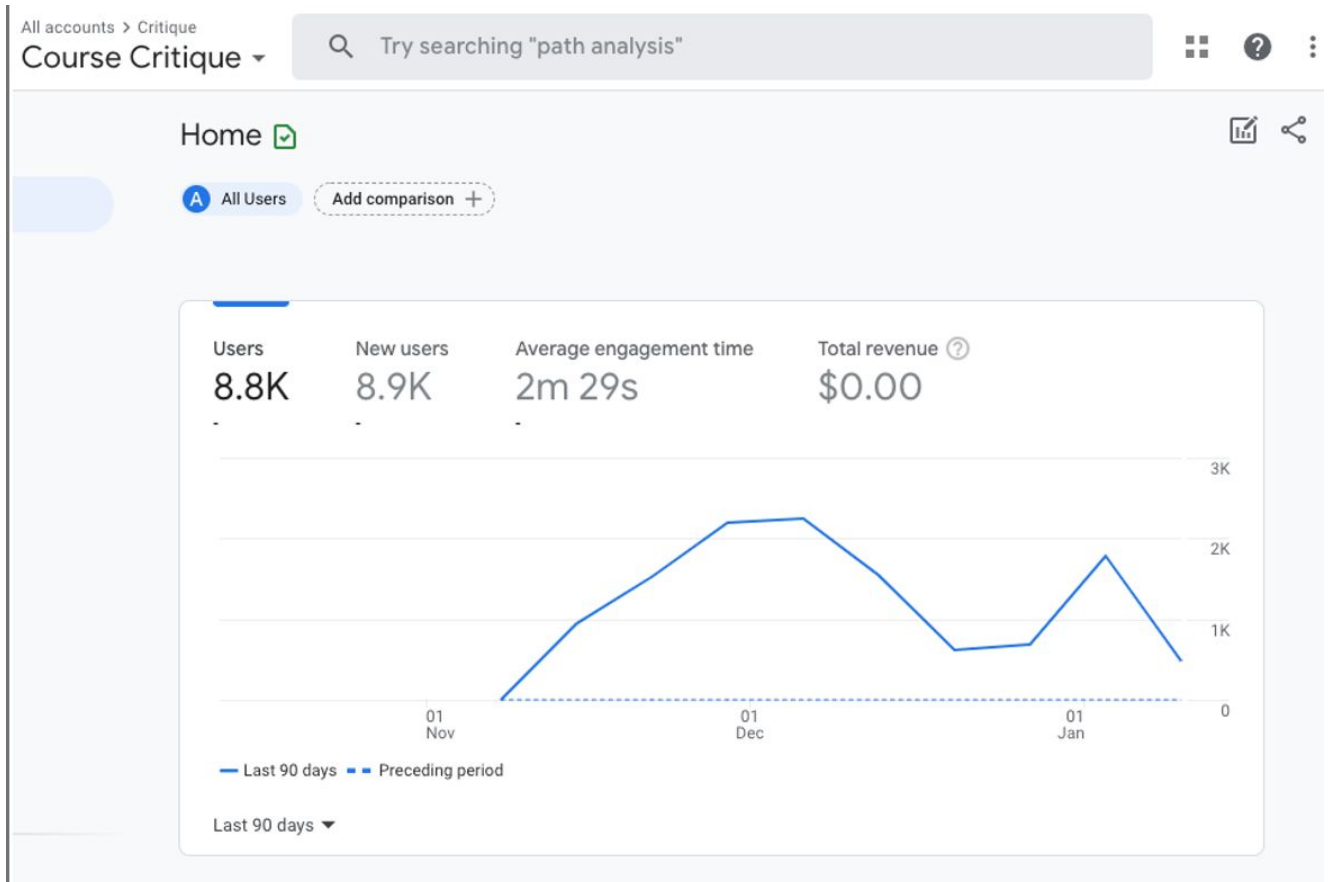Sam Bryant, President of the Senate

26 January 2021
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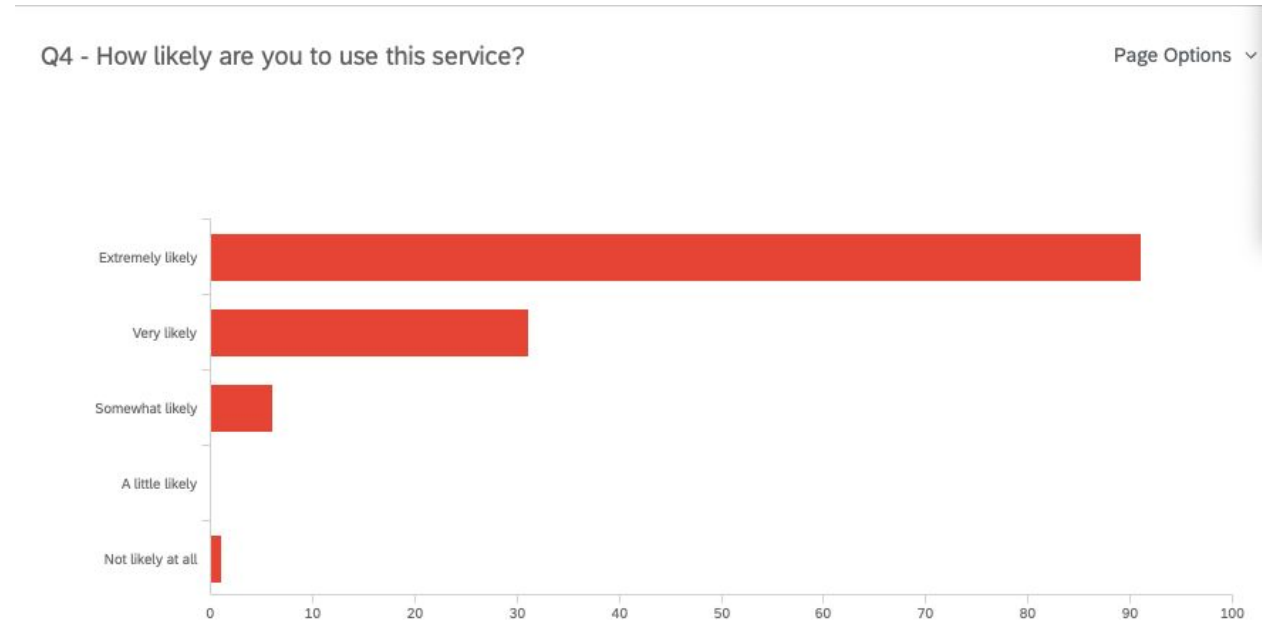Date of Passage

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Asim Ahmed, President

Appendix A: Web Traffic Data for critique.gatech.edu

Georgia Institute of Technology maintains a grade distribution database service for all of the courses and professors at the university. The graph below indicates the number of users critique.gatech.edu sees as a function of time. The website netted over 8,800 new users in a 3-month period, with peaks during course registration and the add/drop period.

Appendix B: Qualtrics Survey Data on Student Interest for Grade Distribution Database
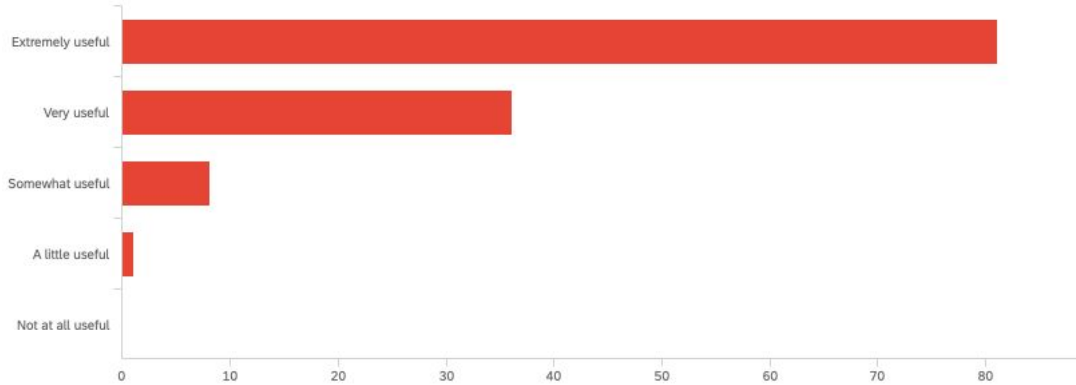
A voluntary online survey was conducted to gauge interest of University of Georgia students for a grade distribution database service hosted by the university. Students were asked to provide responses based on their reactions to a description of the concept.

Q4 - How likely are you to use this service?   Page Options ⌄

Response	Count (approx.)
Extremely likely	~91
Very likely	~31
Somewhat likely	~6
A little likely	0
Not likely at all	~1

Of the 129 students surveyed, 91 students (70.5%) indicated that they would be "Extremely likely" to use such a grade distribution database service while 31 students (24.0%) claimed to be "Very likely" to use the service.
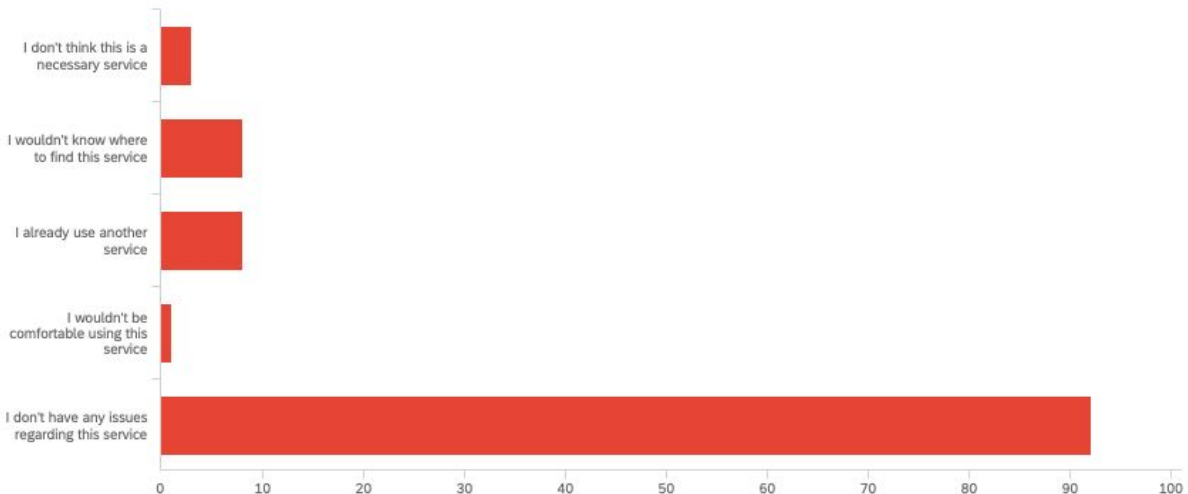
Of the 129 students surveyed, 82 students (63.5%) indicated that they would consider a grade distribution database to be "Extremely useful" for course registration compared to other available services while 38 students (29.4%) claimed that the service would be "Very useful" in comparison to other services.

Of the 129 students surveyed, 82.1% indicated that they do not have any issues regarding the grade distribution database. The two most popular potential issues involved students not knowing where to find such a service or students already using another service for course registration.