

**Studies of Engineering Educator Decisions (SEED)**  
**Center for the Advancement of Engineering Education**  
**Interview Protocol**

The interview consists of open ended questions with a variety of potential follow-up questions shown in light gray. Anything to be said directly to the interviewee is shown in italics.

Interviewer script (for comparison group participants only):

*“Thank you for taking the time to participate in this interview. The team will be using this information to learn more about your teaching decision-making. In this interview, we will first ask you about your teaching background. Then we would like to hear your thoughts about teaching decision-making. Next, we want you to talk about a teaching-related decision you have made. Finally, we would like to hear about a teaching decision you made while conducting a class session. We want to understand your sense of decision making. We will ask you about the process, factors and outcomes associated with the decision. You may stop this interview at any time, or choose not to answer one or more of the questions. There are no right or wrong answers to any of the questions. We are interested in your thoughts about how you personally make teaching-related decisions. All of your responses will be kept confidential. Is there anything about the study you would like me to tell you before we begin?”*

Reminder:

Turn audio recorder on.

State subject code.

I. **Demographic** data about participant:

*First, I would like to ask you some questions about your background.*

- What department are you in?*
- What is your faculty status (level of tenure)?*
- How long have you been teaching?*
- What teaching experience do you have?*
- Please describe your current position.*
- Is there any other demographic information that you would like to share with us?*

II. Questions related to **general** teaching decision-making:

*We want to know how you define teaching decisions, and how you make these decisions. So please take a moment to think about all the teaching decisions that you have made.*

- *Can you tell me what things come to your mind when you think about teaching decisions?*
  - i. *What are the types of things you are thinking about?*
  - ii. *What kind of decisions are going through your mind?*
  - iii. *Why?*
- *How do you decide what teaching decisions you make?*
  - i. *How did you know that you were at a decision point?*
  - ii. *What types of things do you think about?*

### III. Questions related to **pre-active** teaching decisions: (planning stage)

*Now, I would like you to take a moment and think about your teaching career. Think about all the classes you had planned and taught. Think about all the students you have instructed. I want you to think about a teaching-related decision you have made.*

*(Prompts if needed: How do you figure out how or what you will teach? What choices you make about your teaching e.g. designing an exam, selecting a textbook)*

- *Can you please describe a recent instructional planning situation in which you were faced with decision-making?*
  - i. *What happened?*
  - ii. *What was the context?*
  - iii. *Who were involved?*
- *What types of decisions went through your mind when you were in this situation?*
  - i. *Why?*
- *Can you please walk me through the process in which you made this teaching-related decision?*
  - i. *What happened?*
  - ii. *What was the context?*
  - iii. *Who were involved?*
  - iv. *Where did your idea/assumption come from?*
  - v. *To what extent did you consider prior teaching decisions when you were in the process?*
  - vi. *Were there any other ideas on the table that you have considered?*
- *Can you tell me about the important factors that you have considered in making this decision?*
  - i. *Publish research studies?*
  - ii. *College, University, Departmental policies?*
  - iii. *Human factors such as students, TAs, other faculty?*
  - iv. *Diversity, recruitment, retention issues?*
- *Can you talk about the outcomes of this decision?*
  - i. *Were you satisfied with this outcome?*
  - ii. *Would you do it differently now?*
  - iii. *If so, how would you do it differently?*

### IV. Questions related to **interactive** teaching decisions: (in-class)

*Now, let's move to a different situation. I want you to think about a decision you have made about your teaching while conducting a class session. (Prompts if needed: changing class policy for a student, choosing to alter a classroom activity at the spur of the moment)*

- *Can you please describe a recent in-class situation in which you were faced with decision-making?*
  - i. *What happened?*
  - ii. *What was the context?*
  - iii. *Who were involved?*
- *What types of decisions went through your mind when you were in this situation?*
  - i. *Why?*
- *Can you please walk me through the process in which you made this teaching-related decision?*
  - i. *What happened?*
  - ii. *What was the context?*
  - iii. *Who were involved?*
  - iv. *Where did your idea/assumption come from?*
  - v. *To what extent did you consider prior teaching decisions when you were in the process?*
  - vi. *Were there any other ideas on the table that you have considered?*
- *Can you tell me about the important factors that you have considered in making this decision?*
  - i. *Publish research studies?*
  - ii. *College, University, Departmental policies?*
  - iii. *Human factors such as students, TAs, other faculty?*
  - iv. *Diversity, recruitment, retention issues?*
- *Can you talk about the outcomes of this decision?*
  - i. *Were you satisfied with this outcome?*
  - ii. *Would you do it differently now?*
  - iii. *If so, how would you do it differently?*

## V. Closing questions for Decision Making

*You have told me a number of important factors that went into your teaching decision-making. I want you to think about all the factors you described earlier. (Prompts if needed: use their words for factors).*

- *Can you please summarize the factors that you considered when you have to make a decision about teaching?*
- *Have your thoughts about these factors changed?*
  - i. *Are you comfortable with these factors now?*
  - ii. *What other factors would you consider adding now?*
- *Do you think you have a regular process of teaching-related decision making?*
  - i. *How would you make decisions now?*
  - ii. *What's your process now?*

- *Do you have formal training in decision making?*
- *Has there been a time that you feel you were in a minority position in anyway that had impacted your teaching decision making?*

VI. Epilogue questions

*You have told me your experiences in teaching decision making. Now, please take a moment and reflect about your career as a faculty.*

- *What led you to become a professor?*
  - i. *Do you have formal training in teaching?*
  - ii. *Do you have industry experiences?*

*Thank you for your responses to the interview questions.*