Schreyer Institute for Teaching Excellence

Overview

The eTesting Lab in the Polluck Testing Center provides students and faculty with an alternative option to traditional test taking. With the cooperation from the Office of Undergraduate Education (UE) and Information Technology Services (ITS), the Schreyer Institute of Testing Excellence manages, schedules, and distributes an ever-growing number of computer exams.

Objectives

The primary objective of the project is to use industrial engineering methods in order to research, analyze, and recommend alternative methods of the testing center’s daily processes. These processes include: the faculty and student scheduling processes, the queuing system in the waiting area, and the distribution of instructions of proper testing center procedures to students. In addition, the team was asked to observe and recommend changes to the aesthetics of the testing center waiting room.

Approach

- Met with the head of the Schreyer Institute of Testing Excellence and discussed with the desired goals for the project
- Observed the testing center first hand in order to further the understanding of the center’s processes
- Divided the project into four sub-objectives and focused on each one individually
- These sub-objectives are as follows: faculty scheduling, student scheduling, student flow through the system, and atmosphere of the waiting area
- The team conducted surveys with the students and faculty to define the personal opinions of the center
- These survey samples were analyzed to determine statistical trends
- An alternative method of faculty and student scheduling was created to increase efficiency
- The modified faculty schedule platform was then tested using process simulation software
- The team also conducted research on the psychological effects of the atmosphere of the waiting area
- All relevant data was compiled and presented to the advisor and sponsor

Outcomes

Using the methods described above, the team was able to conclude the following:

- A new custom, automated, online system should be implemented for the faculty scheduling
- Execution of a strict, standardized set of instructions for testing center procedures
- The process through which students schedule exams should be changed to a first come first serve basis
- The waiting room area can be altered to achieve a perceived level of controllability that can reduce student’s stress