SEI Assessment and Expansion Questions

What are we trying to measure?
Gunther chose 3 issues that had high correlations to learning outcomes, as documented in Feldman 1997 and the studies he reviews:
- Sense of clear organization
- Sense of rapport and caring for learning
- Belief in own learning success

Research questions:
1. Are these constructs what we are getting response to (validity)?
2. Are these still the best constructs to evaluate on? (lit review)?

Does the instrument work?
In addition to validity, we need to know that SEI produces reliable responses; that students across the range of differences in our population respond consistently to SEI.

We also need to test for issues of bias. It seems clear that there are cases in which some students’ perceptions of their instructor violating some expectation – gender, race, age, linguistic background, pedagogical choices, etc. – have an impact on responses.

Current comparison groups are based on 1990’s finding of statistically significant issues based on class size and students sense of “requiredness”. Are these still issues, especially since the range of what is required has changes a great deal?

Research questions:
1. Is there sufficient inter-rate reliability?
2. Is there sufficient cross-source reliability? Do SEI results triangulate with peer, self, and expert evaluations on similar issues?
3. Is there large-scale bias? On what characteristics? Does the instrument exacerbate it? Is this mitigatable?
4. Are the issues of class size and requiredness still problems?
   Is grouping for comparisons a reasonable way to address this?
   If so, are the existing grouping still the right ones?
5. Are there important differences between either the response data or the desired feedback based on graduate vs. undergraduate courses or course delivery mode or other types of classes?

Flexibility vs control?
The shift from a hard-coded backend system in PeopleSoft to the flexibility offered in eXplorance Blue offers many affordances. However, making changes to a system that is used as an import data source in faculty personnel decisions requires an abundance of caution and use of proven change-management processes.

Several requests have already been made to the SEI oversight committee: a list of issues from USG, the option to add questions to the basic ten, a better comments system to allow specific prompts and machine text analysis.

Policy questions
1. Which if any of these should we explore?
2. What process needs to be in place for adopting any?

Research Questions
1. How can/should we test the validity and reliability of any optional questions that we might make available?

Other questions about use/interpretation/outreach and training?