What is SALG?
SALG is an online survey instrument originally developed for the undergraduate STEM education reform community in 1998. The instrument has been updated over time to serve instructors and students across all disciplines.

SALG is designed to exclusively focus on students’ learning gains and is built around two principles:
1. assessment of a course should relate to the explicit learning goals of that course;
2. students have something valuable to tell us about what helps them learn.

This approach, along with SALG’s ability to be customized, provides instructors with specific and meaningful feedback about how much learning happened in their class and what did or did not facilitate it.

What kinds of questions are included in a SALG survey?
SALG instruments are comprised of ten question stems. The first four stems focus on learning goals and ask students to assess their gains in:
- understanding
- skills
- affect/attitudes
- integrating course ideas into their lives

The final six stems focus on the effectiveness of particular pedagogical practices and ask students how much the following course elements helped them learn:
- course design and approach to the material
- class activities
- graded assignments and tests
- resources used
- meta-information about the class given to students
- support provided to students

Instructors may not edit or delete these ten stems; each stem must have at least one question. Because SALG’s design encourages instructors to customize the instrument for each course, many stems include sub-questions which ask instructors to fill in details of class activities, assignments, key class concepts, etc.

Sample Stem 1 from HAP Pilot SALG

Your understanding of class content

1. As a result of your work in this class, what GAINS DID YOU MAKE in your UNDERSTANDING of each of the following?
   no gains | little gain | moderate gain | good gain | great gain | not applicable
   \[ D \]
   1.1 The intersection of Native Hawaiian issues with Pacific Island and/or Asian issues
   \[ D \]
   1.2 The cultural perspectives, values, and world views of Native Hawaiians, Pacific Islanders and/or Asians
   \[ D \]
   1.3 The following concepts that have been explored in this class
   \[ D \]
   1.3.1 (Concept 1) [Fill in]
   \[ D \]
   1.3.2 (Concept 2) [Fill in]
   \[ D \]
   1.4 How ideas from this class relate to ideas encountered in other classes
   \[ D \]
   1.5 Please comment on HOW YOUR UNDERSTANDING OF HAWAII, ASIA AND/OR THE PACIFIC ISLANDS HAS CHANGED as a result of this class.

Questions denoted with a "D" measure Gen Ed LOs and may not be modified. The Gen Ed Office will receive data only for "D" questions.

Question 1.3 can be customized to reflect specific LOs.

Faculty may edit any non-"D" questions and add questions as needed.
Is it difficult to create a SALG survey?
No. The process consists of 5 basic steps:
1. Choose a base instrument from which to start. The General Education Office will provide HAP pilot participants access to the HAP template.
2. Fill in basic information about your course: name, institution, course title, number of students, etc.
3. Edit the instrument questions to adapt the survey to your class.
4. Set the open and close dates for your survey.
5. Announce the availability of the survey to students.

What should I consider in creating a SALG survey?
Before you create your instrument, we recommended that you examine your course learning objectives (LOs), which may also include departmental/program LOs, Gen Ed LOs, institutional LOs, and LOs that come from your personal theories about teaching. Divide that list into objectives related to gains in understanding, gains in skills, affective/attitudinal gains, and gains in integrating course material into the students’ lives. Having fewer LOs in each category allows you to ask more focused and detailed questions.

You may also consider whether to use a Baseline SALG. This is a shortened instrument you can use at the beginning of a term to assess where students are in relation to your learning goals when they enter your class.

Why should I consider using SALG?
There are many potential benefits of using SALG:
• Students better understand their own learning processes by reflecting on what helped them learn.
• Faculty are provided with course-specific feedback so they can continuously improve their pedagogical approaches and course content, promote their methods with colleagues, and document achievements for tenure and promotion purposes. Unlike other course evaluation tools, SALG focuses on student learning rather than teacher behaviors.
• Course coordinators can use data to identify best practices that can be shared within their departments.
• At UH Mānoa, SALG data can be used to measure attainment of the institutional learning objectives. SALG data is also accepted by WASC as sufficient evidence of student learning for reporting purposes.
• Within UH System, data could be collected to examine how well articulated courses are meeting LOs.

Why is the General Education Office interested in SALG and how does it hope to use SALG data?
SALG is recommended for project evaluation purposes by the National Science Foundation and is used by organizations such as Science Education for New Civic Engagements and Responsibilities (SENCER). Dr. Hokulani Aikau, Faculty Administrator of the UHM General Education Program, saw the potential for using SALG within Gen Ed through her work with SENCER.

Because SALG is a tool focused on student learning, the Gen Ed Boards and Gen Ed Office can receive data for the purpose of examining whether Gen Ed learning objectives and Hallmarks are being met. Over time, it will be possible to determine whether any learning objectives or Hallmarks require revision for clarity.

The General Education Office would also like to provide faculty an alternative means of renewing their Gen Ed course designations. It is highly possible that SALG data demonstrating that Gen Ed LOs are being met can be submitted and used to grant automatic renewal.

Data yielded from the Spring 2017 pilot will be pivotal in understanding the logistics of implementing this alternative means of course designation renewal. The pilot is also informing the Gen Ed Office of what steps will be necessary if we decide to use SALG to assess other Focus and Foundations courses.

How can I get more information?
1. Visit the SALG website: http://www.salsite.org/
2. Contact Hokulani Aikau (aikau@hawaii.edu) or Wendi Vincent (wvincent@hawaii.edu)