

## **Online Course Evaluation System**

### **What is the online course evaluation system?**

Since 2006, the College Curriculum Council has worked to develop a flexible course evaluation system that will help departments evaluate their courses and teaching more effectively. Following the CCC's recommendation, the College piloted an online course evaluation form in spring 2008. Every semester since then, some version of the online course evaluation form has been made available to departments. Each semester's form was revised according to extensive feedback from faculty, students, and departments. In fall 2010, the online course evaluation system was used by 22 departments.

### **Is there one standard form?**

No. Five base forms have been developed by faculty to meet the needs of different academic departments and programs. These five forms, which are listed below, can be modified by departments to suit their needs.

- Humanities and social sciences
- Physical and natural sciences
- Laboratory sections
- 0100-0600 foreign language courses
- Performance and applied fine arts courses

### **Are departments required to use it?**

No. Departments may continue to use paper evaluation forms if they wish.

### **Can just a few courses in a department test the form?**

Yes. The system allows departments to select which courses will and will not use the online system. We anticipate that departments will eventually migrate most if not all of their courses to the system because of its ease of use and its enhanced reporting functions.

### **Do we have to include all questions on the standard form?**

No. The forms can be modified to fit your department's needs. However, every form contains a set of five questions that cannot be removed: one text-response question on the quality of the student's learning, two likert-scale questions on course effectiveness and teaching, and two text-response questions on course effectiveness and teaching.

### **How can we customize the form?**

Department chairs and managers have access to the system's edit functions, by which department-specific questions may be added. If you are interested in adding a question relevant to one of your courses, speak with your chair.

### **Can we evaluate TAs using the system?**

Yes. TAs entered in Banner are automatically entered in the system. The evaluation builder also allows for the adding of TAs whose names are not in Banner. When the student fills out the form, the TA name appears in red above a set of questions. The reporting system is built so that the primary instructor receives the TA results, along with the responses to all other questions. TAs receive information about their questions only and do not have access to confidential faculty information in the system.

### **What about courses with multiple instructors?**

Multiple instructors can be easily evaluated in the new system. The primary instructor on record in Banner is automatically entered in the system. Departments may add additional instructors to one or more courses. Again, when a student fills out an evaluation, the name of every instructor appears in red above the questions specifically about his or her teaching. Students comment on the teaching of each instructor individually.

### **What kinds of reports are available?**

At the end of the evaluation period, course instructors can read their course evaluations using a convenient online viewer. Paper reporting is currently under development and will include the following types of reports:

- **Course instructors** receive all individual evaluations, grouped by course; responses to each Likert-scale question grouped by course; and narrative responses grouped by course and question.
- **Teaching assistants** receive reports on the section of questions specifically about TAs
- **Department managers, chairs, and directors** receive the same information as faculty, plus the following:
  - Individual evaluations grouped by course type (E.g., all ENGL 0110 sections, all CHEM 0360 labs)
  - Aggregate data on Likert-scale questions by course and across courses
  - Text box question responses grouped by course and question

### **Who else has access to the information?**

- No one has access to the data except individual course instructors, department chairs, and department managers. As is already the case, departments will be expected to send teaching reports to the Dean of the Faculty. This system is designed to facilitate such reporting.

### **How do we ensure that students will fill out the forms?**

- The course evaluation system is integrated into Banner's grading function. As long as a course evaluation is available for a given course, students are unable to view a final grade until they either complete an evaluation or indicate that they prefer not to.
- Our experience with the system this fall made it clear that we should keep the system open as long as possible. To ensure a high rate of completed evaluations, we recommend that departments keep the system open until the last day that faculty may submit course grades for a given term.
- Many faculty have had good results by asking students to bring their laptops to class on a designated day and to fill out the forms in class. We think this would be a good practice to follow.

### **To learn more about how the system functions:**

- Dynamic versions of the five base forms are available via the Faculty Governance web site.