



UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO MISSISSAUGA

Guidelines on the Student Evaluation of Teaching in Courses

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Table of Contents

1. Introduction	2
1 A. Course Evaluation Framework	3
1 B. Appropriate Use of Course Evaluations	3
1 C. Scope of Course Evaluation Framework.....	3
2. The Course Evaluation Form	4
3. Administration of Course Evaluations.....	6
3 A. Process	6
3 B. Reporting Procedures and Use	6
3 C. Data Accuracy	7
4. Review.....	9
Appendix A.....	10
Roles and Responsibilities.....	10

1. Introduction

The University of Toronto Mississauga (UTM) and the University of Toronto (U of T) are committed to ensuring the quality of its academic programs, its teaching and the learning experiences of its students. An important component of this is the regular evaluation of courses by students. The University of Toronto's centralized course evaluation framework is used to collect student feedback about their learning experience for all courses delivered at UTM.

The Vice-Provost, Innovations in Undergraduate Education, is responsible for Provostial oversight of the system, and the Centre for Teaching Support & Innovation (CTSI) provides administrative, technical, and educational support (see University of Toronto Provostial Guidelines on the Student Evaluation of Teaching in Courses, the "Provostial Guidelines").

The Office of the Vice-Principal Academic and Dean (OVPAD) at UTM is responsible for divisional oversight of course evaluations at UTM. This document outlines the procedures for the centrally administered course evaluations in UTM Undergraduate and Graduate courses. For alternative course evaluations, see section 1C.

According to the University's Policy on the Student Evaluation of Teaching in Courses, course evaluations are conducted to:

- Provide formative data used by instructors for the continuous improvement of their teaching.
- Provide members of the University community, including students, with information about teaching and courses at the institution.
- Collect data used in the summative evaluation of teaching for administrative purposes such as annual merit, tenure and promotion review.
- Provide data used by divisions for program and curriculum review.

The following University of Toronto policies and guidelines should be used when clarification of terms and processes is required.

- [Provostial Guidelines on The Student Evaluation of Teaching in Courses \(updated February 2022\)](#)
- [Policy on the Student Evaluation of Teaching in Courses \(2011\)](#)
- [A Step-by-Step Guide to Review Course Evaluations \(2025\)](#)
- [Policy on the Appointment of Academic Administrators \(2003\)](#)
- [Divisional Teaching Evaluation Guidelines](#)

1 A. Course Evaluation Framework

To ensure that course evaluations provide instructors, academic administrators, and students with meaningful and relevant feedback, [U of T's Course Evaluation Framework](#) applies a cascaded assessment structure that acknowledges the need for both broad-based and granular assessment across the various levels of the institution.

Specifically, course evaluation forms are comprised of items that reflect core teaching and learning priorities, which apply to all courses at U of T; divisional items that reflect teaching and learning priorities within a specific division (e.g. Faculty of Arts & Science); departmental items that reflect teaching and learning priorities within a specific department (e.g. Computer Science); and finally, individual instructor items that reflect teaching and learning priorities within a specific course.

1 B. Appropriate Use of Course Evaluations

Course evaluations are part of an overall teaching and program evaluation framework that includes regular peer review, instructor self-assessment, cyclical program review and other forms of assessment as appropriate. As part of this framework, course evaluations are a particularly useful tool for providing students with an opportunity to provide feedback on their own learning experiences. Course evaluations provide one source of information about students' reported learning experiences. They do not measure teaching effectiveness or teaching quality.

1 C. Scope of Course Evaluation Framework

The U of T Policy on the Student Evaluation of Teaching in Courses defines the scope of courses that require evaluation in the following manner: "Each undergraduate and graduate course will be evaluated each time it is offered. It is left to divisions to make provisions for obtaining student feedback by alternative means in courses of an individual/independent nature (e.g., independent study courses, music studios, practica) or courses with very small enrolments as defined by each faculty/division".

The course evaluation framework is best suited to courses that are multi-week, didactic style, with no more than 4 instructors. Further, these courses should have assessment components and course materials. Only instructors who are employed by the University of Toronto and who have a valid UTORid are eligible for evaluation by the framework.

Data from cross-listed courses will be managed by the primary department and the Division will report on these as outlined below.

Teaching assistants are governed by terms in the CUPE 3902 collective agreement and are not eligible to be evaluated through the centralized course evaluation process and system.

Alternative Course Evaluations

Alternative course evaluations may be required for some courses where central course evaluations are not feasible. At the start of each academic term, the Chair/Director of an academic unit may identify courses that are suited to alternative means of evaluation (e.g. ROP, independent study/research or thesis courses), and thereby excluded from central course evaluations. Please contact UTM OVPAD (at programcurriculum.utm@utoronto.ca) for more details and guidance on this process.

2. The Course Evaluation Form

The University of Toronto’s course evaluation framework consists of four parts and includes questions that elicit both quantitative and qualitative (open-ended) responses. The maximum number of questions permitted is 20.

Course Evaluation Items:

Administrative Responsibility	Questions (Items)	Details
Institutional	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. I found the course intellectually stimulating. 2. The course provided me with a deeper understanding of the subject matter. 3. The instructor created a course atmosphere that was conducive to my learning. 4. Course projects, assignments, tests and/or exams improved my understanding of the course material. 5. Course projects, assignments, tests and/or exams provided opportunity for me to demonstrate an understanding of the course material. 6. Overall, the quality of my learning experience in this course was: 7. Please comment on the overall quality of instruction in this course. 	<p>To appear on all forms.</p> <p>Scale: Q1-Q5: Not at all, Somewhat, Moderately, Mostly, A Great Deal</p> <p>Q6: Poor, Fair, Good, Very Good, Excellent</p>

	8. Please comment on any assistance that was available to support your learning in the course.	Q7-Q8: Open-ended, qualitative
Divisional (UTM)	<p>Undergraduate evaluations:</p> <p>9. Compared to other courses, the workload for this course was ...</p> <p>10. I would recommend this course to other students.</p> <p>11. The course inspired me to learn more about the subject matter.</p> <p>Graduate evaluations:</p> <p>1. The course provided opportunity for me to enhance my critical thinking and judgement.</p> <p>2. The course content was relevant to my professional development.</p> <p>3. The course instructor related course concepts to current issues or real-life situations.</p>	<p>Scale (Undergraduate):</p> <p>Q1: Very Light, Light, Average, Heavy, Very Heavy Not at all,</p> <p>Q2-Q3: Somewhat, Moderately, Mostly, A Great Deal</p> <p>Scale (Graduate):</p> <p>Q1-Q3: Not at all, Somewhat, Moderately, Mostly, A Great Deal</p>
Departmental/ Program	<p>Link to UTM Departmental items:</p> <p>UTMississauga-Course-Evaluation-Items updatedWinter2024.pdf</p>	
Instructor-selected	Questions chosen from the instructor item bank (up to 3).	

Source: <https://teaching.utoronto.ca/course-evaluations/ce-items/>

Each course generates a single evaluation form. If there are multiple instructors teaching the same course section, all instructors will be evaluated on the same form. In such cases, if instructor-specific questions are selected, each instructor would receive a separate report with responses to their chosen questions. Additionally, the current framework allows up to four instructors to be evaluated at a given time for the same course code.

3. Administration of Course Evaluations

3 A. Process

Course and Student Enrolment

The UTM Office of the Registrar will ensure that all registered students, as well as instructors for each course, are clearly and accurately identified. This is to ensure that students can evaluate teaching within every course offered.

Timing

In consultation with the Vice-Dean, Undergraduate and the Office of the Registrar, the Associate Director, Academic Programs and Quality Assurance in UTM OVPAD will determine the timing of when course evaluations must conclude, which will be before the start of the exam period, and will communicate this timing information to CTSI.

Communications

All communications to faculty, academic administrators, students and staff pertaining to the process of collecting results for centrally administered course evaluations are administered by CTSI and sent centrally.

Additionally, the UTM OVPAD will encourage student participation by posting messages on Quercus and in other relevant communications. These will seek to encourage participation and explain the importance of evaluations and how they are used. The OVPAD will also encourage faculty to adopt practices aimed at ensuring a high response rate, e.g., by giving students time at the beginning of the last class to complete the evaluations.

3 B. Reporting Procedures and Use

For each course, CTSI generates two reports of anonymized course evaluation data: the Instructor Report and the Academic Admin Report. These reports are intended to provide feedback to course instructors and to be used for both formative and summative purposes, for use by PTR, tenure and promotion committees, in an aggregate form for program and curriculum review.

The Instructor Report includes data for all Institutional, Divisional, Departmental/Program, and Instructor questions. The Academic Admin Report includes data for all Institutional, Divisional, and Departmental/Program questions. The Academic Admin Report will include data on Instructor questions only if instructors opt to make data for these questions available to the Academic Admin Report at the time they choose their questions.

Report Content:

CONTENT TYPE	Institutional		Divisional		Departmental		Instructor- Selected
	Quantitative Data	Qualitative Data	Quantitative Data	Qualitative Data	Quantitative Data	Qualitative Data	
Academic Admin Course Reports	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	-
Instructor Report	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

Stakeholder Groups Access:

STAKEHOLDER GROUP	Academic Admin Course Reports	Instructor Report
	Academic Administrators (Dean, Vice Dean, Associate Dean)	YES
Chair/Director, Associate Chair/Director and/or Program Director	YES	NO
OVPAD staff, Registrar, identified academic unit staff	YES	NO
Instructors	NO	YES

3 C. Data Accuracy

The Associate Director, Academic Programs and Quality Assurance in the UTM OVPAD will be responsible for identifying individuals in the OVPAD, Office of the Registrar, and/or Academic Units to be granted access to reports and will communicate this information to CTSI at the start of each term.

Access

Reports of the results of course evaluations will be available to instructors and identified academic administrators and staff via the Quercus learning management system, under the Course Evals tab, and via a personalized emailed link.

The Policy on the Student Evaluation of Teaching in Courses states that data from course evaluations are made available to:

Instructors

- Instructors will have full access to the Instructor Report for each course they have taught. This report includes all quantitative and qualitative data from course evaluations conducted in the course. Access to this report will be available only after final grades have been approved at the divisional level and in accordance with the release schedule.
- Instructors may elect to share data from instructor-selected questions to academic administrators. They are responsible for this process.
- Instructors can share their own course evaluations with whomever they want and are encouraged to share their course evaluations when applying for academic positions or promotion. Course instructors are responsible for this process.
- Instructors can opt-out of sharing course evaluation data with students for each course offering they teach using CTSI's opt-out process, which is sent by email and available via Quercus. Instructors will be asked to indicate their interest in doing so at the time that they select their course-specific instructor questions. This must be specified separately for each course, each time is taught.

Academic Administrators

- Academic administrators and appropriate support staff, as identified by the UTM OVPAD, will have access to the Academic Admin Course Reports. These include Dean, Vice Deans, Associate Deans, and Department Chairs or Academic Unit Directors.

Students

- For course offerings in which the instructor has not opted out of sharing this data, quantitative data from the core institutional items and scaled divisional items will be posted on Quercus by CTSI under the Course Evals tab. This data will be posted after the release of reports for a given term.

Data collection and storage

The OVPAD will be responsible for downloading and retaining convenience copies of reports for a period of three years on a SharePoint site with appropriate user access permissions. CTSI will retain ownership of the reports, and thereby be responsible for records management.

4. Review

Every three years, the UTM OVPAD will review these guidelines and procedures, including divisional and departmental/program items, to maintain and communicate best practices.

The review will include approval of changes to divisional items, in consultation with the decanal office. In addition, academic unit Chairs/Directors will review and approve changes to departmental items for the programs offered through their academic unit. (For jointly offered courses, the Chair/Director from each department will agree to the approval.) be asked to review their own departmental items, and update them (as needed)

The revised guidelines will be reviewed by the decanal office in OVPAD and approved by the Vice-Principal, Academic and Dean.

Appendix A

Roles and Responsibilities

University Role and Responsibilities

- Provides and supports a centralized course evaluation framework and online delivery system that preserves the confidentiality of the responses and supports various reporting options. The framework includes a common course evaluation form that is customizable by divisions, academic units, and instructors. The online course evaluation system is managed centrally through the Office of the Vice-President & Provost and the Centre for Teaching Support & Innovation (CTSI).
- Specifies a set of institutional questions that reflect the overall teaching priorities of the University, and that must be included on all course evaluation forms.
- Provides staff support for course evaluation administration in CTSI through the Course Evaluation Operation team, which is specifically designated to assist divisions, units, and instructors in all aspects of the evaluation process.
- Provides materials to support the interpretation and use of course evaluation data.
- Manages communication to students, faculty, academic administrators, and staff about the course evaluation system, with the assistance of the CSTI Course Evaluation Operation team and in consultation with the division.
- Advises divisions on appropriate evaluation processes for courses that may not be best handled via the centralized system (with enrolment under 10, more than 4 instructors, practicums etc.).

Division Role and Responsibilities

- Oversees the course evaluation process for all of its courses.
- Identifies divisional questions that reflect divisional teaching and learning priorities.
- Sets the time period for course evaluations.
- Data accuracy in ROSI to ensure correct execution of course evaluations.
- Contributes to regular reviews of the policies and procedures of the course evaluation process to identify any necessary changes to division-wide procedures.

OVPAD and Office of the Registrar Role and Responsibilities

The UTM OVPAD and Office of the Registrar play essential roles in the effective implementation of the system each term because of their access to, and comfort with, ROSI, as well as administrative expertise and access levels required to:

- Ensure instructors are properly identified with courses,
- Ensure course codes and term designators are accurate,

- Ensure student enrollment is up-to-date, and
- Provide names, UTORids and emails to CTSI for persons authorized to access summative reports (this is normally the Dean but may also include Chairs and/or Vice-Deans)

Instructor Role and Responsibilities

- If desired, selects up to three (3) additional questions from the University of Toronto instructor item bank for the evaluation form for each offering of each course that they teach. Instructors may use these questions to assess specific teaching priorities and/or approaches not addressed elsewhere on the form. The data collected through the use of these questions are intended to provide formative feedback for the instructor and as such will only be reported to the instructor.
- Instructors may share the results from instructor-selected questions with their chair or other academic administrators for review.
- Instructors may choose to opt-out of sharing data from institutional and divisional questions with students, and will respond during the opt-out window provided.

More Information

- [Centre for Teaching Support and Innovation website for Course Evaluations](#)
- [University of Toronto Provostial Guidelines on the Student Evaluation of Teaching in Courses](#)
- [Policy on the Student Evaluation of Teaching in Courses](#)
- For questions about course evaluation viewer access at UTM, please contact programcurriculum.utm@utoronto.ca
- For all general course evaluation questions, please contact course.evaluations@utoronto.ca