

Preliminary to any discussion of the form and use of student evaluations, we have collected information on research, forms, and other measures.

Research

There is a large literature on student evaluations. We have posted a review from the School of Education, as well as a number of recent links: Questions Frequently Asked about Student Evaluation Forms (<http://www.crlt.umich.edu/crlttext/crlt.faqtext.html>); What do they know, anyway? Making Evaluations Effective (<http://www.ncsu.edu/felder-public/Columns/Eval2.html>); Using Student Ratings (<http://www.nyu.edu/cte/white.html>). A full-scale review of our questionnaires might require familiarity with this research.

On the surface, it appears that some of the general results of research have been incorporated by W&M, e.g., attention to a few general questions (rating of instructor and course; how much learned, and perhaps intellectual stimulation and challenge); such questions apparently tend to be reliable and valid. Other issues, including the small, but real, relation to expected grades, course content, faculty member's reputation, differences in class size and level, gender and race of faculty member, which have been addressed in the literature, should be included in any further review.

Forms

We have collected sample forms from most departments and schools and will complete the collection by May. The appended tables show which kinds of questions each entity asks. Almost all ask two general questions about overall evaluation of the course and instructor. The most common specific questions focus on:

- usefulness of assignments, texts, and exams
- clarity of course objectives
- grading (policy and fairness)
- stimulation/critical thinking
- amount learned
- Instructor characteristics:
 - competence and preparation of instructor
 - receptivity to questions
 - receptivity to differing opinions
 - enthusiasm
 - availability for help
 - clarity of presentation
 - feedback

Student information, such as major, level, GPA, and expected grade, is also requested by many departments.

Evaluation of Teaching

The information we have so far suggests that all departments and schools rely on student evaluations in merit, retention, tenure, and promotion decisions. Other common, but not universal, measures include review of syllabi, tests, and handouts, student narrative comments, and teaching portfolios, as well as observation by colleagues (mandated or optional).

	E	P	S	A	W	B	G	H	P	G	C	A	B	C	M	E	W	M	R	C	M	A	A	I	P	T	A	K	V	B	I	F	
	c	s	o	n	o	l	o	i	h	e	h	p	i	o	a	n	r	o	e	l	a	u	r	r	n	h	h	m	i	i	u	a	d
	o	y	c	t	m	a	v	s	y	e	e	p	o	o	t	g	i	d	l	a	s	t	H	t	i	e	S	n	m	s	w	u	
Student Status	x	x	x	x		x	x	x	x	x		x	x	x	x		x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x					
Grade	x	x									x	x	x						x	x													
Workload	x								x					x															x	x	x		
Difficulty	x										G	x			x																		
Texts		x	x	x	x						B	x	x																				
Exams		x	x	x	x	x						x	x	x																			
Assignments	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x		x	x	x	x	x	x																
Clear objective	x		x		x	x																											
Organization	x	x	x	x	x			x	x																								
Stimulating	x	x		x	x	x	x	x	x	x		x	x		x	x																	
Crit thinking																																	
Learned a lot						x	x																										
Enthusiasm	x	x		x	x			x	x																								
Rapport		x																															
Grades: clarity						x	x	x	x																								
Fairness			x					x	x																								
Receptivity: ?		x		x				x	x	x																							
Diff opinions																																	
Availability	x		x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x																							
Feedback			x	x		x	x	x																									
Competence				x																													
Preparation																																	
Discussion		B	C																														
Presentation	x	x	x	E	x	x	x	x	x	x																							
Gen Instructor	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	
Gen Course	x	x	x	x		x																											
Other topics	A		D	F			G	C				C	J	K																			
Other measures																																	
syllabi, etc		x	x	x	x																												
observation		x	x	x																													
narrative																																	
portfolio			x	x																													
grades																																	
letters																																	

1. separate large intro from small upper level

- a. Instructor encourages independent thinking
- d. opportunity to work with others
- g. Instructor presents varying points of view
- j. Instructor gathers enough info for grade
- m. Student would recommend course
- p. Student would recommend teacher

2. separate form for writing classes, labs, seminars, etc.

- b. Instructor uses effective examples/illustrations
- e. class meetings worthwhile
- h. prompt return of work
- k. Student worked to ability
- n. Course presents interdisciplinary approach
- y. tracking postgraduates
- c. opportunity for student participation
- f. Course presents disciplinary approach
- i. Course: preparation for future work
- l. Improve skills (writing; creative/visual thinking)
- o. Course develops precise thinking
- z. focus groups (Bus); interviews with representative sample of students (Hist)