



OISE Guidelines for the Student Evaluation of Teaching in Courses

April 12, 2017

Background

The *Policy on the Student Evaluation of Teaching in Courses* (2011) stipulates that each course at the University of Toronto will be evaluated by students. The *Provostial Guidelines on the Student Evaluation of Teaching in Courses* (2017) addresses the administration, use and storage of course evaluation and related data. The OISE guidelines are intended to align with the Provostial Guidelines and provide clarity on the implementation and interpretation of the course evaluation framework at the divisional level; specifically regarding data input, data collection and verification, reporting process and communication strategies.

The primary course evaluation system is administered by the Centre for Teaching Support and Innovation (CTSI). CTSI manages the central system, the collection of student evaluation data, coordinates external support and works with divisions to coordinate the housing of the data, maintaining the system and providing advice on the selection of evaluation items.

Overview of Roles

Division Roles

The Associate Dean, Programs is responsible for division-level oversight of the Course Evaluation Process at OISE, and for providing additional messaging to faculty, students and staff, where appropriate, to encourage participation and engagement with the system.

In collaboration with the Registrar's Office, the Academic and Administrative Business Process Analyst will coordinate the divisional activities in relation to the Course Evaluation Process. These activities include:

- Acting as the liaison between OISE and CTSI in matters relating to timing, policies, and any issues that may arise from the implementation of the course evaluation process and systems at the division level;
- Communicating and coordinating the verification of course data with departments and programs;
- Ensuring course data (e.g., session, course code, section, instructor, etc.) that is extracted from ROSI is accurate and timely so that CTSI may collect the data and import it into the course evaluation system;
- Providing division-level support to faculty, students and staff as needed;
- Negotiating both the timing of the instructor and student task completion windows per session with CTSI;

- Working with all programs and departments to ensure that the timing of the course evaluation process at OISE is appropriate and in line with course end dates;
- Managing the storage of divisional, departmental and individual instructor reports locally in a central repository at OISE (i.e., Homepage);
- Managing the access to data for the division; communicating with decanal staff and academic administrators who should have access to the data to CTSI in a timely manner; and
- In collaboration with CTSI, providing training and workshops to faculty, students and staff.

Department Roles

The Chair is responsible for departmental-level oversight of the Course evaluation process for their department. The Chair may appoint a staff member(s) in their department to manage the process and act as the liaison between the department and the Dean's Office in matters relating to the course evaluation process.

Each department is responsible for:

- Verifying that the ROSI data that provided by the Dean's Office is accurate;
- The timely submission of data or changes to the Dean's Office to ensure that ROSI is correct at the time of import into the course evaluation system;
- Ensuring that any incorrect data is corrected and/or entered into ROSI in a timely manner;
- Providing faculty, students and staff in their department additional support regarding the course evaluation process; and
- Providing course evaluation reports, with the approval of the Chair, for other administrative processes including PTR, promotions, and the sessional hiring process.

Instructor Roles

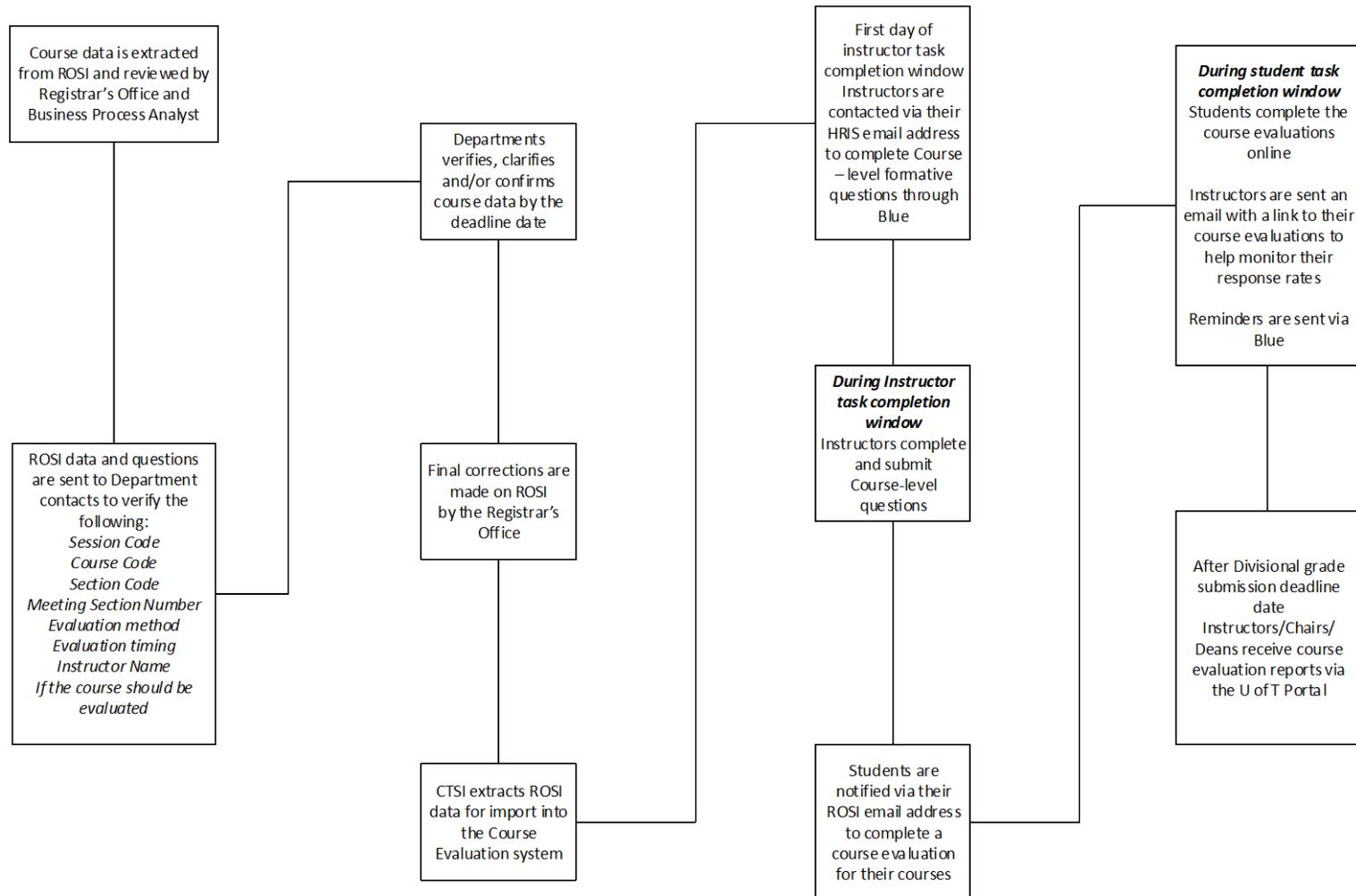
Each instructor is responsible for:

- Selecting course-level questions during the instructor task completion window;
- Accessing their individual course evaluation reports via the U of T Portal;
- Communicating with their students about the importance of participating in the course evaluation process; and
- Monitoring their individual course evaluation response rates.

Data Verification Process

OISE will ensure that the data on the central repository system (ROSI) is updated in a timely manner so that all required data is accurate prior to entry into the course evaluation system. The data verification process will involve close communication between CTSI, OISE, and the departments to ensure that the timelines are in sync with academic schedules. Below is a flowchart of tasks that will ensure that the data verification process is timely and will ensure accurate course evaluation data.

The U of T Course Evaluation Process (Using Blue)



Overview of the Evaluation Instrument

Student course evaluations are seen as one component in the process of assessing teaching practice. In order not to disadvantage our faculty at the time of tenure and promotion, and in situations where they are being nominated for teaching awards, it is important to have a small number of items that are collected about all courses. As goals differ across courses and disciplines, in addition to the institutional and divisional items, the course evaluation questionnaire includes items unique to departments and individual instructors.

In addition to the eight core institutional (U of T) items, the course evaluation questionnaire includes three divisional (OISE) items that reflect the shared experiences and interpretations of teaching effectiveness outlined in the institutional priorities, and: (a) are relevant to all disciplines and fields of study at OISE; (b) support faculty members' professional development, promotion and tenure by helping gather evidence on teaching performance; and (c) capture fundamental aspects of the student classroom experience that carries over a range of course types, levels, and pedagogical approaches. Core items will be reviewed periodically by representatives across departments and at OISE to ensure that items reflect the teaching goals of their programs, departments and the division.

Departments and programs may also decide to include additional questions specific to their area of study and/or program. Individual faculty members may also include additional questions for each of their courses. However, the results of these questions will not be shared centrally. Currently, there is a maximum of three course-level questions that can be selected for each course from the course evaluation question bank. The evaluation instrument cannot exceed 20 items, in order to ensure that response rate is high.

Overview of the Reporting Process

All course evaluation data are collected, archived and released in ways that maintain the anonymity of individual students. No course evaluation data should be released to course instructors prior to submission of final grades. Final grade submission deadline dates are communicated to CTSI who will then establish reporting timelines for OISE.

CTSI is responsible for providing course evaluation reports via the U of T Portal, with additional email communication, to Chairs, the Associate Dean, Programs, the Dean, and the Academic and Administrative Business Process Analyst, in a timely manner.

OISE will review the group of users who will have access to the reports periodically and communicate any changes to the group to CTSI in a timely manner.

Currently, access is limited to the following users via the U of T portal:

- Department Chairs in each department
- Associate Dean, Programs
- Dean
- Academic and Administrative Business Process Analyst

However, the Executive Assistants and Chairs in each department are given access to the local central repository of data (Homespace).

Interpretation and Use of Course Evaluation Data in Divisional Processes

Course evaluation data for closed-ended and open-ended questions are archived in electronic form. The course mean, median and standard deviation for closed ended questions, as well as the answers to the open-ended questions will be provided to the individual course instructor, the Department Chair, the Associate Dean, Programs and the Dean. However, statistics and answers to course-level questions will only be shared with the instructor. Individual instructors may choose to share those results with their Chair and/or review committees at their own discretion.

The mean, median and standard deviation for each department and all of OISE will also be available to allow individual instructors to locate themselves in relation to their peers, for department Chairs to provide support for teaching in their departments, and for review committees to evaluate the candidate in relation to peers. It is expected that course instructors will review their course evaluations at the end of each semester in order to understand student views on their strengths, weaknesses, pedagogy, level of knowledge on subjects with a view to improving their teaching practice and advancing her teaching philosophy. The summary of the most recent (3 to 5 years) course evaluation data will also be used to support faculty members' nominations for divisional, institutional and external teaching awards.

Sharing of Course Evaluation Data with Students

As the general norm, course evaluation data will be shared with students. Aggregated course evaluation statistical data will be shared with students via the U of T Portal. In collaboration with CTSI, OISE will periodically review what access students will have to the course evaluation data. Instructors may opt-out of sharing the information with their students.

Opting-out Procedures and Mechanism

Instructors have the option to opt-out of sharing their course information with students. In collaboration with CTSI, OISE will set the window for opting out of data sharing with students each session. The process will ensure that instructors will have the opportunity to opt-out after reviewing their course evaluation results.

Transfer of Data to another Unit/Division/Organization

Faculty members are responsible and have access to their own data and therefore may distribute their information for various purposes to another unit, division or organization at their own discretion.

Faculty members, committees, and other external institutions may submit request for access to departmental data to their Chair, and access to divisional data should be directed to oise.programs@utoronto.ca and will be assessed on a case-by-case basis.