Office of Measurement and Evaluation of Teaching

Student Opinion of Teaching Survey

Operating Policies & Practices

The services of the Office of Measurement and Evaluation of Teaching (OMET) are provided by the Office of the Provost to help Schools and departments with the mission of conducting student opinion of teaching surveys.

As mandated by the Office of the Provost, each School, or each department in the Dietrich School of Arts & Sciences, must have a written policy for student evaluation of teaching and peer evaluation of teaching. Who should be surveyed and how often an instructor’s courses should be surveyed is a School decision, or in the case of the Dietrich School of Arts & Sciences a department-by-department decision. The Provost’s office does not mandate using OMET to administer surveys, but some form of formal evaluation is required.

If a School or department chooses to use the services of OMET to fulfill the evaluation of teaching mission then they must abide by the policies and procedures of the office. OMET’s policies and procedures are in place for purposes of maintaining confidentiality, student anonymity, and effective systematic practices.

1. Requesting a student survey of instruction:
   1. Typically, an instructor must request that a survey be administered for his or her course. However, beginning in 2013, arrangements have been made with the schools of Law, Information Science, Business, University Honors College, College of General Studies, and Arts & Sciences to request surveys on behalf of their instructors. This list is subject to change or may apply only to fall and spring terms. It is good practice for each instructor to check with his or her School or department to determine its practice for requesting surveys. All instructors associated with a course should have individual requests. The school or department in which they reside should make cross-listed course survey requests.
   2. OMET receives its course, student, and instructor information at the beginning of the term after add/drop period ends. It is this student information that will be used for the surveys. Surveys are sent to officially enrolled students. Students who withdraw after these dates will be included in the survey unless proof of withdrawal is provided to OMET by the instructor prior to two weeks before the start of the survey period.
   3. Requests for surveys will not be honored after the term is finished.

2. Survey Content
   1. Standard survey forms are used for each School or department. The current forms have been approved by the School or department and cannot be altered without the permission
of the School or department and its administration. (Process varies based on governance policies of each School.)

2. Instructors who request or whose School or department submits its list to OMET at least two weeks before the start of the survey period will have the opportunity to add questions to their survey. **

3. Survey Administration:
   1. Surveys are administered for classes with five or more students.
   2. All surveys are administered online.
   3. Surveys take place during the last three weeks of classes*** during fall and spring terms. Summer surveys are administered based on summer term/session schedules. **
   4. Four reminders are sent to students who have not submitted a survey. **
   5. Response rate notification emails are sent to instructors one week prior to the student response deadline if the rate is below 50%. **
   6. Instructors are encouraged to discuss with students the survey process, the importance of student participation and how the responses are used.
   7. Instructors may allow class time for students to complete the survey on a mobile device.
   8. Instructors may not try to influence the content of students’ responses
   9. Instructors may administer their own surveys to illicit feedback from students, however official OMET survey results will be sent directly from the OMET office and will have been conducted according to systematic administration guidelines.

10. Confidentiality
    1. Student survey responses are anonymous.
    2. To protect student anonymity, OMET does not release information on who did or did not complete the survey.
    3. Results
        1. The complete results (quantitative and qualitative) of the survey are reported by OMET to the individual instructor, after final grades are turned in to the Registrar.
        2. Survey data will not be deleted once results are released.
        3. OMET may release results to another individual (usually a School or department administrator) if an established policy by faculty and/or administration has been agreed upon and reported in writing to OMET. The release to the instructor always occurs before the release to the School/department administrator.
    4. Data Retention
        1. Electronic copies of results and summaries will be retained for 10 years.

*Instructor is used to denote anyone teaching at the University of Pittsburgh, i.e. Professors, Associate Professors, Assistant Professors, part-time instructors, lecturers, teaching assistants, etc.

**Some features and practices apply only to regular term classes.

***May vary depending on School or class meeting times.