

# Instructions on Using the Course Evaluation Summary Sheet Template

Updated August 2025

## Who is the template for?

Before using course evaluations in your dossier, consult with your unit head and [divisional guidelines](#) to understand the criteria, expectations and norms in our discipline.

The accompanying [Excel Template](#) is provided as **an optional tool** to U of T instructors to summarize and present course evaluation data and help readers gain an overview and provide context to the accompanying narrative in your teaching dossier.

When integrating course evaluations into your teaching dossier, it's important to present them as one piece of evidence among several indicators of teaching effectiveness, such as:

- Mid-course feedback surveys
- Peer observation of teaching (formative, not summative)
- Unsolicited emails/letters from students or colleagues
- Examples of student work and outcomes
- Teaching awards
- Instructional grants

Teaching excellence is an ongoing, iterative process. Course evaluations can provide valuable insights into students' experiences and perceptions of teaching if proper consideration for contextual factors, trends/patterns, and multiple data sources is utilized. Following effective practice in interpreting course evaluations, including leveraging multiple sources of information, can help derive relevant insights.

## What is this template?

This [Excel Template](#) is an optional tool to offers a summary of your quantitative course evaluation data, helping readers gain an overview and providing context to the accompanying narrative in your teaching



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dossier. Please note that this template is not required. It is a resource designed to help instructors present their course evaluation data effectively.

The development of this template was informed by feedback from U of T instructors.

## What is included in the template?

- Incorporates findings from the latest research conducted by the Evaluation & Assessment Unit at CTSI (see [Renewed Validation Study](#) for reference).
- Emphasizes the importance of considering contextual factors (e.g., course size) when interpreting course evaluation results.
- Highlights recommended response rates and the minimum number of responses needed across course sizes for precise and reliable evaluations
- Introduces granular item-level results (i.e., item endorsement rate) for more detailed insights beyond aggregate measures like the Institutional Composite Mean (ICM).
- Provides reference tables with typical ranges for ICM and item endorsement rates to aid interpretation.
- Includes built-in analytics to automatically calculate:
  1. Course size category (Column G)
  2. Whether response rate and number of responses meet the threshold (Column H)
  3. Whether ICM is within the typical range (Column I)

## How to use the template: Step-by-step instructions

In the Excel template, greyed-out columns will update automatically. Do not edit the grey-out columns.

### Step 1. Enter your name and department

- a. Go to the Fill-In Summary Tab.
- b. In the upper left corner of the template, replace the placeholder text with your name and department.

### Step 2. Enter your course information

- a. In Column A, enter the course code and section (e.g., PSY100H1 LEC0101).
- b. In Column B, enter the semester (e.g., Fall 2025).

### Step 3. Enter your response rate information

- a. In Column C, enter the number of students invited to complete the evaluation (number available from your course evaluation). The information entered in Column C will auto-populate the course size

information in Column G. For more details about Column G, refer to [Understanding "Course Size" \(Column G\)](#).

- b. In Column D, enter the number of student responses (number available from your course evaluation). The Response Rate (RR) in Column E and the analysis of RR threshold in Column H will be calculated automatically. For more information about Column H, refer to [Understanding "Response Rate Met the Threshold" \(Column H\)](#).

#### Step 4. Enter the ICM (Institutional Composite Mean)

- a. In Column F, input the ICM value (value available from your course evaluation). The analysis of the ICM range in Column I will be calculated automatically. For more information about Column I, refer to [Understanding "ICM in or Above the Typical Range" \(Column I\)](#).

#### (Optional) Step 5. Enter item endorsement rates for Ins01 to Ins06

- a. In Columns J to O, enter the item endorsement rates if available. The item endorsement rate is found in Section 1 of the new course evaluation report (available starting May 2025). For the old course evaluation report, calculate endorsement rate by adding the percentages of respondents who selected the top two positive options:
  - For Ins01 to Ins05: "A Great Deal" and "Mostly"
  - For Ins06: "Excellent" and "Very Good"

#### Repeat for additional courses

- a. Repeat Steps 2 to 5 for each additional course you wish to include.

## Understanding the Analysis Columns

### Understanding "Course Size" (Column G)

Analysis of U of T course evaluation data (Fall 2018/19 – Winter 2022/23) shows that different instructional contexts (e.g., large vs. small courses) have distinct Institutional Composite Mean (ICM<sup>1</sup>) profiles. Notably, course size plays a significant role in interpreting ICM scores, as larger courses tend to receive lower ICM scores. An ICM of 3.7 might be typical for large courses (200+ students) but would be considered below the typical range for smaller courses (25 or fewer students) (CTSI, 2025).

### Understanding "Response Rate Met the Threshold" (Column H)

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<sup>1</sup> **Institutional Composite Mean (ICM):** A mathematical average of the first five institutional rating scale items (Ins01-05), which represent institution-wide teaching and learning priorities. The 2018 Validation Study established the reliability and validity of using the ICM as a metric to understand students' collective experiences.

## How is the threshold calculated?

- The reliability and accuracy of course evaluation results depend on the number of student responses.
- While course evaluation results offer a snapshot of student perceptions, the precision of this snapshot varies based on response rates.
- **Sufficient response rate (%):** Response rates at which the course ICM will be at least a somewhat precise estimate (width of interval around the mean  $\leq 0.49$ ) (CTSI, 2025)  
**Sufficient number of respondents:** The number of student respondents at which a course ICM is predicted to have a reliability coefficient of  $\geq 0.80$  for a given course ICM (CTSI, 2025)

## Understanding "ICM in or Above the Typical Range" (Column I)

### How is the typical range calculated?

- The typical range corresponds to the 15th and 85th percentiles of the distribution of course-section ICMs.
- This analysis is based on the average ICMs across all course sections taught between 2018/19 and 2022/23 (undergraduate and graduate) from all 15 faculties/schools within the central course evaluation system.
- Atypically low (bottom 15%) or high (top 15%) scores don't automatically indicate ineffective or effective teaching. Various factors outside an instructor's control—like class size or course difficulty—can influence these scores.

## How-To in Excel

### Can I Modify, Add, or Remove Content?

The provided template represents a **minimum recommended** structure for presenting your course evaluation results in a teaching dossier. It includes:

- Course Information (e.g., section)
- Response Rate Information
- Institutional Composite Mean (ICM; average of core items 1–5)
- Results of institutional core items (item endorsement rates)
- Automatic calculations for key indicators

You may also wish to add:

- Department-specific items
- Instructor-selected formative items (not visible to others)
- Instructor-specific evaluation items (e.g., core item #3)
- Comparative scores (e.g., divisional or program benchmarks)
- Separate tables for individual items or groups of items

## Editing Rows and Columns in Microsoft Excel

### To resize a row or column

- Move your cursor to the header (row number or column letter) at the edge of the spreadsheet. The cursor will change in appearance.
- Left-click and drag to resize manually or double-click to auto-fit the content.

### To delete or insert a row/column

- Right-click on the row number or column letter to select the entire row/column.
- Choose "Insert" to add a new row/column or "Delete" to remove an existing one.

## How do I include this table in the dossier?

- Click on a cell (typically the upper-left cell of the table).
- Drag to select the portion of the table you wish to include.
- Use the copy command (right-click within the selected area and choose **Copy**).
- Paste the table into a word processor (e.g., Microsoft Word) by right-clicking and selecting **Paste**.

## The Table Formatting Looks Unusual After Pasting—What Should I Do?

If the table does not appear formatted correctly after pasting, consider the following:

- Paste the table as an image by right-clicking and selecting **Paste as Picture** under Paste Options (or Paste Special, depending on your version of Word).
- Adjust the margins on the page to accommodate the table.
- Reduce the font size within the table for a better fit.
- Break the table into multiple smaller tables if necessary.

## Have Additional Questions?

We are happy to help! Refer to the [Step-by-Step Guide to Reviewing Course Evaluations](#) for additional support or submit a consultation request via the CTSI general consultations [link](#).