Interpreting & Integrating Course Evaluations

Use this worksheet as a guide for systematically working through your course evaluations and considering how to integrate them into your course evaluations. References to report sections assume that you’re working with evaluations covered by the Cascaded Course Evaluation Framework, but reflection questions will apply to other formats.

# PROMPT #1: Work Through Individual Reports

Use the questions below to guide your reading of each of your individual course evaluation reports.

## Quantitative Scores

Look above Section 1. What is the response rate for this report? This can be calculated as a fraction (responded/invited) or percentage. Based on this response rate, how confident are you in the representativeness or precision of these scores?

In Section 1, Part A, what is the Institutional Composite Mean (ICM)? This score is the most reliable measure of students’ overall learning experiences in the course.

Are there any individual items (above the ICM) that stand out as unusually low or high? What might this reflect about your teaching? Be careful not to over-interpret small differences.

Jump to Parts B and C. Are there any Divisional or Departmental Items whose scores stand out? Are there any that particularly connect with your teaching philosophy that you may want to highlight or track for your dossier?

In Section 2, examine the distribution of scores. They may be clustered, spread, or bimodal (two peaks). What might be the explanation for the patterns you observe?

If you have you opted for any Instructor-Selected Items, they will appear in Section 4. Are there any whose scores stand out? Are there any that particularly connect with your teaching philosophy that you may want to highlight or track for your dossier?

What contextual factors about your course might be relevant for interpreting your quantitative scores (e.g. course size, teaching innovations)?

Given your responses above, what outstanding questions might be answered by reading through qualitative student comments? For example, comments can help explain low (or high) scores or unusual score distributions.

## Qualitative Comments

In Section 1, how many different students provided comments in response to Question 7? Based on this, how reflective might the comments be of overall sentiment in the course?

Review your comments systematically and keep track of common themes. Which themes around *opportunities for improvement* (e.g. ‘unclear instructions’) are most commonly mentioned by students?

What suggestions do students make related to common opportunities for improvement?

Reflect on the opportunities for improvement raised by students. If this is an older report, what changes have you since made to your teaching to address some of these comments? If this is a more recent report, what changes would be most feasible to implement?

Which *positive* themes (e.g. ‘well-organized lectures’) are most commonly mentioned by students?

Reflect on the positive themes. How can they be used to support the narrative of your teaching dossier? Consider whether the comments suggest any elements of your teaching that you had not yet highlighted.

Do the comments address any of your outstanding questions from the quantitative section?

# PROMPT #2: Work With the Summary Table

After you’ve filled in the summary table, consider the following questions to frame your discussion in your teaching dossier.

How would you describe your scores overall? Consider aggregating scores or describing meaning in terms of the qualitative anchors (i.e. “Not at all”, “Somewhat”, etc).

What are the general trends over time for similar courses?

Are there any outliers or courses that stand out? What contextual factors might explain these?

# PROMPT #3: Integrate Into Your Dossier

As you work your course evaluations into your dossier, consider the ways you can draw explicit connections to your teaching philosophy statement and other sources of evidence for your teaching effectiveness.

What overall story do your course evaluation scores tell?

What contextual factors about your overall teaching or particular courses should be described?

What student quotes illustrate elements of your teaching philosophy and/or effectiveness?

What other sources of evidence reinforce the story told by your course evaluations?

Based on your course evaluations, what are your next steps?