

Procedures for Gathering Student Evaluations

As spelled out in the *Faculty Handbook*, student involvement in third-year and tenure reviews comes through the use of special student evaluations forms. (See the excerpt from the *Faculty Handbook* on student participation.) Student input is solicited from a list of students, both current and recently graduated, generated by a sampling procedure administered by Institutional Research and Assessment, and from a second list of students and recent graduates solicited from the faculty member being reviewed. Procedures for sampling students are described below. Examples of the cover letter sent to students and evaluation form are also included.

After the Provost receives the student and graduate questionnaires, the students' names and addresses are deleted from the letters in the interest of anonymity, as the procedures require. Because handwritten responses may be identifiable, these will be typed by staff in my office. Your student evaluations will be made available for you to read. I will then schedule an individual meeting with you so we can discuss thoroughly the contents of all the letters received in your case. The "redacted" versions will then be sent to the tenured members of your department and the FPC. The original letters with names will be seen only by the President and the Provost.

Excerpt from Carleton College *Faculty Handbook*

The College encourages the involvement of students in its faculty and curricular decisions. Students take part in the hiring process within departments and in the review and evaluation of courses, programs, and departments through the departmental curriculum committees, the Education and Curriculum Committee, departmental reviews and other departmental and College-wide committees. All instructors have the right, and are encouraged, to secure student evaluations of their own courses.

In formal reviews for tenure or reappointment, student involvement comes through the use of special student evaluation forms distributed and processed by the provost. For this evaluation, a list of 20 to 30 names of current and recently graduated students is solicited from the faculty member concerned. A second list of names is obtained by the Office of Institutional Research and Assessment through a random sample, with appropriate mechanisms to make the sample broadly representative of the diversity of students who have taken the faculty members' courses. (Any student who has been the subject of a judicial proceeding involving the faculty member being evaluated will be barred from participating in this review at the latter's request.) After showing the covering letter and the evaluation form to the faculty member being evaluated, the provost writes to each student whose name appears on the lists, requesting the student's evaluation of the faculty member. Evaluations from current students are normally sought when students are away from the campus.

After the evaluations have been received, the provost prepares a copy of the letters, deleting the student's name and address and other material in the letter that is not appropriate to the review. The concerned faculty member is then given the opportunity to read the edited letters in a manner approved by the provost's office. At a later date, the faculty member meets with the provost to discuss the letters. The edited letters are also made available to the tenured members of the department and to the Faculty Personnel Committee. Only the provost and the president see the full letter from each student.

Student evaluations provide evidence to assist all participants in the process in making their decision. Used with sensitivity, they ought also to provide valuable assistance to the faculty member in evaluating his or her own teaching.

Example of letter to student or graduate

November 20_____

Dear Carleton {Student or Graduate}:

Professor _____ in the Department of _____ is undergoing a formal review for reappointment to the Carleton faculty, and I write to ask you to fill out a questionnaire evaluating their teaching. You have been chosen to participate in this review by a process described in [this excerpt from the Carleton Faculty Handbook](#).

Student evaluations are a very important part of the review process. Along with the appraisal of a candidate's scholarship and the observation of a candidate's classroom teaching by members of their own department, student feedback provides primary evidence upon which the decision is made.

In answering these questions, please consider the full range of contexts in which you knew Professor _____. Please comment on how they helped you develop various skills (writing, speaking, lab skills, etc.) as well as content knowledge.

Survey link to questionnaire inserted here.

Under the guidelines adopted by the faculty and the Board of Trustees, student evaluations will be read by the candidate under review **after your name and address have been removed**. They are then made available to the tenured members of the candidate's department and to the members of the Faculty Personnel Committee, a faculty group that deliberates with the President and the Provost, to assist them in making their recommendations. **Only the Provost of the College and President will see your name attached to your response.**

The thoroughness of our reviews is vitally important to the future health of the College and the effectiveness of the teaching here. For this reason, we depend upon you to respond fully and candidly to the questionnaire. Please rely for your answers on your own experience of Professor _____, and not on hearsay from other students. Because different students find different faculty or teaching techniques to be effective, we value every opinion; we need your response to ensure as fair and accurate a judgment as possible.

To be certain that it will be included in our evaluation procedure, we must receive your response by DATE.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact Becky Krogh, Academic Projects Specialist [by email](#) or at (507) 222-4311.

Thank you on behalf of the College and Professor _____, for taking the time to respond thoughtfully to this request.

Sincerely,

This form is sent when we don't have a person's email address. It looks slightly different than the online form, but both evaluations contain the same questions.

Example of evaluation questionnaire

STUDENT EVALUATION QUESTIONNAIRE

Please use a pen to complete and sign the form.

Evaluation of _____
(Faculty Member's Name)

1. Which courses and/or labs did you have with this faculty member? What other interactions did you have, e.g. as advisor, comps advisor, or work supervisor? Please complete the following:

Course or Other Interaction		Academic		Are/were you a major in this person's department?
No.	Title	Year	Term(s)	
This information is prepopulated for those completing the form online. They have the option to add additional information or note any corrections to the prepopulated information.				

2. Please briefly describe the criteria you use to judge the effectiveness of a faculty member at Carleton.
3. Which qualities of a faculty member are most helpful to your learning?
4. Based on the criteria you use to evaluate faculty members, what are this faculty member's strengths? How and how well did they help you to learn?

5. Does this faculty member have any weaknesses that affected your learning? If so, please describe their weaknesses and how they affected your learning.

6. Are there any aspects of this faculty member's scholarly or creative work, or breadth of intellectual interest, that enhance their teaching effectiveness? If so, please explain.

7. Please list up to seven of the most effective faculty you have had at Carleton (including this faculty member, if appropriate).

8. Keeping in mind all the faculty you have had at Carleton, please check the phrase below that most closely reflects your rating of this faculty member:

among the least effective <input type="checkbox"/>	considerably less effective than average <input type="checkbox"/>	less effective than average <input type="checkbox"/>	of average effectiveness among Carleton faculty <input type="checkbox"/>	more effective than average <input type="checkbox"/>	considerably more effective than average <input type="checkbox"/>	among the most effective <input type="checkbox"/>
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INFORMATION BELOW MUST BE INCLUDED IN ORDER FOR THIS QUESTIONNAIRE TO BE CONSIDERED IN THE REVIEW. IT WILL BE DELETED WHEN VIEWED BY FACULTY MEMBERS.

Name: _____

Address: _____

City, State, Zip: _____

E-mail Address: _____

Signature: _____

If you have any questions please contact Becky Krogh, Academic Projects Specialist, at 507-222-4311 or bkrogh@carleton.edu.

Sampling Procedures for Faculty Reviews

Which students are eligible for selection?

To be eligible for the population of students from which a sample will be drawn, whose evaluations are then requested as part of a faculty member's review, a student must:

- be a Carleton graduate or a currently-enrolled degree-seeking Carleton undergraduate,
- have taken at least one course taught by the faculty member who is being evaluated, and
- have received a "valid grade" in the course as recorded on the student's transcript as of the date the sample is drawn. Grades that are not valid include DRP (drop), CI (continuing integrative exercise), L (non-credit labs), and N (PE activity course not completed).

To be eligible, graduates must have formally completed all requirements for graduation and received a Carleton degree. Eligible undergraduates must be enrolled full-time, attending an approved off-campus study program, fulfilling a required leave, or on a waiver of senior residency (an early graduate). To be eligible to be polled, students must meet all of the criteria as of the point in time in which the sample is drawn. Students who have withdrawn, are currently taking a personal leave, or who have completed 12 terms but left without graduating are not eligible for sampling.

How is the sample obtained?

[Nota bene: Our current data retention options include only two designations of biological sex: male and female. Once we have completed the transition to Workday, we will have more options for such designations to be preserved in student records.]

The sample is drawn from the approved list of students taught by the faculty member. In order to ensure a sufficient number of student responses, the target sample size is 150 students. If there are 150 or fewer unique students on the approved list, all those students will be sampled. If there are more than 150 unique students, then the pool of eligible students will first be stratified by sex. To do this, the percentage of all eligible students who are male and the percentage who are female will be computed. The target number of students of each sex to be sampled is determined by multiplying the percent of all students who are eligible of that sex by 150. E.g., if 54% of all eligible students are female, then the percent of students in the sample of 150 who are female should also be 54%, or 81 students. Within each sex, students will be randomly sampled until the target number for that sex is reached, but the sampling will be weighted by the number of courses that a student has taken with the professor. A student who took three courses will be three times as likely to be sampled as a student who took only one course. This results in a sample that is perfectly representative of the sex distribution of unique students taught by the faculty member and that represents students in proportion to the number of courses taken.

How do we begin?

The Office of Institutional Research and Assessment will send you a list of all courses you have taught during the years appropriate for the review. The list will reflect each of the courses you have taught during this period according to the College's computerized transcript system. We then ask that each faculty member verify this list of courses against their own list of courses as being both complete and accurate. Occasionally, the official records are incomplete or inaccurate for courses taught cooperatively by two or more faculty, due to switching of course sections without having notified the Registrar of such change(s), the listing of instructors as "Staff," assumption or dropping of responsibility for a course due to illness or other emergency, or for independent studies when they are handled administratively by a department chair. Confirmation, or emendation, of this list is all that is required to get the selection process underway. This should be done promptly so that the sampling and other work can continue and the necessary deadlines can be met.

Student Names Submitted for Sampling by the Tenure Review Candidate

Review candidates will be asked to submit a list of up to 30 students whom they would like to have us contact for an evaluation of their teaching. Once the set of courses taught is confirmed, review candidates will be sent their class rosters to aid in composing their personal list of students. These class rosters will be based on data contained in the College's computerized student records system. These students must meet the same eligibility criteria as those randomly sampled by Institutional Research and Assessment as part of the review – e.g., enrolled or graduated, taken a course from the review candidate during the time period covered by the review, and received a valid grade. Evaluation forms will be sent to these students. Overlap between the personal list and the one selected randomly will almost always exist, but the only effect of this outcome is to create a joint category of evaluation responses. Occasionally, students not registered in any of the courses may be on the personal list with the approval of the Provost.

Frequently Asked Questions

Q. Which terms are included in the reviews? When are the students polled?

A. For the third-year review, students are drawn from all courses taught by the faculty member since their arrival at Carleton. Students taught through spring term of the review year are included; the evaluations will be sent out during the following winter break. (The intervening fall term will be included at the time of tenure review.)

To be eligible for sampling at the time of tenure review, students must have taken a course from the faculty member since the third-year review, beginning with courses taught during the fall term of the third-year review. This tenure review sampling also includes students taught through spring term of the tenure review year; the evaluations are sent out during the summer break.

Students are polled during the summer for PEAR reviews. Schedules for continuing (non-PEAR) reviews are determined individually.

For samples drawn during the summer, seniors receiving their degrees in June are included in the population, and undergraduates are included or excluded based on their enrollment status at the end of spring term.

It is conceivable that the same student could be drawn for more than one review for a given faculty member provided that the student took at least one course in each of the time periods.

In summary,

Number of classes taken: a student's likelihood of being included in the sample is directly proportional to the number of classes they have taken with you. A student who has taken two classes is twice as likely to be included, a student who has taken three classes is three times as likely to be included, etc.

To be certain that a student will be surveyed: include the student in your personal list. If that student meets the status criteria, and can be reached via e-mail or paper mail, the student will receive an evaluation.