

University Policy on End-of-Term Student Evaluation of Courses

Version: 1.0

Responsible University Official: Provost

Effective Date/Period: For all applicable courses offered in association with the Fall 2017 “main term”

1.0 Introduction

Saint Louis University values and strives for excellence in curriculum design and pedagogy in all courses. Data from students’ assessments of their courses and faculty plays an important role in faculty efforts to strengthen their instruction and overall course quality. Such data can also play a supporting role in a comprehensive faculty evaluation protocol, as well as in promotion and tenure decisions.

Accordingly, SLU will, University-wide, conduct end-of-term student course evaluations (SCEs) per this policy. The University Office of Assessment is hereby charged by the Provost to regularly administer end-of-term SCEs and disseminate the results per this policy with the support of the deans/directors, ITS, the Office of the University Registrar, and other SLU colleagues as needed.

2.0 Scope

The policy governs the administration of end-of-term SCEs for all courses:

- at both the undergraduate and graduate levels
- in all colleges/schools/centers (except the School of Medicine)
- at all campuses/locations
- offered via all delivery modes

3.0 Purposes for Student Course Evaluations

The primary purpose of end-of-term SCEs is to solicit feedback from students that informs faculty efforts to improve their course designs and pedagogy. This includes related improvement efforts offered by departments and colleges/schools/centers, as well as related programming offered by the Reinert Center.

Secondarily, aggregated end-of-term SCE data may be used as one element of a multi-faceted, comprehensive faculty evaluation protocol in which multiple measures of teaching performance are reviewed. Because the primary goal of SCE administration is improvement in curriculum design and pedagogy, University sponsored SCEs will not be written expressly for the purpose of faculty evaluation. **In no context is SCE data to be employed as the sole measure of a faculty member’s teaching performance or as the sole measure of the value/quality of a course.** End-of-term SCE data may not be used for any purpose other than those expressly detailed above.

NOTE: While this policy specifically addresses “end-of-term” SCEs (those administered at/near the end date of a given course), periodic evaluation of courses – including, but not limited to mid-term evaluation of courses – is strongly encouraged as a sound means to inform needed changes in pedagogy and/or course design for the remainder of a given course.

4.0 Administration of University-Wide SCE Surveys

University-Level End-of-Term SCE Surveys

Each term (fall, spring, summer), a single, web-based end-of-term SCE survey will be administered by the Office of Assessment to all students registered in all courses (graduate and undergraduate), University-wide, designated in Banner with an “Instructional Method” code of:

- Colloquium
- Discussion
- Lecture/Discourse
- Recitation
- Seminar
- Lab
- Studio
- Clinical
- Internship/Externship
- Practicum/Preceptorship

Because of their generally individualized nature, no University-wide end-of-term SCEs will be administered for courses with the following Instructional Method codes in Banner:

- Directed Study
- Independent Study
- Independent Research
- Thesis
- Master’s Project
- Dissertation
- Doctoral Project

Note: Students enrolled under the status of “Audit” will not be solicited to submit SCE surveys.

The University-level SCE survey described above will feature a shared set of University-wide questions designed to solicit meaningful and actionable information from students to inform improvements in curriculum and pedagogy across all disciplines and course levels. Survey customization is addressed below.

SCE Survey Customization

In addition, each college/school may choose to augment the shared set of University-wide questions on the University-level SCE with a set of up to 10 questions specific to the college/school. Because of the limits to the nature and quality of data that can be solicited via SCEs, and because of the administrative complexity in designing and maintaining such customized surveys, only customization at a college-/school-wide level (as opposed to a department/academic program/major level) is possible at this time.

*IMPORTANT: SCEs should **not** be used as means to try to assess student learning of course or program outcomes; used in such a way, SCEs solicit only contextual/indirect data about student achievement/experiences, the use of which in improvement efforts is limited. Other assessment methods providing direct evidence of student achievement of outcomes – often embedded within regular course requirements and evaluation methods – are the most appropriate vehicles for assessment at the course and program level.*

Academic units seeking to solicit student input in addition to and outside the scope of the University-sponsored SCEs must do so otherwise (via Qualtrics or some other means).

Survey Administration Period

The periods during which SCE surveys will be open for student participation are as follows:

10 days	Course Eval Start Date	Course Eval End Date	Total Span of Course Eval Period
14+ Week Courses	16 days before the Term/Part of Term end date associated with the course in Banner	1 day after the Term/Part of Term end date associated with the course in Banner	18 days
8-13 Week Courses	8 days before the Term/Part of Term end date associated with the course in Banner	1 day after the Term/Part of Term end date associated with the course in Banner	10 days
5-7 Week Courses	5 days before the Term/Part of Term end date associated with the course in Banner	2 days after the Term/Part of Term end date associated with the course in Banner	8 days
4 Week Courses	4 days before the Term/Part of Term end date associated with the course in Banner	2 days after the Term/Part of Term end date associated with the course in Banner	7 days
3 Week Courses	3 days before the Term/Part of Term end date associated with the course in Banner	2 days after the Term/Part of Term end date associated with the course in Banner	6 days
2 Week Courses	2 days before the Term/Part of Term end date associated with the course in Banner	2 days after the Term/Part of Term end date associated with the course in Banner	5 days
1 Week (or Less) Courses	1 days before the Term/Part of Term end date associated with the course in Banner	2 days after the Term/Part of Term end date associated with the course in Banner	4 days

NOTE: The "Term/Part of Term end date associated with the course in Banner" includes what is historically known as the "Final Exam Week" for Fall and Spring terms.

Automated e-mail reminders will be sent by the Office of Assessment at regular intervals to those students who have not yet responded to the SCE survey invitations.

The University Registrar will not post in the Banner system the official course grades until the course evaluation period has ended. Faculty members will not be able to view their SCE data for courses until the University Registrar posts official grades in the Banner system.

Voluntary Nature of SCEs

Neither faculty nor academic administrators may require student submission of an SCE for any course or program; end-of-term SCEs, administered first and foremost for the purpose of improving course design and pedagogy, must be entirely voluntary for all students at all levels. No incentives (including but not limited to course extra credit, faculty's timely submission of final grades, students being excused from a

course assignment, cash or any other form of compensation, etc.), may be offered to any student to solicit submission of an SCE.

The rich and expansive literature on end-of-term SCEs clearly demonstrates that what most significantly influences higher SCE responses rates – and earnest, meaningful, actionable student responses – is demonstrable evidence to students that data from SCEs is regularly used to improve curriculum and pedagogy. Support for best evidencing to students the importance and use of SCE data is available via the Office of Assessment and the Reinert Center.

University-Supported Technology

The Office of the Provost, supported by the Division of Information Technology Services (ITS), will fully support the web-based system via which the end-of-term SCE surveys will be administered University-wide. The system will be fully integrated with Banner and require limited assistance from college/school/center or departmental staff.

5.0 SCE Data Access

Access to end-of-term SCE data is strictly controlled, per the table below. Electronic reports of SCE data – downloadable in multiple formats (including Excel and Word) – will be available to those with appropriate access. Reports may be run on a term-by-term basis or longitudinally. Assistance with interpreting and analyzing end-of-term SCE data is available from the Office of Institutional Research and Office of Assessment.

SCE Access Table

Note: Those identified below may designate an administrative proxy with corresponding access.

	Individual Faculty	Department & Program Chairs	Deans & Center Directors	Provost	Promotion & Tenure Committees
Individual course, with individual narrative comments**	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Instructor-level, aggregated, with individual narrative comments	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Course-level, aggregated	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> *	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> **	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
Department-level, aggregated	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
College-level, aggregated	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
University-level, aggregated	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	

* Assumes that the individual faculty gaining access taught at least one of the pertinent sections.

** For cross-listed courses, the instructor and chair of the "home department" (the department from which the course originates, per the University Policy on Cross-Listed Courses) have access.

NOTE: To protect student anonymity, no individual course-level reports will be generated when fewer than two students in any single course section submit SCE surveys. Custom reports can be produced that aggregate SCE data across multiple sections of the same courses taught by the same instructor in the same term or across terms to mitigate anonymity concerns.

6.0 Exceptions

Exceptions to this policy may be granted by the Provost upon request by a dean.

7.0 Approvals

This policy was:

1. Reviewed by CADD on: 9/17/16 and 5/24/17
2. Adopted by Provost Nancy Brickhouse on: 6/1/17
3. Amended by Provost Nancy Brickhouse on: 5/16/18
 - *to codify the practice -- established in Fall 2017 by the Provost and implemented by the University Registrar -- of not releasing official, final grades until the related course evaluation period has ended; see "Survey Administration Period" section above*
 - *to lower the threshold at which reports are generated to two students, from five*
 - *to clarify that students auditing courses are not asked to submit course evaluations*
4. Updated on 7/11/18 to reflect revised survey evaluation periods.