

Faculty Survey Comments

A session for students and faculty members explaining the importance of the surveys is necessary. Question number 13 should not be in the faculty form!

Evaluation is important, but should be contextualized with instructors and students. Survey questions should apply to the course in question and be consonant with the project of teaching from the beginning. Good instructors can get weak evaluations and vice versa. For salary and promotion decisions, there must definitely be much wider means of looking at the faculty member's performance. For new faculty, a discussion of the evaluation process, results, and implications for job would be beneficial.

Evaluation shouldn't affect pay, but it should affect promotion

Evaluations not properly tailored to the courses. More emphasis should be put on the subjective evaluation to make students really think about their courses. Frequently it is used as a means of revenge for bad grades. I wish there was more of an honest discussion atmosphere than rating, but if everyone goes for high scores it will never emerge.

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Faculty of Medicine

I believe that the ICEs are only one of many means available for institutional and personal assessment of teaching effectiveness.

Attaching undue and exclusive importance to the ICEs in matters of faculty performance evaluation is not justifiable.

I believe that the questions on the current ICE's are poorly constructed and often give positive value to the wrong things. In addition, even if the questions were perfect, I don't think that students take the survey seriously.

I do not suggest that faculty members should not be evaluated by students; on the contrary, they should be. However, to be fair to both parties, I suggest that the instructor should also give a feedback about the difficulties s/he encountered in a certain semester in terms of the quality and composition of a class, the book, the country situation, etc...Some classes, for instance, are composed of really bad students in a high proportion, while others are more balanced. In the current system, only student grades are taken into account in evaluating a class, which is not always representative of the quality of the whole class and the semester difficulties. On the other hand, the instructor is evaluated with a questionnaire. I feel this might not be a fair approach.

I do think many point in ICE do not correspond to most courses in architecture and are therefore giving a wrong result by students using the "U" instead of something that would correspond to "inapplicable" for example and would not affect the rating.

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I don't disagree with student evaluations, but much must be done to create valid and meaningful evaluation forms and administrative procedures

I had to water down the content of my courses over the last several years just to make students happy and have "fun" in their courses. I feel like I am teaching in a kinder Garden.

I think students want an easy way out of most of the courses with little input and maximum output and I believe this is compromised by some of the instructors.

I think the evaluation would have sense only if it takes into consideration the mentality of our students, balancing what they are looking for against what AUB thinks a good education should be.

I think the whole issue is evaluation of the teach effectiveness and the course as a whole, not the teacher or his/her character. So this questionnaire may have missed this.

I value students' comments on ICEs and strive to make the necessary adjustments. Trends in ICEs over a number of semesters provide good indices of instructors' teaching effectiveness. The quality of ICEs will be enhanced considerably if students can be persuaded to provide relatively-short thoughtful narratives about needed adjustments in courses.

ICE evaluation should be given to faculty only in order to help faculty members improve. Students take them seriously if they do the evaluations the first time only. It becomes meaningless and mechanical later on. Also some students find them long and boring, so I guess if they are shortened and if students are allowed to describe their evaluations for each teacher briefly, it would be more appealing to students. Other methods of faculty evaluations should be devised. Thank you.

ICE is a necessary tool for faculty and administration as a guideline to improve classroom values, ethics and performance. It should not be taken into account for a faculty member from the first time he or she teaches a course. Considering the results in promotion and tenure should be taken after the instructor taught the course several times and was given the chance to look closely into his positive and negative points and see how much his attempts to correct have succeeded.

ICE is noble in its "intent", but it is rendered ineffective in practice by "informal" realities of instructional administration at AUB
ICE should be complemented by other forms of teaching evaluation. Question 16 of ICE is confusing should be changed or put in a different way. Thank you

ICE's are just one tool, other issues should be considered, such as effective learning outcomes. The system is rigid, not all questions have the same degree of relevance for every course. Ratings should be related to personal teaching improvement plans. Ratings should be discussed in peer-to-peer/senior-to-junior/chair-to-faculty or counselor-to-faculty setting.

If question 1 had said: "As an instructor, I value input and make improvements in their teaching and courses as a result of weaknesses identified by students" then I would have strongly agreed. However I do not think that this is widespread among the faculty. One of

the problems is that we do not receive the actual comments written by students, just the numbers. The comments by students are much more helpful than the numbers.

In general weak and average students do not take the evaluations seriously and, if they have any input it is negative in correlation to their grades. Many of our students here are thus not mature or responsible enough to give accurate evaluations.

In this survey, as in all OIRA surveys/questionnaires, I have problems with the language used to pose the questions. There are ambiguities (sometimes it is only vagueness) that need to be avoided and controlled for. For instance, does the question in (11) mean that student ratings are GENERALLY a threat to academic freedom or does it ask about the specific ICEs administered at AUB and how this specific administration deals with them? I could go on... But the point I am trying to make is the following: how does OIRA make sure that these surveys (and the ICEs in particular) are measuring what they are intended to measure?

It is worth considering requesting fresh graduates to evaluate the courses and /or instructors after leaving the University. 2) Instructors should study the evaluation and take logical remarks of students into serious consideration. The University.

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It should be emphasized to students how important their evaluations are. Also peer review of instructors should be conducted if instructors get low student evaluation scores

It would be nice to send faculty students' written comments on the evaluation forms and not just the tabulated numbers.

It's unclear how this survey is going to help you determine the consequences of the ICE. It seems most of these items are worded in general and not specifically about the ICE instrument and process so it is actually difficult to answer some of them because sometimes I might answer differently as a general principle than I would about our particular evaluation instruments and process.

Make Results More Understandable

MED 3 STUDENTS ARE EXPOSED FOR HALF AN HOUR TO THE INSTRUCTOR EVALUATION IS UTTERLY REDICULOUS

Nice and useful survey

none

Only serious students' evaluations should be considered

Our answers to this survey are limited by the questions being asked and how they are phrased... the same problem exists in the student evaluations. A lot more thought and testing need to go into the questions being asked in the surveys conducted by OIRA. For example, I "disagree" that "Students do not have enough knowledge to judge the quality of instruction." However, I think that many (or most) students do not rate their instructors based on the "quality of instruction", but on other factors unrelated to the quality of teaching, such as the friendliness of the instructor or the ease of the assignments. Asking faculty only the first question provides

OIRA with an incomplete and inaccurate picture of their opinions. The “comments” section at the end only partially rectifies this situation because there is little time or space to go back and discuss every question. This faculty survey and the evaluations given to students, while easy to tabulate, do not present a complete and accurate reflection of the quality of an instructor’s teaching and therefore should not be used as the ONLY mechanism with which to judge instructor effectiveness.

Our students do not really know how to evaluate objectively: they usually evaluate their own achievement in the course.

Please do a reliability pilot testing, i.e. the same instrument given twice to the same students for large classes/ also, note that small classes are more likely to report higher scores/ check the correlation between mid term exam results and overall evaluation of the students

Question 7 is unclear and could lead to very different answers.

Question # 10 is not clear! The response I gave is based on the assumption that the ratings are only one out of many factors bearing upon personnel decisions.

Lack of motivation in providing accurate answers, and common misunderstandings about the ranking system. The number system should be replaced with SA, A, U, D, SD like this survey. The other big problem involving ICE surveys is Dept/Academic Unit corruption for which OIRA has been unfairly blamed! In fact, what happens is that the surveys are conducted by inept RA's who do not explain anything to the students. No separate sheet recording number of responses is distributed. This mechanism is used by most dept. in N-America. This sheet is given to the faculty member so that they can corroborate the accuracy of the ICE report. This is a very important missing step and it should be implemented ASAP. But the most insidious damage to the ICE surveys and the reputation of OIRA actually comes from within the departments!!! I have personally witnessed major infractions of collection & storage procedures for student evaluations. After completion, instead of being delivered directly to OIRA by the RA's and GA's, they are taken back to the dept. where they await the completion of all the other surveys before they are sent on to OIRA. This process takes 3-4 weeks & in the meantime the surveys lie around in easily opened brown envelopes (which are only secured with a staple) often in the secretary's office, or in the Dept. Chair's office, and sometimes in the open common photocopy area! Since these surveys are completed in pencil and since there is no separate sheet of numbers to corroborate the completed evaluations, this EXTREMELY FAULTY system of collection is vulnerable to tampering & errors. This more than anything else undermines the credibility of ICE reports. I have personally witnessed unguarded completed ICE evaluations. Once there was a Xmas party going on in my dept. The staff was in the dept. chair's office for about an hour. The photocopy room was left unlocked and next to the door on a table was a stack of recently completed student evaluations in UNSEALED brown envelopes. I was shocked. In addition once a box of completed student surveys was accidentally delivered to my office! How can these results be used to determine the future of professors at AUB if they are handled in such a cavalier manner? If OIRA wants to be effective it must reform distribution & collection immediately.

Questions regarding our knowledge of general trends in ICE results cannot be answered by us, since we have no idea (whether general or specific) of how other instructors do: I don't know what kind of results they get and how to assess any possible accordance or discordance between their teaching and their results.

Some of the above questions (9-12) are conditional on how fair are the students filling in the ICE reports

Some of the questions posed in this questionnaire are not clear. E.g. no. 10 (Do you mean personal or personnel?)

Some of these items are difficult to answer because it is not clear whether the statement is a normative one or seeks a personal view e.g. item 1 could be read to mean. "Do you think this OUGHT to be the case" or as "Do you think this is actually what is happening." Some questions on the form need to be changed. Also, each faculty or dept should be allowed to choose a small proportion of questions from a larger set.

Student attitude towards evaluations should be changed

Student feedback can be very valuable if in the form of comments, not numbers. Evaluating teaching quality is very difficult, and the students are probably the least qualified group to do so. Please consider a form to elicit constructive criticism from students: that would be useful. If the goal is to evaluate teaching, a completely fresh start is needed, perhaps peer assessment, or external review. If the goal is to improve teaching, then the current system is almost useless. We need constructive criticism, not numbers.

Students do not fill those evaluations seriously; these evaluations do not reflect the performance of the instructor.

Students' evaluations provide a trend in the long run. They should be maintained although the questionnaire should be refined.

However, another evaluation should be carried out. For example a Faculty member can opt to be (professionally) filmed in several teaching sessions then his performances evaluated by his peers

Students typically reward professors who go easy on them, i.e. those who ignore cheating and who fail no students.

Students should have the chance to evaluate the teacher's effectiveness but it is true that they are greatly influenced by amount of work given and grades so there should be continuous effort to try to come up with the best form that controls for these factors

Thank you.

The evaluation form itself, and the efficiency in processing the form, could be greatly improved here at AUB (even though the forms will always be imperfect).

The form does not apply well to my field of instruction, thus the numbers do not have much meaning. Also, the number scale is not explained anywhere. What is the scale? Is 1 lowest and 5 highest? If I depend on my intuition, this is what I would guess, but do you really want me to guess? The OIRA office continues to show itself to be basically incompetent. Two of my course evaluations were lost from spring 2005, and I also know other colleagues who had the same problem. Nobody who knows anything about our classes takes these numbers seriously, because the forms and OIRA leadership are seriously flawed. This is a cause of great concern for all faculty and students, because these meaningless numbers are used to evaluate faculty members in the promotion and reappointment

process. If it sounds as if I am annoyed and bitter about the OIRA evaluations, it is because I am annoyed and bitter. It seems as if our highly educated group of scholar educators is being evaluated by a bunch of schoolchildren.

The Instructor section is well designed, the course evaluation section is not appropriate: A low grade on that section is actually good! The rating process is necessary and useful, but the highly simplistic statistical summaries produced need expert review and improvement.

The responses above apply to the students' evaluation of faculty at AUB and do not reflect my opinions on the subject of faculty evaluation by students in general terms

The students lost faith in the evaluation system because lots of the bad professors are still working and they are promoted

The survey should be on the reliability and validity of the current evaluation form itself, not general attitudes that are not contextualized.

The system needs to be completely re-worked. As constructed, the evaluation is little more than a popularity contest. I've consistently gotten very good evaluations, but students I've been forced to give bad grades to have (I am almost certain) consistently given me very bad evaluations.

There should be more scope for comments for a number of the above questions (e.g. #12).

There should be more scope for comments for a number of the above questions (e.g. #12). In general, the evaluation exercise cannot be taken too seriously unless (a) students understand and respect the process more; and (b) professors receive positive incentives rather than the usual negative ones. Good teachers should be rewarded, while average ones should not be penalized. Obviously consistent very poor ratings would stand out as an exception. But it is widely felt among faculty that student evaluations are only used as leverage by administration in the most negative of ways. Finally, AUB must decide if it wants the best possible teachers or research output. It is outrageous to demand dynamic teaching skills and good ratings when professors must teach three different courses a semester.

These questions are a bit arbitrary, based on the assumptions of faculty. Also, the student evaluation weighs differently between professorial faculty and non-professorial faculty. That is, some depts. need non-professorial faculty to teach multi-section courses. Those instructors are more eager to please the students as their jobs directly related to teaching performance. This is what I generally have found. E.g. one might correlate for the average class grade for non professorial faculty (FT and PT) with their student evaluations then compare that against professorial rank.

This highly general survey does little to address the issue of teaching evaluation AS IT PRESENTLY EXISTS AT AUB and how it might be improved, if, as is widely perceived, there are in fact problems with the present system.

This survey has the same problems of the students' evaluation forms; it is not a good tool to improve the ratings!

Walking around campus during student evaluation season, I often hear students make comments about teachers I know that make me feel ashamed and defeated, to say the least: "I really hate her!! I will make sure she knows this come evaluation time". I will show this B...! I'll give her the lowest rating ever". :

We are talking about the AUB context

We need to revisit the ICE forms considering exhaustive feedback from faculty and students together rather than feedback similar to this one. Then we may be able to design a meaningful (to both faculty and students) informative ICE. Besides, the standardized form does not fit each and every department; for instance the second section of the ICE fits different and separate courses in the school of nursing vis-à-vis the theory courses, so students are confused filling ICE's twice for the same course. This needs extensive discussion with OIRA staff which this page does not allow to. Thank you.

Your questions need to be improved. Instead of using the term "faculty members" I suggest that you use instead "some faculty members"...otherwise you are forcing your respondent to answer in the negative.