

Student Ratings of Instruction

Directions to Faculty



This document is intended to direct the use of the IDEA Student Ratings of Instruction system in your classes. Please retain these directions for future reference. If you require more specific information in any area, please contact your On-Campus Coordinator of the IDEA Student Ratings of Instruction system. These directions are divided into the following sections:

1. Marking Your Faculty Information Form

- IDEA Objectives
- Instructor and Course Information
- Contextual Questions

2. Using Additional Questions with the IDEA System

3. Instructions for Classroom Administration of the IDEA System

1. Marking Your Faculty Information Form

The Faculty Information Form describes your course and provides critical information needed to generate your report. Use a No. 2 pencil and the proper marks as illustrated on the Faculty Information Form. If the Faculty Information Form is not marked correctly, the processing of your course may be incomplete or inaccurate.

IDEA Objectives

Using the scale provided, identify the relevance of each of the twelve objectives to the course. It is important to remember that no course can be all things to all students. We recommend that you select no more than 3-5 objectives either as "Essential" or "Important," prioritizing what you want students to learn in your course. As a general rule, if you choose three objectives, only one should be "Essential"; if you choose five, only two should be "Essential." The weighting system used to generate summary results in the IDEA report (Progress on Relevant Objectives) weighs Essential objectives "2," Important objectives "1," and Minor objectives "0."

Mark each objective as:

M = "Minor or No Importance"; I = "Important"; or E = "Essential" by blackening the appropriate letter.

In selecting "Essential" or "Important" objectives, ask yourself three questions:

1. Is this a significant part of the course?
2. Do I do something specific to help the students accomplish this objective?
3. Does the student's progress on this objective affect his or her grade?

If you answer "Yes" to one or more of these questions, then that objective should probably be weighted "E" or "I" on the Faculty Information Form. The phrase "Minor or No Importance" recognizes that in most courses some of the twelve objectives will be considerably less important than others, even though some attention may be given to them. An "M" should be selected on the Faculty Information Form for such objectives.

The following brief summary organizes the objectives into six groups. The numbers used for each objective (1-12) correspond to the numbers used on the Faculty Information Form. It is recommended that the meaning of the objectives is discussed with your class early in the semester so a common understanding is reached. For a more thorough discussion about selecting IDEA Objectives, please see [Some Thoughts on Selecting IDEA Objectives](#).

Basic Cognitive Background

1. Gaining factual knowledge (terminology, classifications, methods, trends)

Objective's focus: building a knowledge base

2. Learning fundamental principles, generalizations, or theories

Objective's focus: connecting facts, understanding relationships

Application of Learning

3. Learning to apply course material (to improve thinking, problem solving, and decisions)

Objective's focus: applying what you have learned in this class to clarify thinking or solve problems

4. Developing specific skills, competencies, and points of view needed by professionals in the field most closely related to this course

Objective's focus: developing skills, abilities, or attitudes of a beginning professional

Expressiveness

6. Developing creative capacities (writing, inventing, designing, performing in art, music, drama, etc.)

Objective's focus: flexibility and divergence in thinking, elaboration of thoughts and insights, imagination, expressiveness of individuality

8. Developing skill in expressing oneself orally or in writing

Objective's focus: effective oral and written communication

Intellectual Development

7. Gaining a broader understanding and appreciation of intellectual/cultural activity (music, science, literature)

Objective's focus: gaining and valuing a "Liberal Education"

10. Developing a clearer understanding of, and commitment to, personal values

Objective's focus: developing a sound basis for making lifestyle decisions

11. Learning to analyze and critically evaluate ideas, arguments, and points of view

Objective's focus: higher level thinking skills (either within or outside of a disciplinary context)

Lifelong Learning

9. Learning how to find and use resources for answering questions or solving problems

Objective's focus: functioning as an independent learner

12. Acquiring an interest in learning more by asking questions and seeking answers

Objective's focus: developing attitudes and behaviors to support lifelong learning

Team Skills

5. Acquiring skills in working with others as a member of a team

Objective's focus: learning to function effectively in multiple team roles

Instructor and Course Information

Last Name and Initials: Space is available for the first 11 letters of your last name and your two initials. Beginning with the first box at the top of the form, print each of the letters of your last name in a separate box. Print your initials in the last two boxes at the extreme right of the name section. Then, in the columns below each box, completely darken the circle, which corresponds to the letter you have written in the box above.

Objectives: Because the IDEA system defines effective teaching in terms of progress (learning) on the objectives of the particular course, it is crucial that very thoughtful consideration be given to the selection of "Essential" and "Important" objectives on the Faculty Information Form. Students' report of their progress on those objectives become the primary criteria to evaluate that course and is reported as Progress on Relative Objectives, which combines the results of all objectives you selected as "Important" or "Essential." "Essential" objectives are double weighted. They count twice as much as "Important" objectives in the calculation of progress on relevant objectives.

Days: Blacken completely each day of the week the class meets.

Discipline Code: An abbreviated list of discipline codes can be found on the back of the Faculty Information Form or a more detailed list of codes is available at (www.theideacenter.org/DisciplineCodes). This code is used to provide the disciplinary comparisons in the course report and helps identify your course. In some institutions, it may be helpful in developing a summary report for the department or discipline. Blacken completely the appropriate four-digit modified CIP academic code for the discipline that best represents your course.

Time Class Begins: Blacken completely the time the class begins. This information helps identify the class section.

Course Number: Blacken completely the course numbers. This number helps identify the class section. Typically, the last six digits of the course ID are used. For example, the numbers 000101 would be used for Art 101, Math 101, etc., with the departments distinguished by the previously selected discipline code.

Number Enrolled: Blacken completely the number of students enrolled in your class (e.g., if 9 are enrolled, mark 009; if 23 are enrolled, mark 023, etc). This information helps determine how representative your results are.

NOTE: A report cannot be generated with only 1 student completing the survey form. It is preferable to have at least 10 students complete the survey forms for minimal reliability.

Local Code: Please leave blank unless your IDEA On-Campus Coordinator gives other instructions.

Contextual Questions (Research Purposes): These questions help describe the context in which the course was taught. Future research will determine how interpretations of your results should be altered by contextual considerations. As in the previous sections, please blacken the appropriate responses. While the responses to these items are not required (i.e., the report will be processed without your answering them), your responses will provide valuable background information. If you have questions about these items consult your IDEA On-Campus Coordinator.

Contextual questions one and two (primary and secondary approach to teaching) are defined as:

- **Lecture:** Providing information, explaining ideas or concepts, demonstrating techniques or procedures. Typically, this approach to teaching allows very little or no student interaction.
- **Discussion/recitation:** Inviting students to review and discuss material provided by the instructor. Typically, a regularly scheduled session to enhance material provided in another class meeting.
- **Seminar:** A small group of advanced students who meet regularly with the instructor, typically addressing original research or intensive study.
- **Skill/Activity:** Opportunity to develop specific skills through application. For example, physical education (golf, swimming, etc.); skills related to health professions (CPR, dental hygiene, etc); simulators; or computer skills.
- **Laboratory:** Promoting learning through "hands on" experience in lab setting.
- **Field experience:** Promoting learning through "hands on" or "real life" experiences outside of the classroom.
- **Studio:** Opportunity to develop skills, talent, or expression through application. Typically involves creative work.
- **Multi-media:** (Hybrid) The combined use of media and learning environments, such as lecture, CDRoms, and/or the Internet.
- **Practicum/clinic:** A course in a specialized field study designed to give students supervised, practical experience directly related to a profession.

2. Using Additional Questions with the IDEA System

One of the major criticisms of using a standard form for students' ratings of instruction and courses is that such questions may not be sensitive to some of the unique aspects of a course. The IDEA system offers you the opportunity to ask additional questions to assess particular aspects of your course. The following steps should be followed when preparing additional questions:

Step 1: Prepare and duplicate the additional questions on a separate sheet. Up to 20 additional questions may be asked on either the Diagnostic Form (items 48 through 67) or the Short Form, (items 19 through 38).

Step 2: You may use up to five response options for each question; these responses should be numbered (1), (2), (3), (4), (5) – NOT lettered. Examples of common questions and options are available from your IDEA On-Campus Coordinator or [online](#).

Step 3: Sheets with the additional questions should be distributed along with the student response forms at the time of administration. The IDEA Report will present the distribution of the students' responses, the average, and the standard deviation for each additional question. You may also ask questions which require a written response. These questions may be answered on the back of the student response forms, which will be returned to your institution following processing. However, if you want to give your students more space, provide them with a separate sheet of paper for their written comments. Do NOT send these separate sheets to the Center; they should be kept by your institution.

3. Instructions for Classroom Administration of the IDEA System

The following steps outline the procedures for administering the IDEA system. The DIAGNOSTIC FORM is the burgundy opscan form with 47 items and the SHORT FORM is the red opscan form with 18 items.

Step 1: Complete a Faculty Information Form (orange) for each class.

Step 2: Distribute the student opscan forms (and the comment sheets or sheets with additional questions, if any). Remind the students to use a No. 2 Pencil. The survey administrator might consider having some extra No. 2 pencils available. Surveys completed in ink cannot be processed.

Step 3: Provide the students with the following general course information: (1) Institution; (2) Instructor; (3) Course number; (4) Time and days class meets. Direct the students to complete these sections on the front of their survey form.

Step 4: Unless your institution has its own standardized directions, the following instructions to the students should be read aloud:

Your ratings will be most helpful to the instructor and to the institution if you answer thoughtfully and honestly. Students sometimes wonder, "If the course was well taught and I learned a lot, should I rate every item high?" The answer is "No." IDEA focuses on what the instructor was trying to teach and on what you learned. As such, an instructor is not expected to do well on every item. In recognition of this, items not related to this course are not counted in the final evaluation.

Note: If the data will be used for personnel decisions, the following instructions to the students should be read aloud:

As student raters, you should also know that the results of your ratings for this class will be included as part of the information used to make decisions about promotion/tenure/salary increases for this instructor. Fairness to both the individual and the institution require accurate and honest answers.

Step 5: To insure objectivity and uniformity, after the instructions have been given, it is strongly recommended that the instructor leave the room while the students complete the student response forms. Have either a member of the class, a teaching assistant, or a colleague take responsibility for returning the materials to the designated office as soon as the students finish.