

University Policy on End-of-Term Course Feedback Surveys

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 course feedback surveys per this policy. The University Office of Assessment is hereby charged by the Provost to regularly administer end-of-term course feedback surveys 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 course feedback surveys 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 End-of-Term Course Feedback Surveys

The primary purpose of end-of-term course feedback surveys 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 course feedback survey 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 course feedback survey administration is improvement in curriculum design and pedagogy, University-sponsored course feedback surveys will not be written expressly for the purpose of faculty evaluation. **In no context is end-of-term course feedback survey 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 course feedback survey data may not be used for any purpose other than those expressly detailed above.

NOTE: While this policy specifically addresses “end-of-term” course feedback surveys (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 Course Feedback Surveys

Each term (fall, winter, spring, and summer), a single, web-based end-of-term course feedback 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 a "Section Type" 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 course feedback surveys will be administered for courses with the following "Section Type" 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 course feedback surveys.

The University-level course feedback survey 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.

End-of-Term Course Feedback Survey Customization

In addition, each college/school may choose to augment the shared set of University-wide questions on the University-level course feedback survey with a set of up to 5 questions specific to the college/school or department.

*IMPORTANT: Course feedback surveys should **not** be used as means to try to assess student learning of course or program outcomes; used in such a way, course feedback surveys 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 end-of-term course feedback surveys must do so otherwise (via Qualtrics or some other means).

Survey Administration Period

The periods during which end-of-term course feedback surveys will be open for student participation are as follows:

Course Length	Course Feedback Survey Start Date	Course Feedback Survey End Date	Total Span of Course Feedback Survey 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/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 course feedback survey invitations.

The University Registrar will not post in the Banner system the official course grades until the course feedback survey period has ended. Course feedback survey reports are not released until after the grade submission deadline.

Voluntary Nature of End-of-Term Course Feedback Surveys

Neither faculty nor academic administrators may require student submission of a course feedback survey for any course or program; end-of-term course feedback surveys, 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 course feedback survey.

The rich and expansive literature on end-of-term course feedback surveys clearly demonstrates that what

most significantly influences higher responses rates – and earnest, meaningful, actionable student responses – is demonstrable evidence to students that data from course feedback surveys is regularly used to improve curriculum and pedagogy. Support for best evidencing to students the importance and use of this data is available via 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 course feedback 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 course feedback survey data is strictly controlled, per the table below. Electronic reports of course feedback survey data – downloadable in multiple formats (including Excel and PDF) – will be available to those with appropriate access. Assistance with interpreting and analyzing end-of-term course feedback survey data is available from the Reinert Center and Office of Assessment.

End-of-Term Course Feedback Survey Data 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 course feedback surveys. Custom reports can be produced that aggregate course feedback survey 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 feedback*
4. Amended by Provost Brickhouse on 7/11/18 to reflect revised survey evaluation periods.
5. Amended by Provost Lewis on 9/19/23 to reflect change from "Instructional Method" to "Section Type" in section 4.0.
6. Amended by Provost Lewis on 1/1/24 to reflect the following:
 - The change in name from "Student Course Evaluations" to "Course Feedback Surveys"
 - Customization of questions was reduced to five per academic unit, but customization was expanded to include the departmental level (in addition to the college/school level)