

**Institutional Research
Course Evaluation Policies
and Procedures**

Revised June 2021

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COURSE EVALUATION POLICIES

I. UNIVERSITY POLICY

From the [Baylor University Faculty Handbook, June 2021](#):

All new tenure-track faculty members must participate in student evaluations in all sections of the courses they teach every fall until they have completed six years at Baylor or until they have received tenure. All tenured faculty members are expected to participate in student evaluations in all sections of the courses they teach during the fall of every third calendar year. All part-time faculty, whether employed for a single semester or on a recurring basis, must participate in student evaluations in all sections of the courses they teach.

These guidelines establish the minimum requirements for faculty participation in student evaluations of courses. However, faculty may choose to have students evaluate some or all of their courses each semester if they wish. All faculty members are encouraged to participate in the student evaluations voluntarily at least one semester each year.

II. SCHEDULING OF EVALUATIONS

For the purposes of what follows, “instructors” include tenured and tenure-track faculty, non-tenure track faculty, instructors, lecturers, staff, and graduate teaching assistants, and the term “Chair” refers to Department Chairs and Program Directors of academic programs that request course evaluations.

A. Standard Evaluations

Semester evaluations will be conducted during the last weeks of class prior to final examinations for each fall and spring term, for all colleges and schools. Evaluations for each summer session will be conducted during the last weeks of class prior to final examinations. Courses offered for the full summer session (both summer terms) will be evaluated at the end of the second summer term. The following evaluations are not included with standard semester course evaluations:

- Evaluations for science laboratory sections will be conducted in the weeks prior to the final meeting day for the semester.
- Evaluations for law, military, quarter, and trimester courses will be conducted at the end of each term for all terms.

B. Exceptions

Exceptions to the standard scheduling may be made at the request of a Chair during fall and spring semesters for the following circumstances:

- Team-taught courses where one or more instructor's portion of the course does not fall into the standard evaluation period
- “Mini-mester” courses that end prior to the end of the semester

The Chair should submit an *Early Request* form to the office of Institutional Research (IR) by the 4th week of class (for fall and spring semesters) in order to have a course evaluated prior to the end of the semester.

III. COURSE EVALUATION STATUS

A. Required Status

Per the University's policy on course evaluations (see **I.**, above), courses for all tenure-track faculty members are required to be evaluated each fall until the faculty members have completed six years at Baylor or until they receive tenure. Courses for all tenured faculty members are required to be evaluated during the fall of every third calendar year. Courses for all part-time faculty are required to be evaluated each semester. Additionally, the Dean of the Graduate School requires that all courses for all graduate teaching assistants be evaluated each semester.

It is the responsibility of each department, school, or college to keep track of the evaluation status of each course for each faculty member. IR can provide information on when courses were last evaluated for faculty members upon request.

IR will contact each Chair early each semester with a list of courses that are eligible for evaluation on the *Required Request* form, and those courses that are ineligible for evaluation on the *Special Need* form (see IV.A. for a list of ineligible course types). The Chair will indicate the courses they require to be evaluated on both forms and submit it them IR. (Note: The data listed on the *Required Request* form are obtained from Banner after the 12th class day. If changes need to be made, the department may contact the Registrar's office for detailed instructions.)

B. Voluntary Status

Instructors whose courses are not required to be evaluated may choose to participate voluntarily in the evaluation process. IR will contact each instructor regarding those courses NOT required and offer them a chance to volunteer their courses for evaluation. Upper-level undergraduate courses (3000 and 4000 level) and graduate level courses that are ineligible for evaluation due to schedule requirements may be requested as voluntary by the instructor if they are not required by the Chair on the *Special Need* form.

C. Courses Not Evaluated

Courses that do not have Required or Voluntary status will NOT be evaluated. Courses cannot be requested for evaluation once end-of-semester evaluations have opened.

IV. COURSES

The term "course type" has a meaning which may differ among various groups, and is defined here as the course schedule type obtained from Banner.

A. Types of Courses

Course types eligible for standard evaluation are all course types except the following:

- Chapel (CHA)
- Independent Study/
Directed Reading (IND)*
- Internship/Practicum (INP)*
- Co-requisite Lab (CLB)
- Tutorial (TTL)

*Note: If there is a need for an IND or INP course type or a course with fewer than five students enrolled to be evaluated, the Chair or instructor should submit a *Special Need* form to IR before the deadline for evaluation requests.

B. Courses with Low Enrollment

Courses with fewer than five students enrolled are generally excluded from evaluations. If there is a need for a course with low enrollment to be evaluated, the Chair or instructor should submit a *Special Need* form for the course to IR before the deadline for evaluation requests.

C. Cross-listed and Concurrently-taught Courses

Cross-listed and concurrently-taught courses may be scheduled for evaluation. The evaluation will be issued to the student for the course in which the student is enrolled. Enrollment totals and reports will reflect the combined enrollment of the designated primary course and all related secondary courses.

D. Team-Taught Courses

Team-taught courses will be evaluated individually for each instructor if the evaluation status is either required or voluntary. Courses that are not required for evaluation by the Chair or are not volunteered for evaluation by the instructor will not be evaluated. A separate evaluation and report will be prepared for each instructor if the course evaluation status is required or voluntary.

V. EVALUATION RESULTS

Course evaluation reports are treated as confidential personnel records. Each Chair will have access to reports for *all* courses being taught in the department with required evaluation status, regardless of who requested the course to be evaluated. Each Chair will also be able to view *all* required course evaluations for instructors who have the same organizational code as the chair, regardless of whether the courses were taught in the Chair's department.

Graduate Program Directors will be able to view the course evaluations for graduate teaching assistants (GTAs) who have taught courses in their department.

Instructors may volunteer their courses to be evaluated if their courses were not among those that were required. In the case of voluntary evaluations, the results may only be viewed by the instructors themselves.

COURSE EVALUATION PROCEDURES

I. COMPARISON GROUPS

The purpose of the comparison groups is to give context to the evaluation results, rather than viewing a course in isolation. Once the evaluation process is complete, the reports will be posted online for viewing. The reports include a series of graphs which present the instructor's evaluation results side by side with the comparison group's results. An effective comparison group should consist of courses that are similar to the compared course. The course level, course type (lecture, studio, etc.), and whether the course is for majors or non-majors are some of the factors that should be considered.

At the beginning of each fall semester the Chair receives a list of comparison groups from the previous year with a memo requesting the Chair to review the list and notify IR of any changes. Since the Chair knows the courses best, it is up to the Chair to determine the most suitable comparison groups for each course. If no comparison is given by the Chair, the course is compared to itself for the previous five semesters and the current semester.

II. COURSE TYPES

A full list of courses is downloaded from Banner after the 12th class day. The data listed in the *Required Request* form and the *Special Need* form reflect course information as it appears in Banner.

A. Types of Courses Evaluated

Courses with five or more students enrolled are eligible for evaluation. Most course types (see **II.B** for exclusions) are eligible for evaluation. The evaluation instrument was designed for evaluating *lecture-style* courses; however, Internship/Practicum (INP) and Independent Study/Directed Reading (IND) course types may be included should the Chair or instructor deem it necessary. The Chair or instructor should submit a *Special Need* form to IR before the deadline for evaluation requests in order to have courses with these course types evaluated.

B. Types of Courses Not Evaluated

Courses with fewer than five students enrolled will not be evaluated. The following types of courses are also **not** evaluated with standard evaluations:

- Chapel (CHA)
- Independent Study/
Directed Reading (IND)
- Internship/ Practicum (INP)
- Co-requisite Lab (CLB)
- Tutorial (TTL)

Please note that while laboratory sections are excluded, the associated lecture section may be evaluated. Science laboratory courses are evaluated apart from the standard evaluations.

C. Team-taught courses

Evaluations for team-taught courses will only be created for instructors if the course evaluation status is required or voluntary. If a course is not required or volunteered for evaluation, an evaluation will NOT be created for the instructor.

- Instructors teaching part of semester- should evaluations need to be conducted *EARLY*, the Chair should submit an *Early Request* form by the 4th week of class. The completed *EARLY* evaluation reports will be available after the deadline for grade submission for the semester.
- Instructors teaching all semester- evaluations will be available at the standard time, after the deadline for grade submission for the semester.

D. Cross-listed and Concurrently-taught Courses

Cross-listed and concurrently-taught courses may be scheduled for evaluation. The evaluation will be issued to the student for the course in which the student is enrolled. Enrollment totals and reports will reflect the combined enrollment of the designated primary course and all related secondary courses.

E. Variable “V” Courses

These courses can have credit of 1, 2, 3, or 4 hours. They can be a *lecture, independent study* or *seminar* type of course. Most do NOT meet criteria for evaluation due to their schedule type (e.g., an *independent study* that only involves one student.) It is important that these courses be reviewed by the department to ensure they are classified correctly in Banner. The Chair or instructor should submit a *Special Need* form to IR before the deadline for evaluation requests in order to have this course type evaluated.

III. COURSE EVALUATION STATUS

A. Required

Chairs will receive a request from IR each semester to indicate which courses they wish to have evaluated. The department will indicate only the required courses on the *Required Request* form and the *Special Need* form and submit them to IR.

B. Voluntary

IR will contact instructors, provide them with a list of their courses with indicators of those with required status, and offer them a chance to volunteer any remaining courses to be evaluated. The instructor will submit the courses that are volunteered for evaluation to IR.

C. Not Evaluated

After IR has received all responses prior to the established deadlines, all remaining course records will have the status of “not evaluated” and will be excluded from the evaluation process. Courses cannot be requested for evaluation once end-of-semester evaluations have opened.

IV.FORMS

Forms are used for requesting and submitting specific information required for generating evaluations and reports.

A. Required Request Form

This form contains a departmental listing of all current semester courses (as listed in Banner) that meet the guidelines for courses to be evaluated. Only the “recorder of grade” instructors are listed.

B. Special Need Form

This form is designed for the Chair or instructor to request evaluations for courses that not meet schedule type criteria, but which areas deemed necessary to evaluate. This form is to be submitted with the *Required Request* form.

C. Early Request Form

This form is designed for the Chair to request that a course be evaluated *EARLY*, prior to the standard end-of-semester evaluations. This form should be submitted to IR by the 4th week of class (for fall and spring semesters). As a general guideline, early evaluations typically begin the week before the course is scheduled to end and close the morning after the course ends.

D. Heading Definitions

Definitions for column headings are listed below for the *Required Request* form, *Special Need* form, and the *Early Request* form.

- *Req*- Required status- enter “X” if the course is to be evaluated
- *Term*- Current semester/term
- *BUID*- Instructor Bear ID
- *Last Name*- Instructor last name
- *First Name*- Instructor first name
- *Fac Type*- Instructor faculty type
- *Tenure Status*- Tenure status for the instructor as indicated in Banner
- *Dept*- Course department
- *CRN*- Course CRN
- *Prefix*- Course prefix
- *Course*- Course number
- *Sec*- Course section
- *Type*- Course type
- *Enrl*- Total course enrollment
- *Xlisted Concurrent*- List of cross-listed or concurrently taught courses associated with the course

- *Course Start Date*- First class day for the course (*Early Request* form)
- *Course End Date*- Last class day for the course (*Early Request* form)
- *Eval Start Date*- Date when evaluations should open for the course (*Early Request* form)
- *Eval End Date*- Date when evaluations should close for the course (*Early Request* form)

V. EVALUATION RESULTS

A. Evaluation Reports for Electronic Evaluations

Reports for electronic evaluations will be available to instructors after the deadline for grade submission at the end of the semester. Each Chair and instructor participant will be sent notification when online viewing is available. Reports may be accessed via www.baylor.edu/course_evaluations.

Instructors are allowed to view only their own evaluation reports. Chairs may access their own personal evaluations and the required evaluations of courses in their own department – voluntary evaluations may not be accessed. Reports for cross-listed and concurrently taught courses will appear under the designated primary course, and will include results from the primary course as well as all related secondary courses.

B. Evaluation Reports for Paper Evaluations

Contact IR if you need reports from semesters that are not available online.

C. Comparison Groups

Most reports include data from a comparison group. These groups are determined by the Chair and include data from the current semester and previous five semesters. Each year before the start of fall evaluations, IR will send a list of the current comparison groups to each Chair. The Chairs may make any changes necessary at that time and return the changes to IR.

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

- Comparison groups- group of courses that are identified by the department chair as similar to the course being evaluated. Results from these courses are provided in reports for electronic evaluations to give context to the responses.
- Concurrently-taught courses- two or more courses with different course numbers or sections taught in the same location at the same time by the same instructor.
- Cross-listed courses- courses with more than one course prefix taught in the same location at the same time.
- Instructor- tenured and tenure-track faculty, non-tenure track faculty, instructors, lecturers, staff, and graduate teaching assistants.
- Required evaluations- course evaluations that have been “required” by the Chair. Both the Chair of the department and the instructor may view reports for required courses.
- Team-taught course- one course taught by two or more instructors.
- Voluntary evaluations- course evaluations that have been requested voluntarily by the instructor. Reports for voluntary courses can only be viewed by the instructor for the course.