



## University Policy Statement

### UPS 220.000

## POLICIES, PROCEDURES, AND GUIDELINES FOR THE ADMINISTRATION OF STUDENT OPINION QUESTIONNAIRE (SOQ) FORMS

### 1. PREAMBLE

Student opinion questionnaires (SOQs) are used for the purposes of: (1) providing students an opportunity to give input to instructors about their instructional experience; (2) providing individual instructors with information that could be used to improve their instruction; (3) informing personnel evaluations, recommendations and decisions; and (4) providing data for institutional research while maintaining anonymity of students and instructors. This document establishes policies, procedures and guidelines for the administration, collection, storage, and use of SOQs.

### 2. PRINCIPLES

- 2.1 The policies and procedures of this document are subject to the Board of Trustees policies; the California Administrative Code, Title 5; California Education Code; the Unit 3 Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA); other applicable State and Federal laws; and University Policy Statement (UPS) 210.000, UPS 210.002, UPS 210.020, and UPS 210.070.
- 2.2 The policies in this document apply only to official university-approved SOQs completed by students enrolled in credit-bearing classes.
- 2.3 Student opinion questionnaire forms shall be both quantitative (close-ended questions) and qualitative (open-ended questions).
- 2.4 The process of administering, processing, and storing SOQ data shall be secure, ensure anonymity for students, and be equitable and fair for faculty and students. SOQ data (e.g., statistical summaries) are incorporated into the Personnel Action File and shall be confidential and securely maintained. Students responses shall be independent of each other and students shall not collude via electronic messaging systems or any other means to alter the student feedback as a collective effort. Student responses affected by collusion shall not be used as part of any evaluation.
- 2.5 Instructors who take leave or are reassigned during a teaching assignment shall not have SOQs administered unless requested by the instructor taking leave.
- 2.6 Instructors taking on substitute assignments shall not have SOQs administered unless requested by the instructor taking the substitute assignment.

- 2.7 In unusual situations (e.g., co-teaching), faculty members should consult with their department chair(s) to determine a SOQ dissemination strategy. In accord with timelines established by FAR, the department(s) shall subsequently contact FAR to consult on and arrange dissemination.
  - 2.8 Pursuant to CBA terms, students who do not participate in the regular SOQ process shall not be permitted to complete a SOQ form for that class. Any student communications or evaluations provided outside of the SOQ process must be identified by the student's name to be included in the Personnel or Working Personnel Action File.
  - 2.9 Department chairs and the appropriate administrator(s) shall not have access to SOQ data until after the semester is over and the due date for grades has passed.
  - 2.10 Faculty members shall have access to completed SOQs or statistical summaries as soon as possible after the semester is over and the due date for grades has passed. Faculty members shall have an opportunity to review SOQ results after the semester is over as an urgent priority.
3. ADMINISTRATION OF SOQs
- 3.1 For courses with 10 or fewer enrolled students, departments may determine the appropriateness of administering SOQs. Maintaining the anonymity of students remains the highest priority.
  - 3.2 In a semester-long course, SOQ forms shall be made available to students through FAR on the first day of the 12th week of instruction of a semester and through the last day of the 14th week of instruction. Students who have not completed a form shall be sent no more than two electronic mail messages per week from FAR during this process.
  - 3.3 If a course is taught in less than a semester, SOQ forms shall be made available during the last week of instruction and no more than three email reminders sent from FAR.
  - 3.4 Instructions to students shall be as follows:

“Student opinion questionnaires (SOQs) play a role in the evaluation of instructors and in enhancing their teaching. Written comments are encouraged. Course evaluations are confidential and should not be discussed with others. Instructors will not see the anonymous responses until after final grades have been officially submitted.

Studies have shown that student opinions of teaching are often influenced by unconscious and unintentional biases about instructor characteristics such as race, gender, and other characteristics. For instance, women and instructors of color are systematically rated lower in their teaching effectiveness compared to white men, even when there are no actual differences in the instruction or in what students have learned.

As you fill out this questionnaire, please keep potential biases in mind and make an effort to resist stereotypes about the instructor(s). Focus your opinions on the effectiveness of the instructor in the course, what you have learned, and not unrelated matters.”

- 3.5 While the collection of student course evaluations is required by the Collective Bargaining Agreement, they measure student opinions of teaching performance, and research demonstrates they are subject to multiple biases and therefore should be used and interpreted appropriately to avoid misinterpretation.

#### 4. INSTRUCTOR RESPONSIBILITIES

- 4.1 Instructors shall not make any statements that may influence student responses but may offer encouragements for SOQ response rate. Any encouragements (e.g., extra credit, statements of SOQ purpose) shall be offered to the entire class, based on the response rate of the entire class, and must be specified in the syllabus.
- 4.2 Instructors may allocate an adequate amount of instructional time to complete SOQ forms, whether the course is delivered entirely in person, hybrid, synchronously online, or asynchronously online. During in-class administration, instructors shall not be present while students are responding.
- 4.3 Instructors may read the instructions above (see 3.4).
- 4.4 Instructors shall not be present in the instructional setting (e.g., classroom) while the SOQs are being completed.

Source: Faculty Affairs Committee  
Revised by the Executive Committee (3-15-24)

**EFFECTIVE DATE: July 10, 2024**

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