

Recommendation Concerning the Interpretation of the Results from the Revised Student Questionnaire on Courses and Teaching

Recommendation

Based on differences in the items and rating scales between the original Student Questionnaire on Courses and Teaching (Fall 1996 – Summer 2017) and the revised Student Questionnaire on Courses and Teaching (Fall 2017 onward), it is recommended that the results from these two time periods be treated as separate data sources and not aggregated or compared (e.g., in analyses, tables, graphs) for decisions involving these scores (e.g., Annual Performance Evaluation, Promotion and Tenure, Teaching Awards).

Background

Based on recommendations from Western's *Joint Working Group: Student Questionnaires on Courses and Teaching*'s June 2015 report, a committee was formed to review and revise the Student Questionnaire on Course and Teaching (SQCT). The revised questionnaire is somewhat shorter, leaving room for supplementary questions, and includes modified instructions to provide students with more guidance on completing the questionnaire. The rating scale is also revised to reflect agreement with the core SQCT questions and the committee ensured that the questions are relevant to different course formats (e.g., face-to-face, blended, online). The revised questionnaire was implemented as the standard questionnaire in Fall 2017 (for more information on the revised questionnaire including a comparison of the original and revised SQCTs, [click here](#)).

The change in the rating scale, plus minor revisions to the items, mean that SQCT ratings for courses from the Fall 2017 term onward are not comparable to ratings from before the Fall 2017 term. To illustrate the differences, on the original SQCT, students rated the item “Displays enthusiasm and energy in conducting class sessions” from Outstanding (7) to Very poor (1). The corresponding item on the revised SQCT is “Displays enthusiasm in conducting the course” and students rate their agreement with the statement from Strongly Agree (7) to Strongly Disagree (1). A response at the mid-point (4) in the original scale indicates “Satisfactory” whereas it signifies “Neither Agree nor Disagree” on the revised scale. Although both responses reflect the midpoint of their respective rating scales, they might garner very different interpretations.

Based on these differences, it is recommended that the SQCT results from before Fall 2017 and those from Fall 2017 onward be treated as separate data sources and not aggregated or compared.

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