

Citizen Evaluation of Teaching (CET)¹

Guidelines for Extension Use

Goal: The Citizen Evaluation of Teaching (CET) process is designed to complement self-assessment and peer review (both internal and external to your disciplinary expertise) of Extension teaching at OSU. CET questions consider overall teaching quality and basic teaching functions. The goal is for instructors and your immediate supervisor/s (see Table 2, User's Guide) to identify teaching excellence as well as areas that may need attention.

OSU policy: *"Anonymous evaluations by all students in the class are required each term for each class the faculty member is teaching. A copy of tabulated results must be provided to the faculty member; a duplicate copy shall be placed in the faculty member's personnel records file"* (<http://oregonstate.edu/facultystaff/handbook/facrec/evals.htm>). **Extension faculty are expected to choose three events per year** to evaluate teaching.

The new CET form: The primary purpose of the revised CET form is to provide citizen feedback that confirms quality teaching or identifies themes for possible improvement. Another purpose is to integrate the evaluation of teaching among all teaching faculty at OSU. As a result, questions and forms look similar and will be reported similarly across the entire OSU campus.

Note that the first two questions are worded broadly to compare teaching across disciplines, and were validated by the Office of Educational Assessment at the University of Washington (<http://www.washington.edu/oea/describe.htm>). Questions 3-12 were selected from validated instruments used at other universities to represent standard teaching functions and behaviors. All questions on the Extension form were validated using statistical procedures at OSU (AOT report, 2002).

Faculty are encouraged to add questions to the back of the form to assess personal teaching practices or improvements, measures of learning, facilities, or other parameters of interest. When adding questions to the back, survey research literature recommends that questions be worded carefully to assess only one item or concept at a time. Care must be exercised to avoid using synonyms such as "examples and illustrations" since they could mean different things to respondents.

Photocopying: Alignment during photocopying is critical for accurate and complete scanning. Questions may be typed onto a master and photocopied onto the scan forms placed in the copy tray. When copying, avoid stray marks and lines that may abort the scanning process.

¹ The current "Citizen Assessment of Extension Teaching" form will be changed to Citizen Evaluation of Teaching (CET) at next printing.

To save copy costs, many faculty use overhead equipment to project the questions onto a screen while citizens respond on the back of the scan sheet.

Confidentiality: Teaching evaluations must be conducted to ensure confidentiality. The key is avoiding identification of individuals or small groups attending your educational events, either by their ratings or hand-written comments. At the same time, procedures that ensure integrity of sample sizes and results will enhance validity when peers consider your teaching skills. The *Instructions* (see box) are intended to protect confidentiality while improving the quality of responses based on citizens believing in your commitment to improve teaching at OSU.

Narrative Questions: Faculty report that narrative questions provide more information and ideas than standard CET questions. Examples of narrative questions are listed in Appendix 1 for your consideration.

Interpretation of CET data: Scanning and automatic generation of summary reports will occur at The Milne Computer Center. Reports summarize percentages, frequencies, and medians as measures of central tendency. CET medians are calculated from a 1-6 scale anchored by word descriptors (ie. poor to excellent) known as *ordered qualitative* data, distinct from ordinal numeric data used to calculate arithmetic means. Medians show less distortion of data from high or low values. As described below, CET is intended to complement several sources of information about quality teaching and possible improvement rather than differentiating general teaching performance between good and poor instructors.

A new feature of CET summarizes the results of two *norm-referenced* questions that assess general teaching quality and that are relevant in most instructional situations. Ratings you receive for questions 1 and 2 can be compared to the *norm* or *standard* set by other instructors at OSU. As a result, ratings for these questions are valid for promotion and tenure (P&T), awards, or merit. Eventually, cross-tab data representing correlations between Questions 1&2 and demographic data will be available (requires development of a demographic scan form for Extension). As with any survey or data set, clarity about what is being assessed is essential. For example, instructors who teach jointly or in tandem with others during Extension workshops must clarify who is being evaluated to avoid ambiguity or confusion.

Evaluating teaching quality or improvement also requires criteria specific to the discipline. This is known as *criterion referenced* questions in the literature. The purpose is for teachers to consider strong or weak responses to questions 3-12 as indicators of quality teaching or as prompts for teaching improvement, respectively. Interpreting these indicators within the discipline may provide insights or document teaching quality to complement the norm-referenced data (questions 1&2) used in P&T or faculty awards.

Adding narrative questions often enhances detail, ideas, and constructive suggestions by attendees. When confidentiality is not an issue, instructors may wish to glance at

responses to the 12 questions and narratives prior to sending the scan sheets to the Computer Center since a slight delay is expected before results will be returned.

Sending report summaries to supervisors: The clear intent of the Advancement of Teaching (AOT) committee and the Faculty Senate focuses CET on improving teaching combined with a minor role to confirm teaching performance for P&T, awards, or merit. AOT and the Senate recognize the need to report to immediate supervisors (see Extension User's Guide for a list) while preventing "raw" or non-interpreted data from entering into Prof Reviews, personnel files, or Administrative channels.

Using CET data to complement teaching improvement: The science of teaching evaluation clearly reminds us that teaching is a tremendously complex activity that requires a similarly robust assessment process. CET represents the experiences or perceptions of respondents only. It must be complemented by self-evaluation, internal and external peer assessment, and the sciences of teaching, learning, and evaluation.

As you review CET data, note the practices and skills that should be continued or enhanced along with others that need improvement. Discuss results with peers and immediate supervisor/s to consider possible enhancements, alternative methods, or new approaches. Develop ways to test these ideas the next time you teach this or other educational events. Attend seminars, search the literature, or ask a peer from your department or profession how they might improve one or more aspects of your teaching. Consider how you will assess this aspect of your teaching, how it might affect learning by citizens, and how it contributes to Extension teaching within the discipline. How will innovations in your teaching be communicated to peers? Will it be necessary to consider additional surveys or other assessment techniques within the discipline? Finally, how do you feel about your teaching? Self-assessment and personal satisfaction are the most important aspects of teaching and teaching improvement at OSU.

CET Data and Program Review: Program reviews are similar to accreditation requirements for universities such as OSU and are intended to improve and validate teaching performance by faculty and instructors. The CET process is intended to improve teaching within the discipline. Valid *norm referenced* teaching competencies within colleges requires aggregate data from questions 1 and 2 be reported to Program Leaders and other Administrators at OSU. All other CET data are designed to assess teaching performance by individual instructors with reporting being interpreted within the discipline only.

Summarized by the Advancement of Teaching Committee of the Faculty Senate, 2003.

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Instructions for Administering the CET

Research confirms that respondents take CET evaluations seriously when instructors express a sincere desire to consider their input on teaching quality and performance. To improve comparability for individuals across Extension or within departments, a standard set of instructions should be used for all instructors and educational events.

1. Teaching at OSU including the OSU Extension Service is an essential part of each instructor's responsibilities. Your responses to this questionnaire will help me identify quality teaching or discover aspects to consider for improvement.
2. Please take the time to answer each question honestly and add your comments on a separate sheet of paper.
3. Please answer question #1 from the point of view of the individual instructor asking you to complete the form.
4. **Please use a number 2 pencil. Otherwise, the scan machine will not read your responses.**
5. Please hand your completed evaluations to _____. This person has been instructed to seal the envelope and hand it to the appropriate person to ensure confidentiality.

Appendix 1

SAMPLE QUESTIONS FOR POSSIBLE USE ON THE BACK OF THE FORM

Assessing Instructor/Teaching:

The Office of Educational Assessment at the University of Washington (UW) <http://www.washington.edu/oea/iasforms.htm> has multiple forms based on teaching approaches, instructor's skills and organization, and educational outcomes (Form X).

Kansas State University IDEA Center also displays standard assessment questions along with a dozen learning objectives with relationships to teaching methods <http://www.idea.ksu.edu/StudentRatings/index.html> .

Both Centers permit OSU faculty to select a modest number of questions from their surveys to copy on the back of the OSU form. These questions have been tested for reliability and validity.

Assessing Student/Learner Responsibilities (examples):

- The instructor's teaching performance in this Extension event was?
- Teaching in this Extension event inspired critical thinking?
- The teacher challenged my understanding of the subject?
- Your assessment of learning new information was:
- Your attendance during this event was:
- Your prior interest in this topic was:

Assessing Learning Resources/Environment:

- Quality of learning resources (books, media, visual aids, etc.)
- Quality of learning environment (seating, ability to see instructor, lighting, ventilation, noise, etc.) or (specialized equipment such as drawing tables, etc.0)

Sample Narrative Written Questions:

- The comment sheet from the UW might have questions relevant to your teaching (<http://www.washington.edu/oea/iascmmmt.htm>).
 - Is there anything else you would like to tell us about your participation in this class?
 - Was this class intellectually stimulating?
 - Did it stretch your thinking?
 - Yes
 - No
 - Why or why not?
 - What aspects of this class contributed most to or distracted from your learning?

- What suggestions do you have for improving the class?
- What aspects of presentation helped you most/least?
- What would improve the presentation?

Open-ended Questions for Teaching Assistants:

- What qualities of your TA do you regard as good or outstanding? Please be specific.
- Are there areas in which you feel your TA needs improvement? If yes, please be specific.
- Do you have any other comments you feel would be helpful about this TA's performance?