Information for Instructors and Inventory of Instructors’ Items

USAT Course Evaluation is intended to provide an evaluation opportunity for undergraduate courses whose enrolment is 10 or more, as well as evaluation for some graduate and professional programs.

Some aspects of the USAT process require input from each instructor, and this document describes the information required. As well as this document, instructors will receive a requisition form for each course being taught, and the requisition form should be completed with reference to the following details.

Selecting Additional Items for the USAT Evaluation Form

The evaluation items fall into three parts. Parts one and two are standard items to be used for all instructors in each academic unit. They are printed on the requisition form in Step 4 for information only.

Step 4, Part Three of the requisition form allows the instructor to select up to 10 additional items, which will then become part of the evaluation form used for the specific course named on that form. These selections may, alternatively, be made via the USAT website at http://www.queensu.ca/registrar/usat/. The selections should be made with reference to the Inventory of Instructors’ Items, included in this document.

Please note that:

• if you taught the same course last session, you may select the same items by simply marking the appropriate box
• you do not have to use any additional items if you do not wish to do so
• you may use the same additional items for all of your courses, or have different ones for each course
• you can specify any number of additional items up to a maximum of 10

Providing Results to Students

In accordance with Article 29.4.3 of the Collective Agreement, responses to the university- and department-wide evaluation items will be reported to the instructor, department head, and dean. The reports will only be made available to students if the instructor specifically authorizes the release of the evaluation results. Instructors should specify their preference in this regard by completing Step 2 of the requisition form. If authorization to release is given, copies of the reports will be sent to student society head representatives.

Timing of the Evaluation

The standard evaluation time period (weeks 10 and 11 of a standard 12-week term or week 5 of a 6-week term) is designed to ensure that the majority of students will be in attendance to complete the evaluations. If there are special circumstances that make the standard evaluation time period unsuitable, it is possible to conduct the evaluation at a different time. If an earlier evaluation date is required, Step 5 of the requisition form should be completed to specify the preferred evaluation timing. If a later date is preferred, no special action is required, but the USAT office should be informed so that the completed evaluation will not be expected until the later date.

Instructors should collaborate with their class student representative to establish a specific date and time, within the preferred date range, for the evaluation. An evaluation at the start of the class rather than the end encourages better student participation.
Inventory of Instructors’ Items

The following list of items has been compiled and adapted from a variety of sources, including teacher rating forms used at the University of Washington, University of Michigan, University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign, University of Western Australia, and the University of California, Berkeley. These items are intended to provide information for teaching improvement, and, hence, they are quite specific. Course instructors should select items that relate to their particular teaching approach and objectives, and are not included elsewhere in the evaluation form. Help with selecting appropriate items or formulating alternative items is available from the Instructional Development Centre (call extension 36428). Ratings are made on a 5-point scale as follows:

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly agree</th>
<th>Strongly disagree</th>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
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<td>4</td>
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Remember: The items chosen will be in addition to the university-wide items, which are:

1. Overall, this is an excellent course.
2. Overall, this instructor is an effective teacher.
3. I learned a great deal from this course.
4. The instructor showed sensitivity to the needs and interests of students from diverse groups.

and the departmental items. The set used by specific departments is printed on the requisition form, but for information, the default departmental items are:

5. Grading was a fair assessment of my performance in this course.
6. The workload in this course was reasonable and appropriate.
7. The instructor in this course showed a genuine concern for students.
8. My interest in the subject has been stimulated by this course.
9. The course was well organized.
10. The instructor was available for discussion outside class.
11. The instructor presented material clearly.

The items, broken down by category, from which a maximum of 10 additions may be chosen, are:

1. Instructor’s Attitude Toward Students
   a. The instructor encouraged students to express their opinions.
   b. The instructor seemed aware of student needs.
   c. The instructor seemed to be concerned about whether students learned the material.
   d. The instructor seemed receptive to new ideas and others’ viewpoints.
   e. The instructor never intimidated or embarrassed students.
   f. The instructor used student questions as a way of discovering points of confusion or misunderstanding.
   g. The instructor always noticed when the class had questions.
   h. The instructor created a positive class environment.
   i. The instructor recognized individual differences in the abilities of students.
   j. The instructor in this course showed a genuine concern for students.
   k. The instructor was willing to deviate from the lesson plan to meet the needs of the students.
   l. The instructor never made me feel that I was wasting his/her time.
   m. The instructor noted and responded to students’ puzzlement or boredom.
   n. The instructor was never cynical, sarcastic, or arrogant.
   o. The instructor accepted viewpoints other than his/her own as valid.
   p. It was possible to get a fair hearing for complaints about grades or other problems.
2. Instructor’s Organization and Preparation

a. The instructor’s class presentations made for easy note taking.
b. The instructor presented material in a clear manner.
c. The course was well organized.
d. The course material was presented in logical units.
e. There was continuity from one class meeting to the next.
f. The class presentations (individual lectures) were well organized.
g. The instructor was prepared for class.
h. The instructor summarized key points.
i. The instructor kept on track and did not get distracted.
j. The instructor met the class regularly and arrived on time.

3. Instructor’s Communication Skills

a. The instructor’s voice was clear and understandable.
b. The instructor generally expressed ideas clearly.
c. The instructor’s lectures were pitched at the right level for me.
d. The instructor defined new terms, concepts, and principles.
e. The instructor spoke at just the right pace.
f. The instructor gave examples, illustrations, or applications to clarify abstract concepts.
g. The instructor slowed down when discussing complex and difficult topics.
h. The instructor clarified complex sections of the text.
i. The instructor was able to hold my attention in this course.

4. Instructor’s Interest in Teaching

a. The instructor was enthusiastic in presenting course material.
b. The instructor seemed friendly and relaxed in front of the class.
c. The instructor seemed genuinely interested in the course material.
d. The instructor made the course an enjoyable experience.
e. The instructor made the subject matter interesting.
f. The instructor’s presentations were generally thought-provoking.

5. Pace, Breadth, and Depth of Coverage

a. This course covered the right amount of material.
b. Within the time limitations, the instructor covered the course content in sufficient depth.
c. The course material was presented at a satisfactory level of difficulty.
d. There was no unnecessary overlap between this course and other courses in this department.
e. The instructor integrated the course material with what I had previously learned.
f. The instructor presented divergent viewpoints when appropriate.
g. The instructor presented diverse approaches to problems and their solutions.

6. Instructor’s Expectations and Objectives

a. The instructor clearly specified the course requirements.
b. The instructor informed us of the direction the course was to take.
c. The objectives of the course were adequately explained.
d. The calendar description of the course was clear and accurate.
e. It was clear to me what was expected of me in this course.
f. I always understood why we were covering a certain topic in this course.
7. Instructor’s Accessibility
   a. The instructor was available for consultation with students.
   b. I was able to get individual help when I needed it.
   c. Talking to the instructor during office hours was helpful.
   d. The office hours were scheduled at convenient times.
   e. The instructor encouraged out-of-class consultations.
   f. The instructor was always available during office hours.

8. Audiovisual Aids and Instructional Technology
   a. The instructor made good use of audiovisual materials (videos, slides, models, etc.).
   b. Audiovisual materials (or computers) helped to clarify difficult concepts.
   c. Audiovisual materials (or computers) contributed significantly to my learning.
   d. Audiovisual materials (or computers) used were well integrated into the course.
   e. The course web page was helpful and informative.

9. Student Interaction
   a. The instructor generally stimulated class discussion.
   b. I was able to discuss things with the instructor outside class.
   c. I participated more in class discussion in this course than in other courses.
   d. The instructor allowed adequate time for answering questions in class.
   e. My questions were answered satisfactorily by the instructor.
   f. The instructor provided a good mixture of lecture and discussion.

10. Student Learning and Development
    a. This course was helpful in developing new skills.
    b. I learned more in this course than in similar courses.
    c. I generally understood the material presented in this course.
    d. I felt that this course challenged me intellectually.
    e. I have become more competent in this subject area as a result of this course.
    f. I performed up to my potential in this course.
    g. My opinions about some topics changed because of this course.
    h. The course made me think hard and carefully.
    i. The instructor inspired me to be critical of ideas and materials.
    j. This course helped me develop the skills of critical analysis.
    k. This course stimulated my intellectual development.
    l. This course broadened my intellectual horizons.
    m. This course changed the way I see at least some part of the world.

11. Relevance of Course
    a. The course provided me with a good general background in this area.
    b. The material in this course was interesting.
    c. The instructor related the course to students’ experiences and backgrounds.
    d. This course has given me an enduring interest in this area.
    e. This course has stimulated me to do outside reading on my own.
    f. I plan to take additional courses in this field.
    g. The course made me aware of current problems in this field.
    h. The instructor related theories and concepts to practical issues.
    i. The instructor effectively used examples or personal experience to get across key points.
    j. The instructor incorporated material from other fields to help my understanding of the subject we studied.
12. Examinations and Tests

a. The number and frequency of exams/tests were appropriate.
b. The exams/tests were clearly worded.
c. The exams/tests gave students an opportunity to demonstrate what they had learned.
d. The exams/tests gave the instructor a comprehensive picture of my understanding of the course material.
e. The exams/tests adequately covered the reading assignments.
f. The exams/tests adequately covered the lecture material.
g. The exams/tests were fair.
h. The instructor took reasonable precautions to prevent cheating during tests.
i. The exams/tests reflected the objectives of the course.
j. The answers to the exam/test questions were adequately explained afterwards.
k. I had enough time to complete the exams/tests.
l. The exams/tests were appropriate to the course content.
m. The exams/tests were at the right level of difficulty.
n. The exams/tests were challenging.

13. Assignments

a. The number and frequency of assignments were appropriate.
b. The assignments were clearly worded.
c. The assignments gave students an opportunity to demonstrate what they had learned.
d. The assignments gave the instructor a good picture of my understanding of the course material.
e. The assignments were well chosen.
f. The assignments reflected the course content and objectives.
g. I had enough time to complete the assignments.
h. The assignments were at the right level of difficulty.
i. The assignments were challenging.
j. The assignments helped me better understand the course material.
k. The assignments took the time that they were worth.
l. The instructor made useful comments on the assignments I turned in.

14. Grading

a. My grades accurately represent my performance in the course.
b. I know my relative standing in the class.
c. The grading system was adequately explained.
d. The grading was fair and appropriate.
e. I feel the grade I am getting reflects how much I have learned.
f. The grading system encouraged me to work hard.

15. Outside Reading/Texts

a. The assigned readings were at an appropriate level.
b. The reading assignments were interesting.
c. Readings covered both sides of issues.
d. Outside readings were relevant to the rest of the course.
e. The course required a reasonable amount of outside reading.
f. The text used in the course was helpful.
g. The required text was worth the money I had to pay for it.
h. Reserve readings were easily available.
16. Laboratory Work

a. I generally found the laboratory sessions valuable.
b. The lab instructor clarified lecture material.
c. The lab instructor presented material over and above the lecture material.
d. The lab instructor provided adequate individual attention.
e. The lab instructor helped me to find supplementary references.
f. The lab instructor was available during office hours.
g. The lab increased my competence in using lab equipment and materials.
h. The lab equipment was usually effectively set up.
i. The lab sections appeared to be well integrated with the lectures.
j. The use of lab equipment was adequately explained.
k. The laboratories used for this course had adequate facilities.
l. I had sufficient opportunity to use the lab facilities.
m. The lab sessions were well organized.
n. My lab instructor thoroughly understood the lab experiments and equipment.
o. Directions for the lab assignments were clear.
p. Lab assignments required a reasonable amount of time and effort.
q. Lab assignments were interesting and stimulating.
r. Lab reports were graded fairly and impartially.
s. Lab reports were returned promptly.
t. The lab instructor took appropriate safety precautions.

17. Tutorials

a. I learned a lot from the tutorials.
b. The tutorials provided a good complement to material presented in lectures.
c. The tutorials provided a good opportunity to explore issues raised in lectures.
d. I participated actively in the tutorial discussions.
e. The tutorials were well planned and organized.
f. The tutorials provided a chance to get to know other students and hear their views.
g. The tutorials were helpful in preparing for assignments and tests/exams.

18. Studio/Design Work

a. The studio/design projects were valuable.
b. The studio facilities were adequate.
c. The assigned projects were appropriate to the level of the course.
d. The instructor’s examples and demonstrations were clear and concise.
e. The instructor carefully explained each step of new processes and techniques.
f. The instructor explained the underlying rationale for techniques.

19. Fieldwork

a. I learned a great deal from the fieldwork experience in this course.
b. The fieldwork experience enabled me to relate theory and practice.
c. The fieldwork experience in this course was effectively planned and co-ordinated.
d. My fieldwork placement(s) was/were appropriate to my career goals.
e. I valued the opportunity to discuss fieldwork experiences with my peers.
f. I valued the opportunity to discuss fieldwork experiences with the instructor/co-ordinator.

20. Team-Teaching

a. Team-teaching was effectively used in this course.
b. Instruction was well co-ordinated among the teachers.
c. Course material was effectively presented with the team-teaching approach.
21. Guest Lecturers
   a. The guest lecturers were interesting and stimulating.
   b. The guest speakers contributed significantly to this course.
   c. The guest lecturers addressed issues relevant to the course.
   d. The guest lecturers were effective speakers.

22. Field Trips
   a. The field trips were useful learning experiences.
   b. The field trips were well planned and conducted.

23. Clinical Teaching
   a. The course included a good variety of clinical problems.
   b. The instructor’s clinical demonstrations were clear and well organized.
   c. Clinical techniques were explained well and discussed thoroughly.
   d. I felt competent to handle the clinical tasks I was given.
   e. The supervision of my clinical work was competent and thorough.
   f. The instructor satisfactorily answered my clinical questions.
   g. My clinical work was evaluated fairly and consistently.
   h. The instructor was helpful in my development of good clinical techniques.
   i. I learned to identify both appropriate and inappropriate clinical procedures.
   j. Clinical demands on students in this course were reasonable.
   k. The instructor served as an effective role model for professional practice.
   l. There were ample opportunities to practise clinical techniques.
   m. The instructor provided helpful feedback on my clinical work.
   n. The clinical instruction was competent and up-to-date.

24. Self-Study Courses
   a. The course outline guides the student through a logical learning experience.
   b. The learning resources were appropriate/adequate.
   c. The resource material was sufficient and available.
   d. The discussion groups augmented the source material.
   e. The instructor facilitated participation of all group members.
   f. The instructor was able to direct and control the discussion group so that it did not stray off topic.
   g. The instructor was able to guide the group so that the information presented could be summarized in an orderly fashion.

25. Teaching Assistants
   a. I learned a lot from my TA in this course.
   b. My TA in this course was an effective teacher.
   c. My TA in this course showed concern for students.
   d. My TA for this course was well prepared.
   e. My TA for this course gave clear and helpful explanations.
   f. My TA for this course helped me understand difficult concepts.
   g. My TA in this course seemed genuinely interested in what she/he was teaching.
   h. The instruction provided by my TA for this course complemented the lectures.
   i. My TA for this course was approachable and helpful.
   j. My TA for this course was available for help when needed.
   k. My TA for this course marked my work fairly and consistently.
   l. My TA for this course returned my marked assignments/tests/lab reports promptly.
   m. My TA for this course provided helpful feedback on assignments/tests/lab reports.