Directions to Faculty

IDEA Student Ratings of Instruction

Please review these directions as they have changed since the last IDEA administration. If you require more specific information in any area, please contact the Office of Institutional Assessment and Compliance. These directions are divided into the following sections:

I. Marking Your Faculty Information Form
II. Importance of Objectives
III. Instructions for Classroom Administration of the IDEA System

I. Marking Your Faculty Information Form

The Faculty Information Form describes your course and provides critical information needed to generate your report. Use a No. 2 pencil and the proper marks as illustrated on the Faculty Information Form. If the Faculty Information Form is not marked correctly, the processing of your course may be incomplete or inaccurate.

For many of you your objectives have been premarked on the IDEA forms. Please double check the chosen objective for each of your classes. If there are corrections, please mark the corrections, and a new corrected form will be printed before being submitted to the IDEA Center. For those who have not done so, please observe the following instructions regarding the Objective section.

Objectives: Before selecting your objectives on the Faculty Information Form, please review the Brief Description of IDEA Objectives section (part II of this document). Your weighting of these objectives is very important because it describes the uniqueness of your course by defining its purposes and what students are supposed to learn. Weight each objective as: M = "Minor or No Importance"; I = "Important"; or E = "Essential" by blackening the appropriate letter.

It is important to remember that no course can be all things to all students. We recommend that you select no more than 3-5 objectives either as "Essential" or "Important," prioritizing what you want students to learn in your course. As a general rule, if you choose three objectives, only one should be "Essential"; if you choose five, only two should be "Essential." The weighting system used to generate summary results in the IDEA report (Progress on Relevant Objectives) weigh Essential objectives "2," Important objectives “1,” and Minor objectives “0.”

In selecting "Essential" or "Important" objectives, ask yourself three questions:
1. Is this a significant part of the course?
2. Do I do something specific to help the students accomplish this objective?
3. Does the student's progress on this objective affect his or her grade?

If you answer "Yes" to one or more of these questions, then that objective should probably be weighted "E" or "I" on the Faculty Information Form. The phrase "Minor or No Importance" recognizes that in most courses some of the twelve objectives will be considerably less important than others, even though some attention may be given to them. An "M" should be selected on the Faculty Information Form for such objectives.

For all Faculty - Contextual Questions (Research Purposes): There are six questions in this section, some of which require multiple responses. These questions help describe the context in which the course was taught. Future research will determine how interpretations of your results should be altered by contextual considerations. As in the previous sections, please blacken the appropriate responses. While the responses to these items are not required (i.e., the report will be processed without your answering them), your responses will provide valuable background information.

II. Importance of IDEA Objectives

Because the IDEA system defines effective teaching in terms of progress on the objectives of the particular course, it is crucial that very thoughtful consideration be given to the selection of "Essential" and "Important" objectives on the Faculty Information Form. Students' report of their progress on those objectives become the primary criteria to evaluate that course and is reported as Progress on Relative Objectives, which combines the results of all objectives you selected as “Important” or “Essential.” Because of how this summary measure is calculated, it is important to think carefully about the relative importance of the objectives you select. "Essential" objectives are double weighted. They count twice as much as "Important" objectives in these calculations.

A detailed discussion of the objectives and how to rank them can be found at (http://www.theideacenter.org/SelectingObjectives).
III. Instructions for Classroom Administration of the IDEA System

Step 1: Review the Faculty Information Form (orange) for each class. Mark any corrections necessary and complete any missing areas. (Note – Enrollment numbers noted on the envelope may differ from the enrollment number marked on the information form as the number on the envelope was the preliminary enrollment for each class (including withdrawn students).)

Step 2: Distribute the student opscan forms (and the comment sheets or sheets with additional questions, if any). Remind the students to use a No. 2 Pencil. Surveys completed in ink cannot be processed.

Step 3: Provide the students with the following general course information: (1) Institution; (2) Instructor; (3) Course number; (4) Time and days class meets. Direct the students to complete these sections on the front of their survey form.

Step 4: The following instructions to the students should be read aloud:

Your ratings will be most helpful to the instructor and to the institution if you answer thoughtfully and honestly. Students sometimes wonder, "If the course was well taught and I learned a lot, should I rate every item high?" The answer is "No." IDEA focuses on what the instructor was trying to teach and on what you learned. As such, an instructor is not expected to do well on every item. In recognition of this, items not related to this course are not counted in the final evaluation. Fairness to both the individual and the institution require accurate and honest answers. Please use the comments section on the form to expand upon your experience with the class and/or instructor in areas not covered by the other questions. All answers and comments will be kept confidential.

Step 5: To insure objectivity and uniformity, after the instructions have been given, it is strongly recommended that the instructor leave the room while the students complete the student response forms. Have either a member of the class, a teaching assistant, or a colleague take responsibility for returning the materials to the VPAA’s office (Flowers 107) as soon as the students finish.