Procedures for Gathering Student Evaluations

As spelled out in the *Faculty Handbook*, student involvement in third-year and tenure reviews comes through the use of special student evaluations forms. (See the excerpt from the *Faculty Handbook* on student participation.) Student input is solicited from a list of students, both current and recently graduated, generated by a sampling procedure administered by Institutional Research and Assessment, and from a second list of students and recent graduates solicited from the faculty member being reviewed. Procedures for sampling students are described below. Examples of the cover letter sent to students and evaluation form are also included.

After the Dean receives the student and graduate questionnaires, the students’ names and addresses are deleted from the letters in the interest of anonymity, as the procedures require. Because handwritten responses may be identifiable, these will be typed by staff in my office. Your student evaluations will be made available for you to read. I will then schedule an individual meeting with you so we can discuss thoroughly the contents of all the letters received in your case. The "deleted" versions will then be sent to the tenured members of your department and the FPC. The original letters with names will be seen only by the President and the Dean of the College.

Excerpt from Carleton College *Faculty Handbook*

The College encourages the involvement of students in its faculty and curricular decisions. Students take part in the hiring process within departments and in the review and evaluation of courses, programs, and departments through the departmental curriculum committees, the Education and Curriculum Committee, departmental reviews, and other departmental and College-wide committees. All instructors have the right, and are encouraged, to secure student evaluations of their own courses.

In formal reviews for tenure or reappointment, student involvement comes through the use of special student evaluation forms distributed and processed by the dean. For this evaluation, a list of 20 to 30 names of current and recently graduated students is solicited from the faculty member concerned. A second list of names is obtained by the Office of Institutional Research and Assessment through a random sample, with appropriate balances between men and women, majors and non-majors, and those who have done well or poorly in the faculty member's courses. (Any student who has been the subject of a judicial proceeding involving the faculty member being evaluated will be barred from participating in this review at the latter's request.) After showing the covering letter and the evaluation form to the faculty member being evaluated, the dean of the college writes to each student whose name appears on the lists, requesting the student's evaluation of the faculty member. Evaluations from current students are normally sought when students are away from the campus.

After the evaluations have been received, the dean prepares a copy of the letters, deleting the student's name and address and other material in the letter that is not appropriate to the review. The concerned faculty member is then given the opportunity to read the edited letters in a manner approved by the dean's office. At a later date, the faculty member meets with the dean to discuss the letters. The edited letters are also made available to the tenured members of the department and to the Faculty Personnel Committee. Only the dean and the president see the full letter from each student.

Student evaluations provide evidence to assist all participants in the process in making their decision. Used with sensitivity, they ought also to provide valuable assistance to the faculty member in evaluating his or her own teaching.
Example of letter to student or graduate

June 2019

Dear Carleton {Student or Graduate}:

Professor ________ in the Department of ________ is a candidate for tenure at the College, and I write to ask you to fill out a questionnaire evaluating {his or her} teaching. You have been chosen to participate in this review by a process described in the accompanying excerpt from the Faculty Handbook.

**Student evaluations are a very important part of the tenure review process.** Along with the appraisal of a candidate's scholarship by our own faculty and outside scholarly reviewers and the observation of a candidate's classroom teaching by faculty colleagues in {his or her} own department, student letters provide primary evidence upon which the tenure decision is made. If tenured, this faculty member becomes a permanent member of the Carleton faculty, barring extraordinary misconduct or incapacity, until retirement.

In answering the questions, please consider the full range of contexts in which you knew this faculty member. Please comment on how this instructor helped you develop various skills (writing, speaking, lab skills, etc.), as well as content knowledge. You may complete your questionnaire online at http://go.carleton.edu/83f.

Under the guidelines adopted by the faculty and the Board of Trustees, **student evaluations will be read by the candidate under review after your name and address have been removed**. They are then made available to the tenured members of the candidate's department and to the members of the Faculty Personnel Committee, a faculty group that deliberates with the President and the Dean of the College, to assist them in making their recommendations. Only the Dean and President see your name attached to your response.

The thoroughness of our tenure reviews is vitally important to the future health of the College and the effectiveness of the teaching that goes on here. For this reason, we depend upon you to respond fully and candidly to the questions that follow. Because different students find different faculty or teaching techniques to be effective, we value every opinion. Please rely for your answers on your own experience of the faculty member and not on hearsay from other students. **We need your response to ensure as fair and accurate a judgment as possible.** To be certain that it will be included in our evaluation procedure, we must receive your response by **August 12**. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact Becky Krogh, Academic Project Specialist at 507-222-4311 or bkrogh@carleton.edu. Let me thank you in advance on behalf of the College and Professor for taking the time to respond thoughtfully to this request.

Sincerely,

Beverly Nagel

BN/bjk
Example of evaluation questionnaire

STUDENT EVALUATION QUESTIONNAIRE FOR TENURE REVIEW

- Please type this form or answer the same questions on a word-processor if possible; do not use pencil on the form. Typewritten responses greatly assist our review process. Please sign the form.

Evaluation of ____________________________________________
(Faculty Member’s Name)

1. Which courses and/or labs did you have with this faculty member? What other interactions did you have, e.g. as advisor, comps advisor, or work supervisor? Please complete the following:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course No.</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Academic Year</th>
<th>Term(s)</th>
<th>Are/were you a major in this person's department?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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</tbody>
</table>

2. How many years have you completed at Carleton? _________
   CHECK ONE MALE [ ]   FEMALE [ ]   SELF-DESIGNATION [ ]

3. List briefly the criteria you consider in judging the effectiveness of a faculty member at Carleton. What qualities are most helpful to your learning?

4. Measured by these criteria, what are this faculty member’s strengths? How and how well did this faculty member help you to learn? (Continue on back or separate sheet of paper if need be.)
5. Does this faculty member have weaknesses that affected your learning? If so, how?

6. Are there aspects of this faculty member’s scholarly or creative work, or breadth of intellectual interest, that enhance their teaching effectiveness?

7. Name, if you will, several of the most effective faculty you have had at Carleton (including this faculty member, if appropriate).

8. Keeping in mind all the faculty you have had at Carleton, please check the phrase below that most closely reflects your rating of this faculty member:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>among the least effective</th>
<th>considerably less effective than average</th>
<th>less effective than average</th>
<th>of average effectiveness among Carleton faculty</th>
<th>more effective than average</th>
<th>considerably more effective than average</th>
<th>among the most effective</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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</table>

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INFORMATION BELOW MUST BE INCLUDED IN ORDER FOR THIS QUESTIONNAIRE TO BE CONSIDERED IN THE REVIEW. IT WILL BE DELETED WHEN VIEWED BY FACULTY MEMBERS.

Name: 

Address: 

City, State, Zip: 

Signature: 

If you have any questions please contact Becky Krogh, Academic Projects Specialist, at 507-222-4311 or bkrogh@carleton.edu.

T-7/19
Sampling Procedures for Faculty Reviews

Which students are eligible for selection?

To be eligible for the population of students from which a sample will be drawn, whose evaluations are then requested as part of a faculty member’s review, a student must:

- be a Carleton graduate or a currently-enrolled degree-seeking Carleton undergraduate,
- have taken at least one course taught by the faculty member who is being evaluated, and
- have received a “valid grade” in the course as recorded on the student’s transcript as of the date the sample is drawn. Grades that are not valid include DRP (drop), CI (continuing integrative exercise), L (non-credit labs), and N (PE activity course not completed).

Separate samples are drawn from the two populations of students: graduates and enrolled undergraduates. To be eligible, graduates must have formally completed all requirements for graduation and received a Carleton degree. Eligible undergraduates must be enrolled full-time, attending an approved off-campus study program, fulfilling a required leave, or on a waiver of senior residency (an early graduate). To be eligible to be polled, students must meet all of the criteria as of the point in time in which the sample is drawn. Students who have withdrawn, are currently taking a personal leave, or who have completed 12 terms but left without graduating are not eligible for sampling.

From the population of current undergraduates, 66 students will be selected; past experience has shown that about 45 percent of this group will complete and return the evaluation form. This sample will produce responses from approximately 30 students. In order to achieve this same number of replies from graduates, 85 students will be selected. Historically, the average response for this group has been about 35 percent.

How is the sample obtained?

Several careful constraints are placed on each of the two samples (graduates and undergraduates). First: each sample will be composed of more than one-half, and less than two-thirds, students who were (or are) majors in the faculty member’s department, so long as the total population of eligible students has a sufficient number of majors to enable this. If not, all eligible students who were/are majors in the faculty member’s department will be selected. Second: within the constraint regarding majors, students are selected proportionately from the cells (or categories) of a 2 x 2 x 6 matrix. The variables for this matrix are the student’s gender, his/her major status (i.e., major or non-major in the faculty member’s department), and grade received (six valid grades: A, B, C, D, F, and Other [S, Cr, NC]). In other words, all students in the population eligible for sampling are distributed among these 24 cells. The number of students to be selected from each cell is determined by the number of students in that cell as a proportion of the total eligible population. However, as noted, these numbers are modified as necessary in order to meet the requirement that the sample consist of more than one-half and less than two-thirds majors. Other than the constraint that the sample as a whole has the imposed policy bias toward majors, selection within each of the cells is entirely random.
Of course, the circumstances of a given faculty member do not always fit perfectly into this set of procedures. Some teach in departments that have very few majors, while others may have taught relatively small numbers of students in one, or both, of the populations (i.e., graduates and/or current undergraduates). As noted, strict adherence to these rules is not possible if the number of majors available in the population is not high enough. In these cases, the target number for the total sample size remains as indicated earlier, but with all eligible majors being selected, and the remainder of the sample necessarily being composed of non-majors. In these cases, the proportion of majors in the sample will be less than one-half. Further, in cases where the total number of eligible students in either population is less than the desired sample size for that population, all eligible students will be selected, and the sample will be identical to the eligible population.

**How do we begin?**

The Office of Institutional Research and Assessment will send you a list of all courses you have taught during the years appropriate for the review. The list will reflect each of the courses you have taught during this period according to the College’s computerized transcript system. We then ask that each faculty member verify this list of courses against his/her own list of courses as being both complete and accurate. Occasionally, the official records are incomplete or inaccurate for courses taught cooperatively by two or more faculty, due to switching of course sections without having notified the Registrar of such change(s), the listing of instructors as “Staff,” assumption or dropping of responsibility for a course due to illness or other emergency, or for independent studies when they are handled administratively by a department chair. Confirmation, or emendation, of this list is all that is required to get the selection process underway. This should be done promptly so that the sampling and other work can continue and the necessary deadlines can be met.
Student Names Submitted for Sampling by the Tenure Review Candidate

Review candidates will be asked to submit a list of up to 30 students who they would like to have us contact for an evaluation of their teaching. Once the set of courses taught is confirmed, review candidates will be sent their class rosters to aid in composing their personal list of students. These class rosters will be based on data contained in the College’s computerized student records system. These students must meet the same eligibility criteria as those randomly sampled by Institutional Research and Assessment as part of the review – e.g., enrolled or graduated, taken a course from the review candidate during the time period covered by the review, and received a valid grade. This list should contain approximately equal numbers of undergraduates and graduates. Evaluation forms will be sent to these students. Overlap between the personal list and the one selected randomly will almost always exist, but the only effect of this outcome is to create a joint category of evaluation responses. Occasionally, students not registered in any of the courses may be on the personal list with the approval of the Dean.
Q. Which terms are included in the reviews? When are the students polled?

A. For the third-year review, students are drawn from all courses taught by the faculty member since his or her arrival at Carleton. Students taught through spring term of the review year are included; the evaluations will be sent out during the following winter break. (The intervening fall term will be included at the time of tenure review.)

To be eligible for sampling at the time of tenure review, students must have taken a course from the faculty member since the third-year review, beginning with courses taught during the fall term of the third-year review. This tenure review sampling also includes students taught through spring term of the tenure review year; the evaluations are sent out during the summer break.

Students are polled during the summer for PEAR reviews. Schedules for special reviews are determined individually.

For samples drawn during the summer, seniors receiving their degrees in June are included in the graduate population, and undergraduates are included or excluded based on their enrollment status at the end of spring term.

It is conceivable that the same student could be drawn for more than one review for a given faculty member provided that the student took at least one course in each of the time periods.

Q. How does the program select a distribution of majors/non-majors, males/females, and grades?

A. There are three main groups of records in this process:

1. class roster records
   - the first and largest group, with one record for each course a student has taken

2. the pool of students eligible to be sampled
   - the intermediate group, with one record for each student

3. the sampled pool of students who will be surveyed
   - the final and smallest group, to receive evaluation forms

The program begins with class roster information, which is likely to contain more than one record for some students. The program determines whether the student is eligible to be surveyed (graduated, currently enrolled, on an off-campus program, or on a required leave). If the student is eligible, the program randomly selects one student/course/grade record for each student.

For example, Michael Smith has taken the following three courses from the faculty member under review: Mathematics 111 in Fall 2011, with a grade of A
Mathematics 121 in Winter 2012, with a grade of B
Mathematics 211 in Fall 2012, with a grade of C

One of these three records is selected at random to be included in the pool of students eligible to be surveyed. The grade for that record is carried forward in the process. (Of course, the student may or may not receive an evaluation form – they may or may not be included in the final sampled group.)
Within the pool of students eligible to be surveyed (containing one record per student), the program now assigns the students to 48 groups based on graduate or undergraduate status, major or non-major, male or female, and grade. The program calculates the number of records in each group for the eligible student pool.

Groups of students eligible to be surveyed (24 groups for undergrads and 24 groups for grads):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>A</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>C</th>
<th>D</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>Other</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Undergrad</td>
<td>Major</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Female</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-major</td>
<td>Male</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Female</td>
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<td>Grad</td>
<td>Major</td>
<td>Male</td>
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<td>Female</td>
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<tr>
<td>Non-major</td>
<td>Male</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Female</td>
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</table>

Next, the program determines a target number of majors based on the desired survey pool size (to meet the goal of including more than one-half and less than two-thirds majors in the survey pool). For the usual undergraduate survey pool of 66 students, the target is 39 majors. For the usual graduate survey pool of 85 students, the target is 50 majors.

If the pool of eligible students contains more than 39 undergraduate majors, the program then works to select the correct number of majors to be surveyed, matching the pre-calculated distribution among the major groups as closely as possible. If the pool of eligible students contains fewer than 39 undergraduate majors, all undergraduate majors are surveyed. The program then completes the survey pool of students with non-majors, again matching the distribution as closely as possible to the pool of eligible students. The process is repeated for graduates.

In summary,

**Number of classes taken:** the number of classes a student has taken from you does not improve or weaken the student’s chance of being surveyed for your review. If the student has taken more than one class with you, the course (with the corresponding grade) to be included in the distribution grid is selected randomly.

**Being a major:** if a student is a major, the chances of being surveyed are improved, unless your classes are made up primarily of majors. If the students you have taught are fairly equally distributed between majors and non-majors, a major in your classes is more likely to be surveyed, up to the target number of majors.

**To be certain that a student will be surveyed:** include the student in your personal list. If that student meets the status criteria, and can be reached via e-mail or paper mail, the student will receive an evaluation.

January 29, 2020