Introduction

As expressed in the Senate Policy on End-of-Course Evaluations, "McGill University values quality in the courses it offers its students. End-of-course evaluations provide valuable student feedback and are one of the ways that McGill works towards maintaining and improving the quality of courses and the student's learning experience. Student involvement in this process is critical to enhance the general quality of teaching and learning" (Item 1.1).

The following four core questions are included on all course evaluation questionnaires:

A. COURSE QUESTIONS	B. INSTRUCTOR QUESTIONS
Q1. Overall, this is an excellent course.	Q3. Overall, this instructor is an excellent teacher.
Q2. Overall, I learned a great deal from this course.	Q4. Overall, I learned a great deal from this instructor.

In addition to these four questions, each academic unit includes up to 18 questions. Instructors may also include up to 3 questions.

This document offers information to academic units and instructors on questionnaire development, with separate instructions for each type of user.

Instructions for academic units

Each academic unit may include up to 18 questions. Note that if your Faculty has required questions, they count toward the 18.
1. Review your unit's current questionnaire at www.mcgill.ca/mercury/about/questionnaires.
2. Consult the following sections of this document when creating your unit's default questionnaire:
    a. A bank of recommended questions, organized by category, which facilitates creating questionnaires that address the priorities of each academic unit;
    b. Sample Teaching Assistant questions;
    c. Guidelines for writing meaningful questions in case you do not find questions in the bank that suit your unit's context.

Instructions for instructors

Instructors may add up to 3 questions to their course evaluation questionnaire(s).
1. Review your unit's current questionnaire at www.mcgill.ca/mercury/about/questionnaires.
2. Consult the following sections of this document when deciding which question(s) to add:
    a. Reasons why instructors add questions and examples of instructor-added questions;
    b. A bank of recommended questions, organized by category, which instructors are encouraged to draw from when adding questions; and
    c. Guidelines for writing meaningful questions in case you do not find questions in the bank that suit your course context.

A. Examples of instructor-added questions

Adding questions allows instructors to tailor the course evaluation questionnaire to their course context. Instructors can add up to 3 questions, either selected from the bank of recommended questions or written by themselves. Consult the guidelines for writing meaningful questions for assistance.

Below are five reasons for which instructors may wish to add questions, with examples provided for illustration.

1. Seek feedback about new teaching strategies.

Scenario: You used different strategies in your class such as think-pair-share discussions and one minute papers.

Example question: The activities in class (e.g., talking with a partner, writing reflections at the end of class) helped me learn.* ("Strongly agree" to "Strongly disagree")

2. Seek feedback about new teaching environments.

Scenario: You taught in a classroom with active learning features.

Example question: Overall, the instructor's use of the classroom features had a positive impact on my learning. ("Strongly agree" to "Strongly disagree")

3. Seek feedback about new technologies.

Scenario: You used the Polling @ McGill technology for the first time.

Example question: Using Polling @ McGill in class helped me learn.* ("Strongly agree" to "Strongly disagree")

4. Seek feedback about changes made in response to previous course evaluation feedback.

Scenario: In previous offerings of the course, students were asked to purchase a physical course pack. Previous course evaluation feedback indicated that students did not like having to purchase a physical course pack. Starting this semester, you posted the readings on myCourses.

Example question: I would prefer buying a physical course pack to accessing readings online through myCourses.* ("Strongly agree" to "Strongly disagree")

5. Seek feedback about something that is not addressed in your unit's default questionnaire.

Scenario: You invited a librarian to give a workshop in your course on research skills. Your unit's questionnaire does not include any questions from the "Institutional Resources and Support" category.

Example question: Library staff were helpful to me in conducting my research for this course (e.g., in class, in the library, via email or online chat). (N/A recommended)

*In recognition that adding questions allows instructors to include questions that are unique to an individual course context, this question is not taken from the bank of recommended questions.

Instructors: Proceed to the bank of recommended questions.

B. Bank of recommended questions

This bank contains questions that address aspects of the course and instructors' teaching that have an impact on student learning. The feedback from these questions should provide useful information for improvement.

The questions are sorted according to 12 categories. Within each category, questions are identified as course-related questions (**A**), instructor-related questions (**B**), classroom questions (**C**), and general questions (**D**). When there are multiple instructors, the instructor-related questions (**B**) are asked for each instructor while the course-related questions (**A**) are asked only once.

- Most questions are answered on a 1-5 scale where 1 = Strongly disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Neutral, 4 = Agree, 5 = Strongly agree. Where appropriate, custom answer options can be used.
- A "Not Applicable" (N/A) option should be included where appropriate (e.g., the question does not apply to all students responding to the questionnaire).
- Comment boxes may be included for any question. Please see the policy for more information about requirements for comment boxes.

Category	Questions
1. **Expectations**	**A. COURSE QUESTIONS** 1.A.1. The course objectives were clearly articulated. 1.A.2. Learning expectations were clearly communicated. 1.A.3. Grading expectations for assessments (e.g., projects, papers, tests) were made clear. 1.A.4. The prerequisites adequately prepared me for this course. 1.A.5. The co-requisites for this course were appropriate. 1.A.6. Expectations for assignments were clear. 1.A.7. Expectations for assignments were provided well in advance of the assignment due date. 1.A.8. The course description in Minerva was accurate. 1.A.9. Changes to the course schedule were announced in a timely fashion.
	B. INSTRUCTOR QUESTIONS 1.B.1. The instructor told us what we could expect to learn as a result of taking this course. 1.B.2. The instructor had reasonable learning expectations. 1.B.3. The instructor's feedback on assessments (e.g., projects, papers, tests) provided guidance on how to improve my performance in the course. 1.B.4. The instructor expressed interest in seeing students in the class succeed.

2. Course Content	**A. COURSE QUESTIONS**
	2.A.1. The course content matched the course objectives.
	2.A.2. There was close agreement between the stated course objectives and what was actually addressed.
	2.A.3. The material addressed is relevant for my future.
	B. INSTRUCTOR QUESTIONS
	2.B.1. As the course progressed, the instructor showed how each topic fit into the course as a whole.
	2.B.2. The instructor identified key pieces of information in the course.
	2.B.3. The instructor incorporated current developments in the field.
	2.B.4. The instructor incorporated current events in the course content.
3. Teaching Strategies	**A. COURSE QUESTIONS**
	3.A.1. The assignments were engaging.
	3.A.2. The assignments were helpful for my learning.
	3.A.3. I had the opportunity to share my ideas and knowledge.
	3.A.4. The course materials (e.g., readings, lecture notes, in-class exercises) contributed to learning the subject matter.
	3.A.5. The use of teaching technology (e.g., myCourses, videos, Polling @ McGill) was effective. (N/A recommended if included on unit questionnaire)
	3.A.6. The learning activities were integrated effectively into the course.
	3.A.7. Teaching Assistant (TA) support was essential to this course. (N/A recommended if included on unit questionnaire)
	3.A.8. Activities outside of class (e.g., myCourses discussions, homework) complemented in-class activities.
	3.A.9. Lecture recordings helped my learning. (N/A recommended if included on unit questionnaire)
	3.A.10. The course materials were easy to access.
	3.A.11. Having co-instructors teach this course supported my learning.
	3.A.12. This co-taught course was well coordinated among the multiple instructors.
	B. INSTRUCTOR QUESTIONS
	3.B.1. The instructor encouraged students to participate actively.
	3.B.2. The instructor's teaching strategies helped me learn.
	3.B.3. The instructor made the objectives of each class session clear.
	3.B.4. The instructor incorporated engaging activities.
	3.B.5. The instructor's use of teaching technology (e.g., myCourses, videos, Polling @ McGill) was effective. (N/A recommended if included on unit questionnaire)
	3.B.6. Considering the size of the class, the instructor provided adequate opportunities for questions during class time.
	3.B.7. Considering the size of the class, the instructor provided adequate opportunities for discussion during class time.
	3.B.8. The instructor's teaching methods were effective.

4. Evaluation and Feedback	**A. COURSE QUESTIONS**
	4.A.1. The evaluation methods used in this course were fair.
	4.A.2. Feedback on course assignments contributed to my learning.
	4.A.3. I received meaningful feedback on tests and other work.
	4.A.4. Considering the size of the class, feedback was provided promptly.
	4.A.5. The instructional materials (e.g., readings, notes) were helpful for completing assignments.
	4.A.6. The feedback I received helped me understand my grades.
	B. INSTRUCTOR QUESTIONS
	4.B.1. The instructor provided useful feedback on my progress in the course.
	4.B.2. The instructor provided useful feedback on my work.
	4.B.3. The instructor used different forms of evaluation methods.
5. Interest	**A. COURSE QUESTIONS**
	5.A.1. In this course, I felt motivated to learn.
	5.A.2. As a result of this course, I have a greater appreciation for this field of study.
	5.A.3. This course made an important contribution to my program of study.
	5.A.4. Attending class was a valuable use of my time.
	B. INSTRUCTOR QUESTIONS
	5.B.1. The instructor stimulated my interest in the course.
	5.B.2. The instructor's use of examples increased my interest.
	D. GENERAL QUESTIONS
	5.D.1. Approximately how often have you attended the classes in this course? [0-20%, 21-40%, 41-60%, 61-80%, 81-100%]
	5.D.2. Approximately how many hours per week did you devote to this course? [0 - 6, 7 - 9, 10 - 12, 13 - 15, 16 or more]
6. Difficulty	**A. COURSE QUESTIONS**
	6.A.1. In general, the level of difficulty in this course was appropriate.
	6.A.2. Course topics were dealt with in sufficient depth.
	6.A.3. Considering the number of credits assigned to the course, the workload was appropriate.
	B. INSTRUCTOR QUESTIONS
	6.B.1. The instructor explained difficult material clearly.
	6.B.2. The instructor was able to simplify difficult materials.

7. General Learning Outcomes	**A. COURSE QUESTIONS** 7.A.1. As a result of this course, I have improved my speaking skills. 7.A.2. As a result of this course, I have improved my writing skills. 7.A.3. As a result of this course, I have improved my laboratory skills. (N/A recommended if included on unit questionnaire) 7.A.4. As a result of this course, I have learned to critically evaluate scientific papers. 7.A.5. After completing this course, I feel prepared for future courses in this program. 7.A.6. This course encouraged me to be creative.
8. Learning Environment	**A. COURSE QUESTIONS** 8.A.1. The atmosphere in this course was excellent for learning. 8.A.2. The course respected diverse ways of learning. 8.A.3. There was a collaborative atmosphere in this course.
	B. INSTRUCTOR QUESTIONS 8.B.1. The instructor demonstrated respect for individual differences (e.g., disabilities, gender, race, religion, sexual orientation). 8.B.2. The instructor related to students in ways that promoted mutual respect. 8.B.3. The instructor promoted an atmosphere conducive to learning.
9. Diversity, Inclusion and Accessibility	**A. COURSE QUESTIONS** 9.A.1. The course content included diverse perspectives. 9.A.2. I felt comfortable sharing my ideas and knowledge. 9.A.3. The course readings (e.g., PDFs, e-texts) were offered in an accessible format. (N/A recommended) 9.A.4. The instructional materials (e.g., visuals) were presented in an accessible format. (N/A recommended) 9.A.5. The course assessments were offered in an accessible format. (N/A recommended)
	B. INSTRUCTOR QUESTIONS 9.B.1. The instructor demonstrated respect for individual differences (e.g., disabilities, gender, race, religion, sexual orientation). 9.B.2. The instructor made adjustments to address students' personal circumstances (e.g., family care obligations, financial circumstances, illness). (N/A recommended) 9.B.3. The instructor made adjustments to fit individual abilities. (N/A recommended) 9.B.4. The instructor related to students in ways that promoted mutual respect. 9.B.5. The instructor was available to help students outside of class time, whether in person, by email, or via online meeting.

10. Interaction with Faculty Members	**B. INSTRUCTOR QUESTIONS** 10.B.1. The instructor was helpful to students seeking advice. (N/A recommended) 10.B.2. The instructor was available outside of class (whether in person, by email, in online formats) for feedback and clarification. 10.B.3. Considering the size of the class, the instructor was available for individual consultation. (N/A recommended)
11. Institutional Resources and Support	**C. CLASSROOM QUESTIONS** 11.C.1. I liked this classroom for this course. 11.C.2. This classroom facilitated interaction between students and the instructor. 11.C.3. This classroom facilitated interaction among students. 11.C.4. Overall, the instructor's use of the classroom features had a positive impact on my learning. 11.C.5. What is your favourite thing about this classroom? 11.C.6. If you could change one thing about this classroom, what would you change and why? 11.C.7. The lab/classroom was physically accessible. 11.C.8. The physical facilities (e.g., classroom, furnishings) were appropriate.
	D. GENERAL QUESTIONS 11.D.1. Library staff were helpful to me in conducting my research for this course (e.g., in class, in the library, via email or online chat). (N/A recommended) 11.D.2. Library resources were helpful for completing my work for this course. (N/A recommended) 11.D.3. Registering for this course was a smooth process. 11.D.4. I received accurate information about the course from the department.
12. Recognition	**B. INSTRUCTOR QUESTIONS** 12.B.1. This instructor deserves a teaching award. In your comments, explain why. 12.B.2. This instructor should be recognized for their excellent teaching. In your comments, explain why.

Academic units: Proceed to the sample Teaching Assistant questions.

Instructors: Proceed to guidelines for writing meaningful questions.

C. Teaching Assistant Questions

If the course has Teaching Assistants, the following core questions are required:

TA.1.   Overall, this Teaching Assistant is an excellent teacher. TA.2.   Overall, I learned a great deal from this Teaching Assistant.

Up to 1 additional question related to Teaching Assistants may be included. Sample questions for Teaching Assistants are listed below.

TA.1.   Overall, the Teaching Assistant provided valuable help during the lab/course. TA.2.   The support available from the Teaching Assistant (e.g., responses to questions in person or via e-mail) was useful to my learning. TA.3.   Conferences helped me better understand the course content. TA.4.   Tutorials helped me better understand the course content. TA.5.   Teaching Assistant office hours contributed to my learning. (N/A recommended) TA.6.   The Teaching Assistant was effective in fulfilling their role. TA.7.   This Teaching Assistant deserves a teaching award. In your comments, explain why. TA.8.   This Teaching Assistant should be recognized for their excellent teaching. In your comments, explain why.

Academic units: Proceed to the guidelines for writing meaningful questions.

D. Guidelines for writing meaningful questions

Please read the guidelines below for writing course evaluation questions. Example questions are provided to illustrate the guidelines. Teaching and Learning Services encourages you to contact us for feedback on your questions once you have followed the guidelines.

General

- Most questions are answered on a 1-5 scale where 1 = Strongly disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Neutral, 4 = Agree, 5 = Strongly agree. Where appropriate, custom answer options can be used.
- A "Not Applicable" (N/A) option should be included where appropriate (e.g., the question does not apply to all students responding to the questionnaire).
- Comment boxes may be included for any question. Please see the policy for more information about requirements for comment boxes.
- Use gender-neutral language (e.g., "their" instead of "his/her" when referring to an individual).

Specific

1.   Ask for feedback on only one aspect of your course or teaching per question.
Instead of: "The activities in class and the video assignment helped me learn." ("Strongly agree" to "Strongly disagree") …
Ask two questions:
- "The activities in class helped me learn."* ("Strongly agree" to "Strongly disagree")
- "The video assignment helped me learn."* ("Strongly agree" to "Strongly disagree")

2.   Ask about student learning rather than enjoyment.
Instead of: "I enjoyed the video assignment." ("Strongly agree" to "Strongly disagree") …
Ask: "The video assignment helped me learn."* ("Strongly agree" to "Strongly disagree")

3.   Match the answer options to the question type.
Instead of: "Did the video assignment help you learn?" ("Strongly agree" to "Strongly disagree") …
Ask: "The video assignment helped me learn."* ("Strongly agree" to "Strongly disagree")

4.   Use language that your students will understand.
Instead of: "The activities in class (e.g., think-pair-share, one minute papers) helped me learn." ("Strongly agree" to "Strongly disagree") …
Ask: "The activities in class (e.g., talking with a partner, writing reflections at the end of class) helped me learn." ("Strongly agree" to "Strongly disagree")*

5.   Phrase statements in the positive.
Instead of: "I did not find the peer review exercise helpful." ("Strongly agree" to "Strongly disagree") …
Ask: "I found the peer review exercise helpful."* ("Strongly agree" to "Strongly disagree")

6.   Be precise about the terms used in your question.

Instead of: "I attended class on a regular basis." ("Strongly agree" to "Strongly disagree") …

Ask: "Approximately how often have you attended the classes in this course?" (0-20%, 21-40%, 41-60%, 61-80%, 81-100%)

7.   Do not ask questions that may compromise student anonymity.

Do not ask questions such as: "What grade did you receive on the midterm?" (A range, B range, C range, D range, F)

8.   Ask questions that your students are well-placed to answer.

Instead of…: "The instructor has up-to-date knowledge of the subject matter." ("Strongly agree" to "Strongly disagree")

Ask: "The instructor incorporated current events in the course content." ("Strongly agree" to "Strongly disagree")

9.   Be specific about the feedback you want so that you can act on it.

Instead of: "What did you think about the course?" (comments only) …

Ask specific questions such as:
- "Identify one thing the instructor should start doing to facilitate your learning."* (comments only)
- "Identify one thing the instructor should continue doing to facilitate your learning."* (comments only)
- "Identify one thing the instructor does that negatively affects your learning and should therefore stop doing."* (comments only)

10.   Refer to students in the first person to make the questions more meaningful.

Instead of: "Students had the opportunity to share their ideas and knowledge." ("Strongly agree" to "Strongly disagree") …

Ask: "I had the opportunity to share my ideas and knowledge." ("Strongly agree" to "Strongly disagree")

*In recognition that individual instructors and academic units can write their own questions, this question is not taken from the bank of recommended questions.

References

Kember, D., & Ginns, P. (2012). *Evaluating teaching and learning: A practical handbook for colleges, universities and the scholarship of teaching*. London: Routledge.

Rando, W. L. (2001). Writing teaching assessment questions for precision and reflection. *New Directions for Teaching and Learning*, *87*, 77-83. doi: 10.1002/tl.30