

Course Evaluations and Mercury Annual Report 2011-2012

Course Evaluation Advisory Group (CEAG)

- Chair: Laura Winer, Associate Director, TLS;
- Instructors: Robert Bracewell, Faculty of Education; James Brawer, Faculty of Medicine & Alfred Jaeger, Desautels Faculty of Management;
- Academic unit heads: Kevin Wade, Chair, Dept. of Animal Science, FAES; Bruce Lennox, Chair, Dept. of Chemistry, Faculty of Science;
- Academic Administrator: Andre Costopoulos, Associate Academic Dean, Faculty of Arts;
- Student representative: Haley Dinell, Senator, Faculty of Religious Studies;
- Departmental liaison staff members: Nancy Czermel, Faculty of Law; Amber Saunders, Faculty of Engineering;
- Resource members: Evelina Balut, ISR Portfolio Manager; Tommy Chan, Programmer, ISR; Pierre-Andre Vungoc, Learning Technology Consultant, TLS.

The CEAG worked with TLS to:

- develop strategies and instruments to increase student participation;
- publish the Interpreting End-of-Course Evaluation Results and the Course Evaluations: Information for Students documents;
- increase the number of instructors participating in the dissemination of results;
- present a session at the 2012 Society for Teaching and Learning in Higher Education (STLHE) Conference;
- advise on other TLS activities related to Mercury and the course evaluation system in general.

2011-2012 Goals and Results

- I. Continue to increase student participation;
 - i. In 2011-2012, there was a 2% increase in the overall response rate for the fall term and a 3% increase in the winter term when compared to 2010-2011.
 - ii. Met each term with leaders of student associations to encourage participation and obtain feedback on course evaluation issues.

- II. Increase the number of instructors giving permission to disseminate results: In 2011-2012, 254 instructors (of the 515 who accessed the permission form) gave permission for their results to be made available to the McGill community. To date, 1,639 instructors have given permission while 672 have refused. The remaining instructors have not accessed the form.

- III. Support academic unit heads, instructors and tenure committees in the interpretation of results:
 - i. Presentations to Medical Education Centre, 05/05/2011; School of Architecture – Department Meeting, 11/05/2011; Faculty of Arts – Committee on Student Affairs, 05/10/2011; the School of Continuing Studies, 13/06/2012.
 - ii. Presentation on interpreting course evaluation results to Chairs and Directors at the Academic Leadership Forum, 23/04/2012.

- IV. Implement the new course evaluation policy approved by Senate, including the mandatory TA evaluations and the extended dates option for the University;
 - i. Starting Summer 2012, all teaching assistants will be evaluated. They also now have individual access online to their results.
 - ii. All academic units now have the option to extend their evaluation period until the end of the examination period. There are currently 16 units (out of 86) who have chosen this option.

- V. Develop and disseminate guidelines for instructors and academic administrators for interpretation of results: *Interpreting End-of-Course Evaluation Results* and the *Course Evaluations: Information for Students* documents were published (<http://www.mcgill.ca/tls/teaching/course-evaluations/interpretation>)

- VI. Disseminate the various analyses on course evaluation data at the University.
 - i. These were included in the *Interpreting End-of-Course Evaluation Results* document.
 - ii. Presentation to the Society for Teaching and Learning in Higher Education, 21/06/2012.

System Updates

In 2011-2012, the following system enhancements were implemented:

- I. The questionnaire used for each course (e.g., lab/lecture, undergraduate/graduate) is clearly identified for departmental means in text reports and graph reports;
- II. Teaching assistants (TAs) are able to log in Mercury and retrieve their own course evaluation results;
- III. Student opt-outs are included in the response rates;
- IV. Mercury liaisons are able to identify on their departmental summary page what questionnaire is attached to each course and if there are any TA(s) assigned to these courses.
- V. The three public evaluation results search forms have been combined into one form to simplify the searching process for students.

Participation data

	Fall 2011	Winter 2012
Students involved	31,464	29,663
Courses evaluated	2,457	2,560
Instructors involved	1,953	2,028
Overall response rate	52%	49%

2012-2013 Goals

- I. Continue to increase student participation;
- II. Increase the number of instructors giving permission to disseminate results;
- III. Support academic unit heads, instructors and tenure committees in the interpretation of results;
- IV. Prepare a report on the trends in response rate data over the past five-years.
- V. Investigate the factors that influence students' decisions to participate in the course evaluation system and which courses they evaluate.
- VI. Review all questionnaires and suggest revisions where appropriate.

For additional information, please consult the full report available at:

<http://www.mcgill.ca/tls/teaching/course-evaluations/reports>