



Instructor Toolkit

Student Evaluation of Educational Quality (SEEQ) Online Course Evaluations

What is a course evaluation?

A course evaluation is any survey that solicits students' feedback on various aspects of the course they have taken including the instructor teaching the course.

What is SEEQ?

SEEQ is a standardized course evaluation tool, widely-used and empirically supported. Using SEEQ, students provide feedback on teaching quality and course effectiveness, and faculty gain insight into their instructional methods and practices, providing them with guidance for improvement.

SEEQ is also the only instrument approved for use by University Council and the instrument that academic units are encouraged to adopt as their course evaluation tool.

How are course evaluations used?

Evaluations allow instructors to understand their strengths and weaknesses and enhance their teaching and courses accordingly. The feedback can also be used by administrators, along with other input, to complement summative decisions (e.g. decisions about promotion, tenure, salary increases, etc.) and make formative recommendations (e.g. identify areas where a faculty member needs to improve).

Roles and Responsibilities for the Administration of SEEQ

System administrator: The system administrator, housed in the office of the vice-provost teaching and learning, is the central administrator for the online SEEQ system. The primary duties of the system administrator are managing department access to SEEQ online course evaluation, setting up the start and end dates of each term's SEEQ administration period, responding to questions and providing assistance to department administrators and heads, instructors and students.

Department administrator: The department administrator is responsible for creating SEEQ course evaluations and monitoring the process (e.g. response rates) while the evaluations are in progress. They are also responsible for granting access and releasing the results of SEEQ evaluations to instructors, deans and department heads. Department administrators must consult with their dean or department head to ensure that final grades have been submitted before the results can be released to instructors.

Dean or department head: Deans and department heads are responsible for approving the use of SEEQ within their units, often in collaboration with faculty. Deans and department heads are able to access



results before they are distributed to instructors and are responsible for authorizing the department administrator to release the results to instructors once final grades have been submitted.

Instructor: Instructors in participating colleges/departments may use SEEQ as their course evaluation tool to ask for student feedback on their courses and teaching. Use of course evaluations, including SEEQ, is either voluntary or recommended by deans/department heads. Instructors will be able to see results once final grades have been submitted and they have been granted access from the department administrator.

Student: All students registered in university courses using SEEQ for evaluation purposes will be asked to fill out a SEEQ evaluation. Students will receive an email with a link directing them to the evaluation(s). They will also receive reminder messages for evaluations that have not yet been completed. Students who complete their evaluation(s) will be eligible to win one of several prizes through a random draw after the evaluation period closes.

SEEQ process for instructors

STEP 1: SEEQ EVALUATION PERIOD

- Department administrators are responsible for creating all SEEQ evaluations for the college or department. Once the SEEQ evaluation for a course has been created, the SEEQ system will automatically send an email to all instructors one week prior to the start of the evaluation period informing them of the upcoming evaluation. Students in that course will also receive an email in their PAWS account inviting them to complete the SEEQ evaluation(s). Up to three reminders will be sent to students who have yet to complete the SEEQ evaluation. Once a student has submitted an evaluation, it cannot be deleted.
- SEEQ course evaluations are typically open during the last two weeks of classes and close before the exam period begins. However, under special circumstances the evaluation period can be altered beyond the default dates. If you require different start and end dates, please contact the system administrator at seeqhelp@usask.ca.
- While SEEQ is in-field, instructors can monitor response rates in the system (see SEEQ Training Manual for details). In order to achieve higher response rates, instructors should continually keep track of their response rates and encourage students to complete their evaluation. See below for tips on how to encourage student participation.





STEP 2: VIEWING RESULTS

- After the course evaluations close and final marks for the class have been submitted, the SEEQ results and student comments will be released to the instructor by the department administrator as authorized by the department head. Once the department administrator releases the results, the system will send an automatic email to the instructor's PAWs account informing them that their results are available for review (see SEEQ Training Manual for details on viewing results; available here: <http://www.usask.ca/vpteaching/seeq/conducting-seeq.php>). If you have submitted your final marks and have not had your SEEQ results released yet, please contact your department administrator.
- You may not receive all of your results. In the event that you do not receive the results of an evaluation please contact your department administrator to enquire. One reason may be that the number of respondents fell below the threshold for reliable data. Results for evaluations with fewer than five responses are not released. This is because average scores based on so few responses are potentially unreliable. There is also the potential that so few responses will eliminate the confidentiality students expect from online evaluations.

Tips for encouraging student participation

Instructor enthusiasm towards course evaluations is a proven technique for encouraging students to complete course evaluations and increasing overall response rates. Below are some tips for instructors:

- Make an in-class announcement informing students of the start and end dates for their online course evaluations. Make this announcement as close to the start date as possible. (see below for a sample in-class announcement)
- Inform students to watch their PAWS email for notice of their course evaluations and to advise seeqhelp@usask.ca if they have not received an email.
- Monitor response rates at <https://evaluation.usask.ca> during the period that SEEQ is open and provide reminders to students as appropriate.
- Send out reminders through email, providing the specific number of students who have not yet responded.
- Remind students that their feedback is very important and it helps instructors, departments and the university to know what is working and where improvements are needed. Students need to know feedback will make a difference in how the course is planned in the future.
- Make sure students are aware that their feedback can also be used to influence your career and contribute to tenure or promotion.
- Take time on the last day of classes to allow students to complete the evaluation on line. As long as students have a handheld device, tablet or laptop with data and/or wifi capabilities they should be able to complete the online evaluation. With a very large class (more than 50



students) it may be a good idea to contact your IT personnel to ensure there will be appropriate bandwidth during your class time.

Testimonial

Richard Long, former instructor and department head in the Edwards School of Business (ESB), was a strong supporter of the SEEQ instrument. He kept his response rates significantly above average by demonstrating to his students his commitment to solicit feedback, as described in the University of Saskatchewan's Learning Charter as one of four instructor commitments.

"I find that students are really motivated when they can see that their instructor cares, and they think that their feedback will make a difference in how the course is planned in the future. I encourage student feedback both in class and through email, which I think helps students to become more aware of SEEQ. I think it is really important to keep track of response rates while SEEQ is in-field. I tell the students that X per cent of you have responded, but I still need to hear from the other X per cent, and I believe this helps show the students that I am engaged as an instructor, but also that their peers are doing the evaluation so they probably should as well."

-Richard Long, former professor and head, Department of Human Resources and Organizational Behaviour

Sample SEEQ online course evaluations in-class announcement

Our class is using the online Student Evaluation of Educational Quality (SEEQ) for course evaluation this term. Results will not be released to me until after final grades have been submitted. As well, the results are anonymous to me so I cannot identify you based on your responses.

Your participation in the evaluation is important. Feedback from the evaluation assists me in identifying areas where I can make improvements to the student learning experience. The information may also be used when evaluating my case for promotion and tenure.

Course evaluations are now open and close the day before final exams begin. You will receive an email through your PAWS account inviting you to complete your online SEEQ form. Reminders will be sent to you on a periodic basis if you have any uncompleted evaluations in any of your courses. Once you complete all of your evaluations you will no longer receive reminder notices. You can access the evaluation by logging into evaluation.usask.ca, through the PAWS MyCourses channel and on your smartphone. If you have not received an email with these directions, it is important that you contact seeqhelp@usask.ca as soon as possible.