As detailed in the *Policy on the Student Evaluation of Teaching in Courses*, the University of Toronto is committed to ensuring the quality of its academic programs, its teaching and the learning experiences of its students. An important component of this is the regular evaluation of courses by students. The *Policy on the Student Evaluation of Teaching in Courses* stipulates that each undergraduate and graduate course will be evaluated by students each time it is offered. The resulting data is used for summative review (PTR/Merit, tenure and promotion), program review and other forms of assessment as appropriate. These Provostial Guidelines are intended to provide additional information about the course evaluation framework and process at the University of Toronto. Specifically, they address the administration, interpretation and use of course evaluations and related data.

Principles
- Course evaluations are part of an overall teaching and program evaluation framework that includes regular peer review, faculty self-assessment, cyclical program review and other forms of assessment, as appropriate. As part of this framework, course evaluations are a particularly useful tool for providing students with an opportunity to provide feedback on their own learning experiences.
- Course evaluations must align with and promote institutional teaching priorities. Common core institutional questions will reflect institutional teaching priorities.
- For consistency across the institution, the University is developing a centrally supported online evaluation system for the development, distribution, administration, collection, analysis and reporting of evaluations and evaluation data.
- High levels of participation are important for the validity and utility of course evaluations. Units should work with the Course Evaluation Support Officer and the Centre for Teaching Support & Innovation to develop strategies to enhance participation.
- Aggregate data from course evaluations will be made available to instructors and to university administrators, and to students with instructor consent.
- The diversity of academic units and programs at the University of Toronto requires Divisional guidelines that augment the Provostial guidelines.

Use of Course Evaluations in the Assessment of Teaching
Course evaluation data are meaningful only within a broader framework for the evaluation of teaching. This framework includes: consideration of the meaning and value of specific elements of evaluation data, and consideration of other measures of teaching effectiveness (as outlined in the *Provostial Guidelines for Developing Written Assessments of Effectiveness of Teaching in Promotion and Tenure Decisions*). Course evaluation data should never be used as the exclusive measure of teaching effectiveness. Faculty are encouraged to develop additional means of collecting formative feedback on their teaching in consultation with the Centre for Teaching Support & Innovation (CTSI).

Format of Evaluation Instruments
The university's centrally supported evaluation instrument combines a set of core questions reflecting current teaching practice and priorities that will be used across the university with additional questions, drawn from a centrally-available question bank, selected according to divisionally-determined procedures. The central question bank will be continuously updated by the Course Evaluation Support Officer (CESO) located in the Centre for Teaching Support & Innovation, drawing on suggestions and requests from instructors, departments, divisions and administrators. This evaluation instrument will consist of no more than 20 questions, which will include the 7 core institutional questions, questions

added by divisions, departments and/or instructors. These questions will include a range of both quantitative and qualitative (or open-ended) questions.

~ 7-8 quantitative and open-ended questions	Institutional Core Questions	Will appear on all course evaluation forms. As noted below, these questions will be based on shared institutional teaching priorities.
~ 12-13 additional questions (quantitative and open-ended) selected according to divisionally-determined procedures	Divisional Core Questions	Will appear on all course evaluation forms within a division. These questions will be based on shared divisional teaching priorities.
	Departmental Questions	Will appear on all course evaluation forms within a department/unit or sub-set of courses. These questions may be based on shared departmental teaching priorities or may be included to gather data on a particular topic.
	Instructor Questions	Will be selected by individual instructors for each of their courses. These questions are intended to provide formative data for the instructor.

Institutional Teaching Priorities &Core Questions
The following chart outlines seven institutional teaching priorities that reflect shared expectations and interpretations of teaching effectiveness. Seven core institutional questions have been identified for these priorities, as listed below, and these will appear on all course evaluation forms.

The data collected for these questions will be used for summative purposes (PTR/merit, tenure and promotion).

Institutional Teaching Priorities	Possible Institutional Core Questions (TO BE TESTED & CONFIRMED)
Students learn a great deal in each course.	**Q1.** I have a deeper understanding of the subject matter as a result of this course.
Students report that their course and instructor offer an environment conducive to learning.	**Q2.** The instructor created a course atmosphere that was conducive to my learning.
Students are engaged in their own learning.	**Q3.** I found the course intellectually stimulating.
Students indicate that the methods of assessment in a course reflect and contribute to their learning.	**Q4.** Projects, assignments, tests and/or exams gave me an opportunity to demonstrate my understanding of the course material.
	Q5. Projects, assignments, tests and/or exams helped me better understand the course material.
Students have an overall positive learning experience with the course.	**Q6.** Please rate your overall learning experience.
Students have an overall positive learning experience with the instructor.	**Q7.** Please rate the overall effectiveness of this instructor's teaching. AND/OR Please comment on the overall effectiveness of this instructor's teaching. (open-ended question)

Additionally, one more priority may be included on institutional course evaluation instruments but will not be used for summative review of teaching. Instead, data from this question may be used to provide information to instructors, departments, divisions and the institution about academic support mechanisms.

Students note the availability of support for their learning both from instructors and from across the institution.	**Q8.** Please comment on any assistance you received to support your learning in this course. (open-ended question)

Administration of a centrally-supported system
The dissemination and collection of course evaluations is centrally-supported. Divisions, in collaboration with the Course Evaluation Support Officer will identify their needs and preferences for this dissemination and collection within their own division. These administrative procedures will be outlined in divisional guidelines, as discussed below.

Online evaluation system
The University of Toronto has adopted an online course evaluation system which will be used for all centrally-administered course evaluations. This online system will meet the University's accessibility standards.

Ensuring Appropriate Response Rates
Many institutions that move to an online system note a temporary decline in response rates as students and instructors become accustomed to the new system. The Course Evaluation Support Officer will monitor response rates and oversee a series of educational, communication and incentive strategies to ensure appropriate response rates. Acceptable levels for response rates will be determined at the institutional and divisional levels. Additionally, procedures will be in place to support instructors undergoing tenure and/or promotion during the transition to the new course evaluation framework and online system.

Course Evaluation Support Officer (CESO)
Support for the course evaluation system and framework will be provided through the Course Evaluation Support Officer in the Centre for Teaching Support & Innovation. The CESO will administer the online system, assist with training and the development and distribution of educational materials for all constituents, provide guidance in the interpretation of data, and will oversee the management of the question bank. The CESO will also assist with the identification of appropriate alternative means of evaluating teaching in those cases where the central online system may not be appropriate.

Adding questions to the question bank
Instructors, departments or divisions may request additional items or topics be added to the institutional question bank. These requests will be regularly reviewed. Instructions for this process are available in the Course Evaluation Guidebook.

Data analysis, access, reporting, interpretation and use
To ensure that evaluation data are considered within this broader framework, the following principles and mechanisms to support the appropriate use and interpretation of data apply:
- Only statistically significant data will be used for summative purposes.
- Student responses on course evaluations will be anonymous.

- Reports of evaluation data using the central online system are generated by the Course Evaluation Support Officer for each user group.
  - These reports are intended to be used for both formative and summative purposes, for use by PTR, tenure and promotion committees, and, in an aggregate form, for program and curriculum review, and by students (with faculty consent) for course selection.
  - Data representing information from comparable contexts will be included on reports (e.g. divisional/departmental averages, all 1st year courses, etc.).
  - Instructors, departments, divisions, and/or the institution may also specify a supplementary report format to be produced in addition to the standard report.
  - In the divisional guidelines (described below), divisions are encouraged to consider the best means for sharing data with students to reinforce the essential student role in course evaluations and to engage students in the feedback cycle. At a minimum, divisions are asked to identify an accessible means of distributing data from the core institutional questions to all students and may wish to consider sharing data from additional divisionally- or departmentally-selected questions. However, any instructor may opt-out of sharing their evaluation data with students on an individual basis.
  - Reports are made available for review only after final grades have been submitted.
  - The reports reflect the following level of access to data:

	Access to:	Institutionally-selected quantitative questions	Institutionally-selected open-ended questions	Divisionally-selected questions	Departmentally-selected questions	Instructor-selected questions
User Groups	**Instructors**	X	X	X	X	X
	Department/Unit	X	X	X	X	
	Division	X	X	X	X	
	Institution (Provost/President)	X	X	X	X	
	Students*	X		X	X	

* Except when instructors have opted-out of sharing their data with students.

NB: Instructors may elect to share data from instructor-selected questions with others (e.g. with their department) but will not be required to do so. Additionally, departments or divisions may elect to share data from institutionally-selected open-ended questions with students.

The Course Evaluation Support Officer, in collaboration with the Centre for Teaching Support & Innovation and other teaching support offices across the university, provides guidance and resources to instructors and administrators in support of the appropriate interpretation and use of evaluation results and provides education about course evaluations for students, instructors, and administrators. This includes:

- Information about how to read and interpret the data and identification of avenues for support and improvement relating to issues of particular concern.
- Information to accompany evaluation data in tenure and promotion files (e.g. contextualizing narratives prepared by the candidate).
- Guidelines for departments and instructors to communicate to students the influence of course evaluations on teaching and course and program design and improvement.
- Information for academic administrators to assist them in the interpretation of the data (when determining merit, making personnel decisions, for mentorship purposes, for tenure and promotion, etc.).

- Information for academic administrators on how to connect evaluation data with other indicators of teaching effectiveness.

Template for Divisional Guidelines

As noted above and in the *Policy on the Student Evaluation of Teaching in Courses* divisions will prepare their own guidelines addressing the administration and use of course evaluations and associated data within their division. These guidelines supplement but must reflect the institutional guidelines noted above. Divisional guidelines are to be approved by the Office of the Provost and Vice-President and may be developed in consultation with CTSI/Course Evaluation Support Officer.

Divisional guidelines will include:

Evaluation Instrument Format
- A description of how course evaluation forms will be structured within the division, including:
  - An outline of how the 12-13 questions will be distributed between divisionally-, departmentally- and instructor-selected questions.
  - A list of divisional core questions, if desired.

Communication & Education
- A description of efforts to supplement, where necessary, institutional strategies for communicating with instructors, academic administrators and students about the following issues:
  - The importance of course evaluation data to the quality of teaching and academic programs at the University of Toronto.
  - The essential role of students in this process.
  - The appropriate use and interpretation of course evaluation data.

Reporting
- If desired, a description of supplementary report formats for divisional and departmental administrators.
- A description of what data will be shared with students, in what format and according to which processes. As noted above, divisions are encouraged to share, at a minimum, data from the core institutional questions with students.

Interpretation and Use
- Guidance for interpreting evaluation data in line with divisional guidelines for the overall evaluation of teaching (for PTR/merit, tenure and promotion).
- Information regarding for data storage and security.