

## Policy on Student Evaluations

### Department of Economics

Approved August 31, 1994 and Effective as of the Fall, 1994 Semester

1. All faculty teaching courses in the Department of Economics are expected to conduct student evaluations in each section of every course taught (including summer session courses), adhering to the procedures outlined below. The sole exception to this requirement is listed in #2 below.
2. Faculty teaching a course that entails unusual risk (e.g., experimental course, first time in large section, experimentation with different pedagogical techniques) may apply to the department head for exemption from the requirement that all courses be subject to student evaluation. Appropriate justification must be supplied. No more than one course per academic year may be exempted from student evaluation. The intent of this provision is to encourage pedagogical risk-taking by department faculty. It is incumbent on faculty who are exempt from student evaluations under this provision to explain to the students in the class why they are not being given the opportunity to evaluate the class and instructor. Faculty who are exempted under this provision may nonetheless conduct student evaluations for their own information. Those who chose to do so must conduct the evaluation in such a way as to assure students in the class that the evaluations will not be seen by the instructor before the time that final grades are submitted. One way to accomplish this is to follow all of the normal procedures for conducting student evaluations (described below), with the exception that the evaluations will be returned directly to the instructor after the date on which final grades are due in the Registrar's Office. Neither the department head nor any other member of the department may have access to these evaluations without permission of the faculty member.
3. All evaluations must use the set of questions approved by the department and forms supplied by the departmental office. Faculty may supplement the departmental questionnaire with more individualized questions if they so desire.
4. Evaluations must be conducted in-class during any of the last three class periods of the semester. The evaluations may be passed out either at the beginning or the end of the class period. Students should be allowed no less than 10 minutes to complete the evaluations (not including the time that it takes to give instructions and pass out the evaluations).
5. Faculty may distribute the evaluations and give instructions or ask a student to do this in their place. Faculty who administer their own evaluations must not make any comments that could be construed as an effort to garner more favorable evaluations (e.g., by telling students that these evaluations are important for tenure and promotion decisions and/or that the faculty member will be considered for tenure/promotion in the near future and that these evaluations may prove crucial to the decision). In addition, faculty may not be present in the classroom while the evaluation is in progress. Completed evaluation forms and scantrons should be collected by a designated student who will seal them in a manila envelope and return them speedily and directly to the departmental secretary.

6. The departmental secretary (and any designated student or graduate assistants) will be responsible for separating the scantron forms from the written responses, assembling and transporting the scantrons for machine scoring, and distributing the computer printouts of evaluation results to each faculty. Neither the faculty member nor the department head may examine the scantron forms prior to their being sent out for machine scoring. In no event may computer printouts be distributed prior to the time at which final grades are due at the Registrar's office.
7. The departmental secretary will store the written responses until such time that final grades have been turned in, at which point they will be turned over to the department head for examination. The department head will have one week to examine the written responses and return each set of responses to individual faculty. If the department head has not completed this examination within one week (starting from the time at which final grades are due in the Registrar's office), a faculty member's request to see his or her written comments will be honored by the department head (with the proviso that the written comments be returned to the department head within 24 hours).
8. Significant deviations from the procedure outlined above (following the date of approval of this document) will cause a faculty member's student evaluations to be regarded as "compromised." In such cases, the department head and the department PAC may, at their individual discretion, disregard the compromised evaluations for purposes of evaluations, merit raises, and tenure and promotion decisions. In addition, failure to conduct student evaluations may be regarded by the department head and the department PAC as negative factors in evaluations, merit raise decisions, and tenure and promotion decisions.