# Getting Started with Online Course Evaluations

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10/19/12
Getting Started – Key Points

- The evaluation tool is in my workspace
- The evaluation tool in ecommons is independent of course sites in ecommons. The course doesn’t need to exist in ecommons for the evaluations to be issued online.
- Data sharing issues: Department personnel are associated with the course data via their cruzid. Currently, access by staff to data is limited by cruzid. That is, staff within a department can’t share their evaluation data within ecommons. Data sharing currently needs to happen outside of ecommons.
- Currently, evaluation data will remain in eCommons. There is a project on campus to move the evaluation data into a datawarehouse type archive. This project is a collaborative effort between FITC and APO.
- Instructors don’t have access to view their evaluations in eCommons. It is possible to do this but there are policy issues that need to be resolved in order to activate this feature.

What You Need to Create an Evaluation

- You will need the following information
  - A course to evaluate – term, course name & no, instructor name
  - Open and close dates
  - Communication from your department to students about the evaluation
  - Cruzid and gold password
  - Access as “department manager” in ecommons
How to Create an Evaluation for One Group/Course

The following steps to create an online course evaluation are outlined in detail below.

• Login into ecommons, Locate the Evaluation tool in My Workspace
• Click on the evaluation tool
• Click on add evaluation
• Configure the title, add department instructions and choose the template
• Confirm results sharing is configurable
• Check e-mail notification settings
• Finish evaluations settings by clicking continue
• Assign the evaluation to a group
• Choose the group to assign to and click “save assigned groups”
• Evaluation assignment – review the information for the evaluation that you have configured
• Done
Login to eCommons and Locate the Evaluation Tool in “My Workspace”

Spring Quarter eCommons Workshops Scheduled for Instructors, Grad Students and Teaching Assistants
- 3/29/12 10am - Noon Introduction to eCommons
- 4/3/12 1:30pm - 2:30pm eCommons Gradebook
- 4/5/12 10am - Noon Introduction to eCommons
- 4/18/12 9:30am -10:30am eCommons Gradebook
- 4/19/12 10am - Noon Test and Quizzes
- Recorded eCommons Intro Webinar. Click to view recorded webinar.

Signup and more information at UCSC Event Manager.

Getting Started for Spring Quarter for Instructors
1. Create your new site yourself, on your My Workspace page click Site Setup, then
2. Remember to publish your course site. In your course site, see Site Editor, Manage
3. OR, Re-use your old site by using Site Editor/Duplicate and adding current roster
4. Add your TAs right away (while departmental paperwork is being processed.) In your Site Setup and Add Participants.
5. Don’t delay access for your concurrently enrolled students (via UCSC Extension) to let them started with their CrizID.
Click on the Evaluation System – Takes you to the Evaluations Tool
Clicking on the Evaluation System link takes you into the Evaluation System tool. To get started creating your evaluation you click on the “Add Evaluation” link that is hi-lited below.

Add an Evaluation

Once you click the link to “Add Evaluation” you are taken to an evaluation settings page. This is a long page. This document covers the evaluation settings in 3 sections.
Add an Evaluation – Title, Instructions and Template
The first step of creating an evaluation after you have clicked “Add Evaluation” is to configure the settings for the evaluation. You will be looking at, confirming or configuring the following settings –

- Configure the title, add department instructions and choose the template
- Preview your evaluation
- Confirm that results sharing is configurable
- Check and confirm e-mail notification settings
- Finish evaluations settings by clicking continue

Configure the Title, Add Department Instructions and Choose the Template
This is the most department specific part of configuring a course evaluation.

My Workspace

Choose Template
Select the template to use for this evaluation. Templates define the questions used.

| Template Title        | Owner                |  
|-----------------------|----------------------|---
| My Basic Template     | Rebecca (admin) Peet |  
| UCSC Instructor Evaluation | Rebecca (admin) Peet |  

Click Continue to Settings
1) **Title** – The best practice for naming an evaluation is as follows
   
a. Term (QtrYr)   CrsName   Crs#   Instructor

   b. e.g. Spr 2012   PSYC 01   1484   Jones, J

   We recommend this because you may eventually have many evaluations in your “closed evals” queue. A consistent titling convention will make it easier to sort through your evaluations and locate specific evaluations with more ease.

2) **Paste from Word** – If you are pasting information from MS Word use this clipboard. If you don’t use the “Paste from Word” clipboard your text will have garbage in it.

3) **Instructions** – This is where the department has the opportunity to provide their specific information about the evaluation to the student. You may want to add something to make it clear to the student when the evaluation closes. You can also inform them that they will be receiving reminder emails until the evaluation has been submitted. These are the kinds of information you may choose to include.

4) **Choose Template** – Select UCSC Instructor Evaluation. There may or may not be other templates in the list that you see. The UCSC Instructor Evaluation template is an exact replication of the campus paper scantron instructor evaluation.

5) **Continue to Setting** – Be sure to find the button at the bottom of the page to continue configuring the evaluation.
Evaluation Settings – Title, Instructions, Preview, Open/Close Dates

The very first section of the Evaluation settings page allows you to review the evaluation title and instructions. You also have the opportunity to preview the evaluation and verify that all the elements are correct.

1. Evaluation title:
   - Title: Spr 2012 PSYC 01 Jones, J.
   - Instructions: This is the first of 2 course evaluations you will be receiving for PSYC 01. The first evaluation is being issued for Instructor Jones. At the end of the term an additional evaluation will be issued for Instructor Smith who will be teaching the second half of the course.
   - We take these evaluations very seriously and appreciate your time in completing this evaluation.
   - Thank you,
   - Psychology Department
   - Will appear at the top of the evaluation.

   Template: UCSC Instructor Evaluation (copy) [Preview] [Edit]

2. Evaluation Dates:
   - Current date is May 2, 2012 at 12:15 PM
   - Start Date: 5/2/12 12:15 PM
   - Due Date: 5/3/12 11:59 PM
   - Users may begin submitting evaluation responses on this date.
   - Evaluation ends on this date, no more responses after this date.
1) Notice the scroll bar – this is a long page of settings.
2) Click Preview to check your evaluation configuration so far

   [Image: Evaluation System]

   [Image: Instructor Appraisal]

   TIP: Always give yourself an hour or two before the evaluation goes live. This allows you time to review the evaluation. If the evaluation goes live with configuration errors in most cases you will need to close the evaluation and issue a new evaluation.

3) Set the open and close dates for the evaluation. The best practice recommended by the Dean of Undergraduate Education is to open the evaluation 2 weeks prior to finals week.
Evaluation Settings – Confirm Results Sharing

There is nothing to configure in the results sharing. Please note that instructors don’t currently have access to the online evaluations in eCommons. The departments need to share the data with the faculty outside of eCommons.

Do not change this setting!
Eval Settings – Email Notifications

The Evaluation System sends a notification to students that the course evaluation is available within 5 minutes after the evaluation goes live. The system will send reminders to students to complete the course evaluation every other day until the student completes the evaluation or the evaluation closes. The campus best practice is to send a reminder to students who haven’t complete their course evaluations every other day. This is the default setting for an evaluation. Also, if a student replies to an evaluation email notification or reminder that email goes to the campus help system. FITC staff will respond to this as a help request.

You can also notice that students must login in order to take the evaluation. All active students have access to eCommons whether or not they are participating in eCommons course sites.

Click "Continue to Assign to Courses" to complete the evaluation settings and assign a course group to the evaluation.
**Assign the Evaluation to a Group**

To assign the evaluation to a class roster choose “Assign to Evaluation Group” by clicking on the link.

*To assign an evaluation to a class roster*
When you click on the "Assign to Evaluation Groups" link you will then see a list of all possible courses for your department. Check the box for the course you want assigned to this evaluation.

Next, scroll to the end of the list courses and click "Save Assigned Groups"
Once you click "Save Assigned Groups" the Evaluation System takes you to the page where you assign the evaluation to a class roster.
Evaluation Assignment – Review and Finish the Evaluation
The Evaluation Assignment page lets you verify all of the information about the evaluation. Once you have verified everything click “Done” and your evaluation will go into the pending or active queue depending on your start date.

When you click “Done” you will go into “My Evaluations”. This is where you will track the progress of your evaluations. You will also get the evaluation reports here.
My Evaluations – Managing Your Evaluations

Once evaluations have been configured and issued “My Evaluations” is where you will go to administer the evaluations.

1) **Active Evaluations** - All of the evaluations you have created will be listed first by their title.
2) **Active Evaluations** - Responses will allow you to track how many students have submitted the evaluation.
3) **Active Evaluations** - Settings – you can edit settings while the evaluation is in progress, however, this isn’t a very useful option because some students will have already completed the evaluation.
   You can also close the evaluation early.
4) **Active Evaluations** – Assigned - Click on the group name under assigned to see the group that was assigned. Click on the link again to see which students have not yet submitted an evaluation. Note: Some departments consider this a violation of privacy. Others use the information to make appeals to students to complete their evaluations.
5) **Closed Evaluations** – Settings – Click the report link to get your evaluation data and reports. You can also re-open the evaluation if needed.
6) **Closed Evaluation** – Response Rate – Allows you to know your final rate of response. You can also follow this link to see which students submitted an evaluation.
Reports
All of the evaluation data is stored on eCommons. We are working on a long-term data archiving solution. In the interim, we recommend that departments download all electronic evaluation data associated with the reports and store it according to current department business practices.

Html Report
The html report is the online version of the report that you will see when you open the "reports" link on a closed evaluation.

Pdf Summary Report
The pdf report provides a summary of all of the responses. It aggregates the responses to quantitative questions and provides all responses to qualitative responses. This report does not allow for associating student profile information with student responses.

Excel Report (same as csv report)
The Excel report provides individual level responses. Each row in the spreadsheet represents one student submission. The columns in the report correspond to each question in the evaluation. The student profile is part of a student response and will be found in each row of the Excel spreadsheet.

Appendix I

How to Create an Evaluation for a Batch of Courses
We do not recommend batching evaluations in a department. Although issuing evaluations saves a lot of time when you create the evaluation most departments have found that the workload in getting the report data out of the system by far offsets the initial time savings.

How to Create an Evaluation for a Cross-Listed Course
There are two cases for a cross-listed course. In the first case, each department has an instructor teaching in a team-taught course. In this case, we recommend that each department issue their own evaluation to the class that is listed in their department. Follow the instructions for creating a basic evaluation. In the directions to the students be sure to explain to the students that this evaluation refers to the instructor from your department.

The second case for evaluating a cross-listed course is a little more involved. In this case, the course is listed in two departments but there is one instructor.
  o The home department should issue the evaluation
  o The "department manager” should follow the steps to create a basic evaluation.
  o When you arrive at the “Assign to Groups” the procedure changes
  o First, create an adhoc group
  o Name the group and paste in the cruzids for the students in the other department
  o Assign the adhoc group to the evaluation
  o After assigning the adhoc group, assign to the group from your department
  o Finished
When you get to “Assign Evaluation” click on “Assign to an adhoc Group” -> “Create a new adhoc group”

When you get to “Creating a new Adhoc Group” name the group and paste in the cruzids for all members in the course affiliated with the other department. Click “Create Adhoc Group”. Then click “Back to Evaluation Group Assignments. This returns to the “Assign Evaluation” page.
When you are done creating the adhoc group you will see it listed. Check the box next to the adhoc group you just created. (Don’t click “Save Assigned Groups”, yet.) Next, go to “Assign to Evaluation Groups”

In “Assign to Evaluation Groups” you check the box for the course that is listed in your department. Remember to scroll to the bottom of this page to save your choice.
At this point you have assigned the evaluation to an adhoc group and to the roster associated with the course in your department. You are now done. Click “Save Assigned Groups”.

In “My Evaluations” you can check the assigned groups and be sure that you have assigned the evaluation to both the roster associated with your department and to the adhoc group.

**How to Create an Evaluation for a Course with Multiple Instructors**

Currently, the practice for issuing evaluations to courses with multiple instructors is to issue an evaluation for each instructor. We recommend that you explain in the evaluation instructions that this evaluation is for Instructor X. You will also title the evaluation.
Appendix II – Uniform Procedures from the VP/DUE
Implementing uniform procedures across campus will increase the response rate, ensure data integrity, and improve reporting. Please adhere to the following procedures when utilizing the Online Course Evaluation system:

UNIFORM PROCEDURES

Standard Template
Do not alter the standard template, questions 1-29. Departments can add department-specific questions at the end of the survey beginning with question 30. Altering the template will result in data not being archived properly. Any modifications made to the standard template will jeopardize data integrity over time.

Communication Plan
At UCSC, faculty engagement appears to be the single most important factor to increase student participation and response rates. Department Managers and Chairs can increase response rates by alerting faculty of the dates that evaluations are to be completed and requesting that they encourage their students to complete the online review process even in courses that do not use eCommons for any other purpose.

A comprehensive communication plan includes:
- A message from the Department Chair or Provost to students and faculty communicating the importance of course evaluations and noting the ease of doing so online.
- Information and instructions for faculty to give to their students about online evaluations (e.g., passwords used, anonymous, confidential, value of constructive criticism and feedback) and how the data will be used.
- Department-specific student notification and reminder text should be included in each survey (evaluation), specifying open and close dates. For Spring quarter, it is important the evaluation period close by Sunday, June 10 at 11:59 p.m., prior to the start of final exams.
- Information for instructors about when the results will be available to them and in what format. Sample communications are attached.

Deployment Period
Students and faculty expressed confusion regarding the timing of the evaluation process because different dates have been used by departments over the past two quarters. Historically, paper evaluations were handed out to students in the final week of classes, prior to finals week. With the online process this practice should NOT change. Evaluations need to be collected prior to finals week. This has been, and will continue to be standard campus practice. Please set up Spring 2012 evaluation as follows:

Evaluation period: online evaluations should be available for two weeks prior to the end of instruction.

Student Notification: choose the notification reminder setting ‘every-other-day’ for each evaluation instrument.
File Naming

To maintain the integrity of our archival process, it is imperative for departments to appropriately name both the evaluation instrument and the report data file. The following are examples of appropriately named files:

- Best practice for naming an evaluation for a single course:
  TERM / COURSE / CLASS NUMBER / INSTRUCTOR
  Ex. W12 SOCY 177G 12345 Smith

- Best practice for naming a group or batch of evaluations:
  TERM / DEPARTMENT
  Ex. W12 Music Dept Instructor Evals

Faculty Review of Evaluations

Faculty may see their evaluations once the grade posting deadline has passed and it has been verified that they have submitted grades for their course. Until all grades for a course are submitted, faculty should not review evaluations. This standard campus practice is not changing.

- All units are responsible for the distribution of the evaluation reports directly to their own faculty, just as they have done when using Scantron or other evaluation processing methods. It is important that the administrator communicate with instructors their schedule for the release of this information. It is not currently available online for instructors.

Faculty Communication

Communication from faculty to their students is of the utmost importance to increase student response rates. Some methods to increase student response rates include:

- Remind students of the deadline date of the evaluation and the importance of results after each class.
- Explain in the course syllabus the importance of student input for course improvement and that their evaluations are taken seriously and do effect change.
- Reinforce the message that instructors will not have access to individual student evaluations. Summary reports will be provided only after grades are submitted.
- Remind students that their response will be used to improve the course for future students. Students should know that a professor will take their feedback seriously and specific actions will be taken to resolve any issues raised.
- Help students understand how to give constructive criticism. This will help students give valuable feedback. Further, this action will help convince them that their comments will be heard.
- Direct students to a computer laboratory where they can submit their evaluations.
- Consider the use of department- or course-level incentives. Departments have access to the list of students who have completed evaluations; some faculty have used this information within their classes. Of course, such information should not be shared with fewer than 10 respondents, as it may make responses identifiable. Evaluations can be submitted without answering any questions.
Appendix III – Sample Communication

SAMPLE 1 – General Communication – From Department to Faculty and Students
To: Instructors and Students
From: [Academic Department Name]
Subject: Announcing use of eCommons Online Course Evaluation System for ____ Quarter Courses
[Your Academic Department Name Here (i.e., Anthropology)] is using the new eCommons Evaluations System to collect end-of-the quarter instructor and course evaluations. Evaluations will open ____ and close ____. All students in our courses will have access to the evaluation tool in eCommons, whether or not the class used an eCommons site for course work.

How it works:
Students will receive an email when the evaluation survey is available. The email will provide information regarding the evaluation as well as a link to the evaluation in eCommons. Students can click the link, login to eCommons and find the evaluation to take and submit. Alternately, students can login to ecommons.ucsc.edu and click the Evaluation System tool to see current available evaluations. Student submissions are anonymous and confidential. Instructors cannot identify which submissions belong to which students and will only be able to review the data collected after all grades have been submitted.

SAMPLE 2 – Instructions to Students Included in the Evaluation
Please give serious thought to your comments. This evaluation will become part of the faculty member's personnel file to be reviewed by colleagues and administration when considering the instructor's future teaching assignments and promotions. Your comments will be studied by the professor after grading your work and may be used to improve future offerings of the course.
SAMPLE 3 - System Email Notification to students after an evaluation has been made available:

All information submitted to the Evaluation System is confidential. Instructors cannot identify which submissions belong to which students. Students are required to login to the system for the sole purpose of providing students access to the appropriate evaluations for their associated courses. Please send privacy concerns to ecommons.help@ucsc.edu

An evaluation (NAME) for: CLASS NAME GOES HERE is ready to be filled out. Please complete this evaluation by DATE THIS DATE IS FROM YOUR SETTINGS at the latest.

You may access the evaluation at:

https://ecommons.ucsc.edu/direct/eval-assigngroup/

If the above link is not working then please follow the Alternate Instructions at the bottom of the message.

Enter the site using your username and password. You may submit the evaluation once only.

Thank you for your participation.

Should you encounter any technical difficulty in filling out the evaluation, please send an email to ecommons.help@ucsc.edu clearly indicating the problem you encountered. For any other concerns please contact your department.

Alternate Instructions:
1) Go to https://ecommons.ucsc.edu/ssl-portal
2) Enter your username and password and click on 'Login' button.
3) Click on 'Evaluation System' in the left navigation menu under My Workspace.
4) Click on YOUR CLASS NAME GOES HERE link under evaluation name.
SAMPLE 4 – System Reminder Text for Students Who Have Not Submitted an Evaluation, Yet:

Subject: You still haven't completed your Evaluation: [EvalTitle]
All information submitted to the Evaluation System is confidential. Instructors cannot identify which submissions belong to which students. Students are required to login to the system for the sole purpose of providing students access to the appropriate evaluations for their associated courses. Instructors can only view general statistics as allowed by the university. Please send privacy concerns to [ecommons.help@ucsc.edu].

We are still awaiting the completion of an evaluation ([EvalTitle]) for: [CourseName].

You may access the evaluation at:
[https://ecommons.ucsc.edu/direct/eval-assigngroup/10]
If the above link is not working then please follow the Alternate Instructions at the bottom of the message.
Enter the site using your username and password. Please submit your evaluation by [EvalDueDate].

Thank you for your participation.
------------------------------------------------------------
Should you encounter any technical difficulty in filling out the evaluation, please send an email to [HelpdeskEmail] clearly indicating the problem you encountered. For any other concerns please contact your department.

Alternate Instructions:
1) Go to [ecommons.ucsc.edu]
2) Enter your username and password and click on ‘Login’ button.
3) Click on ‘Evaluation System’ in the left navigation menu under My Workspace.
4) Click on ‘[EvalGroupTitle]’ link under ‘[EvalTitle]’...