

COURSE AND TEACHER RATINGS (CTRs)

The Course and Teacher Ratings (CTRs) at Hofstra provide a measure of student perceptions of a faculty member's teaching effectiveness that complement peer and administrative observations (FPS#46). The form provides students with an opportunity to rate the faculty member on specified attributes of teaching performance, as well as to provide more open-ended comments. The latest version of the Course and Teacher Rating form is distributed to faculty in all units except the Law School each fall and spring semester for administration in the faculty member's classes in accordance with this FPS. Upon a faculty member's request to the Provost's office, CTRs may be administered for Summer and January courses. The latest version of the form is available on line at ___ (*when the form is added during the Fall 2008 semester, the URL in this FPS will be updated*). Summary numerical CTRs are distributed to the offices of the Department Chair, the Dean, and the Provost, as well as to the faculty member. These summary ratings are also available in the library where students can access them at the reference desk. The original forms, excluding the open ended comments, will be retained by the Provost's office. The open ended comments will not be copied and will be returned to the faculty member.

I. Administration of CTRs

The CTRs are to be administered each fall and spring semester. They are to be administered to all classes with an enrollment greater than five students, except those identified by the Department Chair as being inappropriate for this type of assessment. [Separate modules or alternative forms may be developed for use in laboratory, performance, and/or studio classes, and those courses in which the faculty member provides per capita instruction to individual students.] In administering the CTRs, a faculty member may add up to three questions that address issues that are not covered by the form. CTRs may be administered during any class falling within the announced administration period for that semester; faculty members thus have some flexibility in selecting the class period in which to administer the CTR. The completed CTR forms are to be given to a student for return to a designated site. Specific instructions for administering CTRs will be distributed with the forms and must be followed.

II. Interpretation and Use of CTR Results

The CTRs may be used for both formative (individual faculty development) and summative (evaluative) purposes. Although attention to individual items may be useful for formative and interpretative purposes, only scale scores should be used when analyzing the CTRs for summative purposes. Each scale score represents the average score on one of several distinct factors (groups of related items). For each course taught, the faculty member shall be provided with his or her own mean (arithmetic average) for each item and on each scale. Faculty shall also receive the mean and standard deviation (a measure of the degree of variability in the ratings) for each item for all courses with the same prefix. See

FPS 49B (*Fall 2008*) for an annotated example. The prefix mean shall represent the unweighted mean for all courses within that prefix. The standard error of measurement (SEM), a measure of the degree of error to be expected in a score, shall be made available to the faculty member and the department chair in order to construct appropriate confidence intervals.

Administrators and personnel committees shall evaluate performance across courses taught within a semester as follows:

- A. In each semester, the mean for each scale shall be calculated by averaging the scale scores across classes taught by the faculty member during that semester. The mean scale scores are not weighted for class size, e.g., a class with 60 students does not receive more weight than a class with 35 students.
- B. To account for error in the scores, each of the faculty member's mean scale scores shall be assumed to extend two standard errors of measurement below and above the attained scale score. This score interval shall be referred to as the faculty member's confidence interval.
- C. For each scale, the faculty member's confidence interval shall be compared with the department (or prefix) standard. The department (or prefix) standard shall be the mean of the department (or prefix) means for the previous four academic years.
- D. If the department (or prefix) standard falls within the faculty member's confidence interval, the scale score shall be considered acceptable.
- E. Courses with between five and ten respondents should be included in the analysis of a faculty member's CTRs, but should be interpreted cautiously.
- F. Regardless of the department (or prefix) standard, a scale score of 2 or lower shall be deemed meritorious on all scales except the workload scale.

CTR scores must be considered within the context of the faculty member's teaching assignments; for example, scores in courses with distinctive characteristics (e.g., introductory courses, courses for non-majors) should be compared, when feasible, with similarly structured courses. Although there are significant limitations associated with the analysis of CTR scores for a single class, individual course information can facilitate such contextual interpretation and should be submitted. For summative analyses, scores should be averaged over multiple sections and trends in scores should be analyzed over time to ameliorate the effects of idiosyncratic CTRs in a single course. To evaluate performance in a particular course, confidence intervals shall be constructed and interpreted as indicated above.

CTR scores provide the raw data that must be evaluated by the faculty committees and administrators making recommendations regarding personnel decisions. Not only must the CTR scores be contextualized in respect to the courses being taught but it must be

recognized that these data provide only one source of information. They must be evaluated in the context of the data from other sources, e.g., peer and administrative observations. Evaluations from any source that are negative in the aggregate must be viewed as a cause for concern and no single source should be viewed as privileged or automatically warranting greater weight than other sources. Similarly, none of the sources can be automatically dismissed or disregarded as providing less important or less relevant information. It is incumbent on those making recommendations on personnel matters to consider all sources of information in a serious and balanced manner.

III. Instrumentation

Given that the interpretation of the CTRs is based on scales derived from factor analyses of the individual item scores and that changes in the pattern of the ratings may result in changes in the scales themselves, as well as in the standard error of measurement, new factor analyses of the CTRs shall be performed every five years. At such time, the reliability and the SEM shall be recalculated and the scales shall be modified if warranted by the data.

Attachments:

1. Guidelines for Administration (*latest version*)
2. Course and Teacher Rating Form – FPS 49A (*to be added Fall 2008*)
3. Annotated Example of the Computation and Interpretation of the Use of Confidence Intervals, FPS 49B (*to be added Fall 2008*)

ATTACHMENT 1

GUIDELINES FOR THE ADMINISTRATION OF COURSE AND TEACHER RATINGS

This packet contains the following items:

- Sufficient Course and Teacher Rating forms and comment forms for each member of the class
- Pencils
- A return envelope

Please do not make any changes to the information on the labels affixed to the envelopes, and follow the instructions below. If you have any questions or problems, contact the CTR Coordinator at the extension noted on the label of the envelope containing the forms.

INSTRUCTIONS

- CTRs are to be administered at the beginning of a class period in the presence of the instructor. Approximately fifteen minutes should be allowed for distributing and completing the forms.
- The instructor should direct the students to read the instructions on the form.
- Instructors should print on the board the **Instructor's Last Name, Course Number, Section Number**, and the 5 digit **CRN** (write out), exactly as they appear on the label of the envelope containing the materials.
- Instructors may ask up to **3 additional questions** of their own. These questions, which should be numbered [x, xx, and xxx], may either be printed on the board or distributed on a separate sheet of paper. Note: Instructors should keep a record of the questions asked because the computer printout of the results will only provide numerical responses for these questions.
- Each student should be supplied with a **ratings form, a comment form, and a pencil**.
- For the ratings form, students should be instructed to write in the course code in the upper right hand corner and to fill in the appropriate circles. Students should then respond to the items.
- The instructor should not answer questions regarding the items on the forms.

UPON COMPLETION OF ALL FORMS

- A student volunteer should collect all materials. All student **rating forms and comment forms** should be placed in the return envelope and sealed. The instructor should sign across the flap of the envelope and include the date and time.
- The sealed envelope and all pencils and unused materials should be placed in the envelope in which the materials arrived.

Immediately after class a student volunteer should take the envelope to the room designated on the label or to the designated bin in the lobby of Hagedorn Hall. In the event the room designated on the label is closed, the envelope should be deposited through the slot in the door. The envelope should not be sent through interoffice mail.