Proposals regarding Student Evaluations of Teaching
Teaching and Advising Committee

1. We propose that we transition the student evaluation form to the proposed “final” form. The transitional form, including a selection of questions from the current form, will be used to validate the new questions against the historical data.

2. We propose that norming data (beyond raw means) be reported. See the attached example of a norming scheme developed by the Office of Institutional Research and Assessment.

3. We advise Senate to amend the FSH so that other materials and/or evidence be required for annual evaluation of faculty performance in teaching and be admitted for consideration for promotion and tenure. The choice of these materials should not be prescribed in the handbook but chosen by the faculty member in consultation with the unit administrator.

Some Frequently Asked Questions

1. Can we return to a paper form? It is our understanding that a paper form is too expensive, primarily because of the data entry issues, and is not a possibility at this time.

2. What about the customizable questions? We have available a completely customizable survey tool for midterm assessments. [https://www.uidaho.edu/provost/ira/fast-teaching-survey](https://www.uidaho.edu/provost/ira/fast-teaching-survey)
   Our research was clear that midterm feedback from students helps improve the course experience for both students and instructors. Committee members also used paper midterm assessments to great effect in their courses through the process of studying and revising our student evaluation forms.

3. Aren’t student evaluations biased? Yes. In particular, the students themselves carry the inherent biases of their culture, and this is reflected in the survey data. However, the measurements are coarse enough that the bias is within tolerable limits.

4. What do student evaluations measure? First, let us note that student evaluations do not measure student learning nor do they measure the effectiveness of the instructor. The former is ostensibly measured by the students’ grades, and the latter requires first a definition of effectiveness and usually a combination of data including observations (see the work of Heather Hill on mathematics education, for example). Rather, student evaluations give a measure of instructional atmosphere that takes into account the social and emotional aspects of education in addition to the cognitive.