

## How to order and administer course evaluations (aka student ratings of faculty)

### ORDERING FORMS

1. Before the beginning of the semester, determine whether you want paper or online (PICA) evaluations. Go to <http://mars.tamu.edu/ratings/index.htm> for details on the differences (e.g., PICA evaluation results are available to you the day after final grades are due, whereas paper evaluation results are not available for several weeks or sometimes months), as well as clear and simple instructions for ordering PICA evaluations, which you do yourself through <http://pica.tamu.edu>.

**NOTE:** It is not presently possible to order PICA evaluations for labs. Instead, these are special order paper forms that must be ordered by our Lead Office Assistant and Graduate Coordinator, Chasiti Pecos ([cpecos@tamu.edu](mailto:cpecos@tamu.edu)).

2. If you choose paper forms, ensure that the forms have been ordered for your section by checking with Chasiti, including lab sections and team-taught sections.

3. The official evaluation period is the last 2 weeks of classes. Just before then, paper evaluation forms will be placed in your mailbox (or you will be notified when your PICA evaluation instrument will become active). Note that data indicate the last class day is NOT the ideal time to solicit evaluations (see <http://mars.tamu.edu/ratings/PDFfiles/Increasing%20ratings.pdf>), so consider doing so earlier.

### ADMINISTERING FORMS

For both online and PICA methods, I recommend that you preface distribution by informing your class that this is their opportunity to grade you, that you value their feedback to help improve your course, that their responses are anonymous, and that you will not see the results until after final grades are posted to promote their freedom to be honest. Note that it is unethical to offer extra credit or rewards of any kind to students for participating in course evaluations.

#### FOR PAPER FORMS:

1. Consider bringing a few extra pencils with you to class for students who don't have one – Chasiti often has some you can borrow, but be sure to return them.
2. Ask for a student volunteer to pass out and collect all the response forms (and pencils) and return them to Chasiti in Rm 230 (perhaps even write this on the envelope so they don't forget).
3. You must leave the room before the forms are distributed. The logic is that your presence could influence students' responses.
4. The results will be placed in your mailbox, usually sometime within the first 6 weeks of the subsequent semester.

#### FOR PICA FORMS:

1. Automatic emails to students will be generated to let them know the PICA form is open to them. I strongly suggest you send a personal email to your class as well with the "preface" statement above. It is also advisable to send at least one reminder email during the evaluation period.
2. You will be notified when the results are ready for you to view (and download/print).

Finally, consider ordering midterm (PICA only) evaluations for your course, particularly if you are new to teaching, or if you are teaching a new course. The feedback can be useful in helping you shape your course, and you can customize the midterm PICAs to ask whatever questions interest you. As an added bonus, the data indicate that students who do midterm evaluations rate their instructors significantly higher at the end of the semester compared to students who do not do midterm evaluations. Happy teaching!