

Updated Fall 2021

University course evaluations play a vital role as part of the evaluation material used for annual review of faculty and continuous focus on teaching excellence. As such, the university takes its commitment to quality course evaluations seriously. **As of fall 2021, university course evaluations have been centralized under eLearning using the Qualtrics QClassroom survey tool.** The Office of IT Services (a partner of eLearning) [published the following story](#) about this university change.

Distribution of Course Evaluations with QClassroom

Qualtrics QClassroom is a stand-alone program used exclusively for course evaluations that operates independently of Blackboard and other course delivery systems. Evaluation surveys and collected data are all accessed through the QClassroom interface.

What courses are evaluated? Beginning Fall 2021, Qualtrics QClassroom will be used to issue course evaluations for all courses listed on the schedule, regardless of modality or delivery method. The only exceptions will be for courses that do not need to be evaluated (e.g. dissertation hours).

Course and roster information is queried from the university's student information system and loaded directly into the QClassroom tool. Evaluation results are associated with the primary instructor listed for each course on the official class schedule.

When are courses evaluated? Each term, eLearning will generate a course evaluation using Qualtrics QClassroom two weeks prior to the day before grades are due, when they close at 5:00pm.

History

eLearning creates course shells in Blackboard for every single course and its sections each semester; no matter their modality. Historically, eLearning has utilized the Blackboard Enterprise Survey software tool to provide course surveys as a courtesy for online courses. Before the pandemic, the demand from academic departments for

course shell surveys continued to increase until it became an integral role for eLearning; even though the office was not mandated to support this process. At the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Office of the Chancellor directed the creation of a COVID-19 Course Evaluation Task Force as a critical function, given that face-to-face courses were not meeting. This task force also examined ways to determine how course evaluation management could be improved for the university. As a result, the following university leadership groups participated in the demonstration of QClassroom: Provost's Leadership Council, Faculty Senate Executive Committee, Online Campus Advisory Board, Office of IT Services, and eLearning Blackboard Support Division. Shortly after, eLearning was tasked with purchasing and collaborating with IT Services to integrate and implement Qualtrics QClassroom.

Academic Department Input on Course Evaluation Questions

Just like with the old Enterprise Survey course evaluation tool, academic departments can work with eLearning to create department-specific questions for their course evaluations completed using Qualtrics QClassroom. Note that the "department-level" is the most granular level eLearning will provide for questions. For departments not wanting specific questions, eLearning worked with the Faculty Senate Executive Committee during the start of the pandemic to obtain generic questions. If your academic department would like a set of department-specific questions, please email courseevaluations@ualr.edu .

Access to the Qualtrics Evaluation tool

Evaluation surveys and collected results are both accessed directly within the Qualtrics QClassroom tool, though faculty, staff, and students have different avenues for accessing the system.

Faculty and Administrative Access: In the past, eLearning was only able to logistically provide results to department chairs, and those chairs (or administrative assistants) would be responsible for dissemination to individual faculty. The UA Little Rock QClassroom survey tool provides greater access to completed course evaluations allowing direct dashboard access, and based on the increased capabilities of the

QClassroom tool, eLearning will not provide results directly to campus. The dashboard will be the sole point of access.

Evaluation results are distributed through department-specific dashboards accessible on [the university's QClassroom website](#). You can find [more information about how faculty use QClassroom](#) on the Course Evaluations page.

Students Access: Evaluations are available for students approximately two weeks leading up to the due date for final grades for any particular term, and [students can access their surveys in either of two ways available to them:](#)

1. Automated email notification generated by QClassroom sent to their university email account. The evaluation is mobile-friendly and can be completed without logging into Blackboard.
2. Students can log into Blackboard and click the Course Evaluations button to access the evaluation dashboard. This shows the list of their courses being evaluated for the current term and a progress indicator for each that shows whether the course evaluation has been completed.

You can find [more information about the QClassroom student experience](#) on the Blackboard Student Support website.

Increasing Response Rates

- Email notifications are sent to students at the beginning of each evaluation period, and students who have not completed the evaluation within three business days prior to the due date will be automatically sent another email (from within Qualtrics QClassroom) reminding them of the pending evaluation; a feature eLearning was not able to provide previously.
- Faculty are encouraged to remind their students that course evaluations are available to be completed as an additional method of increasing the response rate
 - Faculty teaching face-to-face classes can also encourage students to complete their course evaluation during class using their mobile phone.

- Please note that for some students, the emails re: course evaluations might go to the students' spam folder, so a reminder to check that folder is helpful.
- eLearning has created a subcommittee within the university's [Online Campus Advisory Board](#) (a body with representatives from each academic college) to continually address methods of improving response rates for course evaluations administered online.

Why did UA Little Rock centralize all university course evaluations within eLearning moving forward and what benefit will Qualtrics QClassroom bring to our university?

- eLearning can manage this process for all of Academic Affairs as an official office function, centralizing the importance of course evaluations in one place.
- Centralization of the course evaluation process eliminates any departmental/college costs for conducting their own course evaluations (i.e. staff, scantron sheets, etc.) and reduces instances where a course is not covered based on error (e.g. adjunct not knowing to do them).
- Centralization speeds up the time for academic departments to have access to course evaluation results; an important reality, especially at the start of each spring semester for annual reviews.

Please contact email courseevaluations@ualr.edu with any questions.