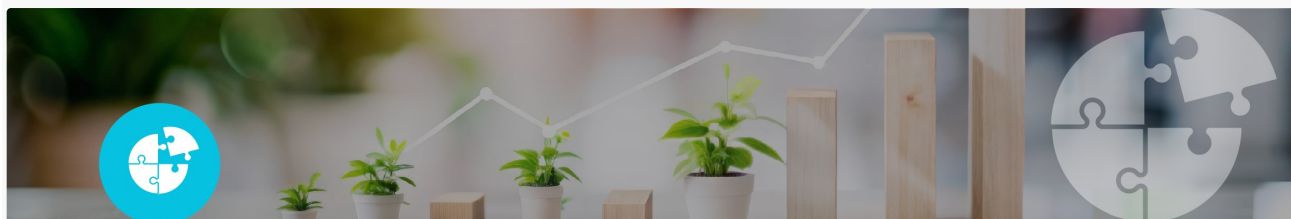


# Course Assessment Survey (CAS)

Version 14

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## Overview

Each term, students are invited to complete a Course Assessment Survey (CAS). This voluntary online survey includes a review of all courses and questions about delivery options. The CAS is an opportunity for you to receive valuable feedback directly from students about the positive impact of your teaching strategies. Reports are generated for courses that receive five or more assessments and shared with faculty via email the following term.

## Making the Most of CAS Feedback

Student course evaluations provide information about your students' overall experience in the course. It is important to keep in mind that this feedback reflects students' perceptions and that these perceptions may be influenced by many factors, including interest in the subject, motivation, unconscious biases, and class size to name just a few. Nevertheless, student course assessments can highlight ways in which students feel connected (or disconnected) to the course and their professor, validate your own perceptions of your teaching approaches, and reveal areas for improvement.

Here are some tips to maximize the impact of the CAS for you and your students.

- Promote the CAS to your students. Greater numbers of responses generate more accurate and valid data. Let your students know their feedback is important by sharing with them how you will use the CAS results.
- Include informal opportunities for student feedback throughout your course. CAS results become available after the current term has ended. To get a better picture of your students' experience during the course, periodically incorporate student feedback as part of your formative assessments or class activities. Use this formative feedback to adjust your teaching practices as the course progresses.
- Be open to learning from student feedback. Consider what value you place on your students' opinions and how this impacts your approach to teaching.

## Responding to Student Feedback

The Center for Teaching and Learning at the University of Georgia offers [Five Steps for Responding to Feedback from Students](#).

1. **Reflect.** Before you look at your student evaluation scores, think about what you are expecting. What went well in your course? What are some areas for growth/development/change?
2. **Read and React.** Look at your collected scores, then allow yourself to have an emotional reaction – good or bad – in response to the data.
3. **Relax.** Take a break. Process your emotions and prepare yourself to come back to the data with a fresh, more objective approach.
4. **Revisit.** Return to your evaluations and process them with a view to understanding your students' perceptions and experiences in your class.
5. **Respond.** Make decisions about what you will and will not change in your course(s) and your teaching, based on the feedback your students have given you. Make some notes for yourself alongside your course materials, so that you can remember what you would like to incorporate and/or change next time.

## Interpreting CAS Data

Seneca's CAS consists of Likert scale questions that ask students how often their professors exhibit various teaching behaviours. Each behaviour is given a number ranging from 1 (Never) to 5 (Always). The higher the average point value for a question, the more often the students feel the professor displays a particular behaviour. Questions are grouped into two broad categories: Instruction in Class and Interaction with Students.

Here are some things to look for when interpreting this type of feedback:

- **Look for general trends rather than specific numbers.** Small differences in average scores may not be significant and overall scores may be distorted by low response rates. Instead consider broader trends. For example, is the students' assessment of a particular question generally positive or negative? How does this rating compare to the averages in your School and across Seneca? How does this rating compare to your other courses? How has it changed over time?
- **Compare the two categories.** Is there a consistent pattern to the ratings in either or both of the categories? Do favourable and less favourable ratings cluster around particular themes?
- **Focus on the highlights.** Identify the 2 questions with the highest scores. Make note of these as important behaviours to continue. Likewise, find the 2 questions with the lowest scores. These may signal growth areas to target for professional development.
- **Take note of any surprises.** Are there any areas that show a difference between your expectations and the perceptions of your students? If so, it may be helpful to reflect upon possible reasons for this discrepancy.

## Learn More About Student Evaluations

- [Course Feedback as a Measure of Teaching Effectiveness](#)
- [Interpreting and Responding to Student Evaluations of Teaching \(pdf\)](#)
- [Interpreting Student Course Evaluation Feedback](#)

Looking for support? Feel free to reach out to us by emailing [teaching@senecapolytechnic.ca](mailto:teaching@senecapolytechnic.ca)

