



NASHVILLE SCHOOL *of* LAW

EDUCATING TENNESSEE'S LAWYERS SINCE 1911

Policy: 2016-01: Student Evaluation of Courses

Date: July 11, 2016

Purpose: The purpose of this policy is to establish uniform guidelines and procedures for student evaluation of courses and professors.

Review: This policy will be reviewed annually or as needed.

Policy/Procedure

1. Students in every course must be given an opportunity to review the course and the professor using the school's electronic course evaluation system. All course evaluations will be conducted on-line through the school's website. The evaluation form will consist of questions prepared by the school and may also include up to five (5) questions submitted by the professor and approved by the school. The evaluation form will also contain open-ended questions that invite students to comment on the course and the professor.

2. The evaluation period is generally 5-7 calendar days long. It will begin following the final exam or the final deadline for completing course assignments. All students enrolled in a class, as well as the professor(s), will receive an email containing information regarding the evaluation process. Students will be reminded to complete their evaluations.

3. Filling out and returning an evaluation is mandatory, but students may elect not to answer one or more question on the evaluation. Students who do not return their evaluation form will not receive their grade in that course.

4. The evaluation process is completely anonymous. To maintain anonymity, the school will not release information regarding who did or did not submit an evaluation, nor will the school permit the professors to review individual evaluation responses for their courses. Professors shall not attempt to influence the content of the students' evaluation and shall not retaliate against students based on the information provided during the evaluation process.

5. Following the posting of the final grades in a course, the school will provide the professor the following information: (1) copies of the students' answers, if any, to the open-ended questions on the evaluation form; (2) copies of the students' answers to the questions submitted by the professor; and (3) a numerical compilation of the answers to all other questions prepared by the school.

6. The answers to the questions submitted by the professor will be made available only to the professor for his or her confidential use and benefit.

7. The answers to the open-ended questions and the numerical compilation of the answers to all other questions prepared by the school shall be made available to the Dean, the school's staff, and the Board of Trustees and may be used by them in any appropriate manner in furtherance of the interest of the school.

8. Electronic copies of the evaluations, results, and summaries will be kept by the school for a period of ten (10) years.

Frequently Asked Questions – Students

Which courses and professors are evaluated?

All courses and professors are evaluated.

Am I required to evaluate every professor and course I take?

Yes. In courses with more than one professor, you will be required to evaluate the course and then each professor separately. In courses with more than one section, you will be required to evaluate the course and the professor.

Why am I required to complete course evaluations?

Course evaluations are important because they enable the professor and the school to improve the content and presentation of the courses.

How do I find the electronic course evaluations that I need to complete?

The electronic course evaluations will be available in the evaluations window on your Sonis Home Page. Instructions for signing onto Sonis will be emailed to you. If you have not received these instructions, contact the office for assistance.

How do I complete a course evaluation?

Click on the Electronic Course Evaluation on your Sonis Home Page. A new page will open with the evaluation. Once you have completed the evaluation, click "Submit" at the bottom of the page.

What should I do if I am unable to access an electronic evaluation I am required to complete?

If you are unable to access an electronic evaluation for any of your courses, contact the office for assistance.

Can I save a partially completed course evaluation and then complete it later?

No.

If I make a mistake on an evaluation, can I delete the evaluation and submit a corrected evaluation?

No.

What should I do if I do not want to answer a particular question and there is not a "not applicable" option?

You are not required to answer every question on an evaluation. You may simply skip any question you do not want to answer or for which you do not believe that an appropriate answer choice has been provided.

When should I complete my evaluations?

You should complete your evaluations before the deadline specified in the email informing you that the evaluations are available.

Will I be reminded to complete the evaluations?

Yes. You will receive an email notice when an evaluation is available, and you will receive email reminders to return your evaluation form.

What should I do if I miss a course evaluation deadline?

You should make every effort to avoid missing a deadline for a course evaluation because you will not receive a grade in any course for which you have not submitted an evaluation. If you have missed a deadline for good cause, contact the school as soon as possible. If the school accepts your reasons for missing the deadline for submitting an evaluation, you will be provided an opportunity to complete the evaluation.

How can I confirm that an evaluation has been received?

A message will appear in the evaluation window of your Sonis Home Page indicating that the evaluation was successfully submitted.

Will my professor know if I submitted an evaluation for a course?

Evaluations are required for all courses. Your professors may presume that you submitted an evaluation for the course. However, the school will not provide the professors with any information regarding who has or who has not submitted course evaluations.

Are the evaluations really secure and confidential?

Yes. The course evaluations are both secure and confidential. Professors do not receive any identifying information with their evaluation results. The system only keeps a record of who has submitted an evaluation in order to ensure that students have submitted an evaluation and that no student has submitted more than one evaluation for any course. The school knows whether or not a student has submitted an evaluation, but it has no record that attaches a student's identity to any one evaluation. Because the evaluations are completed electronically, there need be no concern about a professor recognizing a student's handwriting.

Are there any restrictions regarding the substance of the answers to the open-ended questions?

You are not required to answer the open-ended questions. If you decide to comment about the course or the professor or both, refrain from inadvertently providing information that will enable the professor or the school to identify you.

Who decides which questions to ask on a course evaluation?

All course evaluations contain questions selected and prepared by the school. In addition to these standard questions, professors may submit up to five (5) additional questions. These questions will be included in a course evaluation if the school determines that they are appropriate.

What information will be provided to the professor?

The professors receive (1) copies of the students' answers, if any, to the open-ended questions commenting on the course and the professor; (2) copies of the students' answers to the questions submitted by the professor; and (3) a numerical compilation of the answers to all other questions prepared by the school.

When will a professor receive the results of a course evaluation?

The tabulated results of a course evaluation will be made available to professors after the final grades for the course have been posted.

Can I view previous evaluation results for a course I am considering enrolling in?

No.

Where can I find the Nashville School of Law's evaluation policy?

The school's evaluation policy is available on the school's website or upon request in the school's administrative office.

My question was not answered; where else can I go for help?

If you encounter problems and need help accessing your evaluations, contact the administrative office.