ACADEMIC DEAN AND PROVOST INSTRUCTION 1531.12F

From: Academic Dean and Provost

Subj: MIDSHIPMAN EVALUATION OF CLASSES AND INSTRUCTORS

1. Purpose. To establish a process by which midshipmen may voluntarily, and with confidentiality, evaluate the quality of the instruction they receive and the content of the courses they take at the Naval Academy during each academic term. The information obtained from midshipmen will contribute in ascertaining the effectiveness of teaching and learning and may be used as inputs in military officer fitness reports and in decisions concerning pay, promotion, and tenure of civilian faculty members.

2. Cancellation. ACDEANINST 1531.12E. No special markings appear because this instruction is a complete revision. The instruction should be read in its entirety.

3. Discussion. Because the education of midshipmen is the ultimate purpose of the academic program, their reactions to its effectiveness are particularly important. Midshipmen will be requested to comment objectively on contributions to their education by the course, the section, the instructor, and themselves. These comments will help the instructor assess his or her performance and will help the administration evaluate the academic program, as well as the performance of individual faculty members.

4. Action

   a. Course and Instructor Evaluation Forms. Department chairs are responsible for devising forms that allow midshipmen to confidentially express their opinions and suggestions regarding their courses and instructors. Departments are free to construct forms best suited to their needs so long as they are designed to improve teaching and learning. Instructors must make it clear to midshipmen that their participation is entirely voluntary but that their views are considered highly valuable to the process of improving teaching and learning at the Naval Academy. Midshipmen should be assured that the information provided will be held in confidence and will not be used as the basis for any research concerning midshipmen. Course evaluations are not considered research for the purposes of applying the Code of Federal Regulations (32 CFR 219), and instructors are not required to submit a protocol for review to the USNA Institutional Review Board (IRB). It is understood that course and instructor evaluations are for internal use only and are not intended for external distribution, presentation, or publication. If, however, an instructor plans to add additional questions that are outside the scope of course assessment, or if an instructor plans to publish the results derived from the class surveys, the instructor should contact the Human Research Protection Program (HRPP) office before proceeding. Because midshipman participation is entirely voluntary, instructors may not pressure midshipmen to participate in the survey; however, instructors may tell midshipmen of the value of their participation to the educational process at the Naval Academy. In those cases where midshipmen will complete the opinion survey in class, instructors should
absent themselves during the time when the midshipmen are completing the forms; however, a person other than the instructor may monitor the process. In those cases where midshipmen will complete the opinion survey outside of class, the instructor should direct the midshipmen to this instruction on the Dean's website for their information.

Midshipman opinion forms should not rely exclusively on multiple-choice questions but should afford midshipmen the opportunity to write thoughtfully about the impact of the course, the section, the instructor, and their own efforts on the failure to achieve or the achievement of the intended learning outcomes. Electronic submission of midshipman opinion forms is acceptable. Plans for utilizing electronic means for collecting midshipman evaluations must be submitted to the Vice Academic Dean via the appropriate Division Director for approval in the academic term prior to that term in which the form is to be used. Any significant changes to a department's form must also be submitted via the appropriate Division Director to the Vice Academic Dean for approval prior to the academic term they are first used.

When paper forms are used, instructors will distribute these forms to all of their midshipmen and ensure their collection not later than the last day of class of the academic term. The midshipman section leader will collect the forms from each of the midshipmen who wish to submit them, place the completed forms in an envelope, and note on the outside of the envelope the number of midshipmen in the section and the number of forms collected. The section leader will then seal the envelope and return it directly to the department chair or other designee. In no case is the section leader to return the completed forms to the instructor.

Department chairs will ensure that the collected evaluation forms are kept in a locked cabinet or office. Department chairs will review the forms and maintain them on file. Instructors will be given the opportunity to review the midshipman evaluation forms from their sections after all end-of-course grades have been submitted. These forms will be maintained for four years or until the faculty member detaches from the Naval Academy, whichever is sooner, at which time the forms will be destroyed. Whenever electronic means are used to collect midshipman opinion forms, similar rules shall apply.

Whenever an instructor's teaching effectiveness is being judged for officer or civilian personnel evaluations, promotion, tenure, or awards, these evaluations will be given due consideration along with all other evidence of effectiveness in promoting midshipman learning. All midshipman evaluation forms for an instructor will be sent forward together with a summary of the evaluations provided by the faculty member's department chair and comments by the faculty member, if so desired.

Information about an instructor collected on midshipman evaluation forms will be treated with administrative privacy.

Division Directors will ensure that midshipman evaluation forms are prepared and utilized by each department in their divisions in accordance with this instruction.

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All Non-Mids (electronically)