



DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY
OFFICE OF THE ACADEMIC DEAN AND PROVOST
UNITED STATES NAVAL ACADEMY
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ACDEANINST 1531.12G
2/ADAA

SEP 03 2014

ACADEMIC DEAN AND PROVOST INSTRUCTION 1531.12G

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 in their evaluations of classes and instructors (commonly referred to as Student Opinion Forms or SOFs) is used to ascertain the effectiveness of teaching and learning. Results of evaluations may be used by department chairs and their designees to adjust teaching strategies for courses and programs, as input in military officer fitness reports, in annual performance evaluations of instructional faculty members, and in decisions concerning pay, promotion, and tenure of civilian faculty members.

2. Cancellation. ACDEANINST 1531.12F.

3. Discussion. Because the education of midshipmen is the primary focus of the academic program, their evaluation of its effectiveness is particularly important. Midshipmen will be requested to provide their objective observations on contributions to their education by the course, the section, the instructor, and themselves. These observations will help the instructor assess his or her own performance, and will help others in the evaluation of the academic program and the performance of individual faculty members.

4. Policy.

a. Department chairs are responsible for developing course and instructor evaluation forms that allow midshipmen to confidentially express their observations and suggestions regarding their courses and instructors. Departments are free to construct forms best suited to their needs as long as they are designed to determine if teaching and learning goals are being achieved, and as long as midshipmen input is anonymous and confidential. No personally identifying information will be collected. Personally identifying information is defined as information that can be used individually, in combination, or in context to identify an individual. Personally identifying information includes, but is not limited to, names, alpha numbers, QPR's, grades, academic majors, social security numbers, or any combination of data that, when combined, can identify an individual. Departments should carefully consider the value of requesting information about midshipmen in relation to course or instructor evaluation and should review existing research to determine the validity of correlations.

b. Instructors must make it clear to midshipmen that their participation is entirely voluntary, but that their views are valuable to the process of improving teaching and learning at the Naval Academy. Midshipmen should be assured that the information provided will be held by

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the department or program until after grades are submitted, as described in 4e below, and will not be used as the basis for any research concerning midshipmen.

c. Course evaluations are not considered research for the purposes of applying the Code of Federal Regulations (32 8FR 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. However, if 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 evaluations, the instructor must 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 evaluation; instructors are encouraged to tell midshipmen of the value of their participation to the educational process at the Naval Academy. In those cases where midshipmen complete an evaluation in class, instructors should excuse 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 complete an evaluation outside of class, the instructor should direct the midshipmen to this instruction for specific information regarding the process described in part 4.e below.

d. Course and instructor evaluation forms should not exclusively rely on fixed response items, but should afford midshipmen the opportunity to write thoughtfully about the impact of the course, the section, the instructor, and their own efforts regarding the achievement of the intended learning outcomes in an open-ended format. Electronic submission of evaluation 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.

e. 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 midshipman who wishes to submit one, 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.

f. Department chairs will ensure that the collected evaluation forms are kept in a locked cabinet or office. Department chairs and, as appropriate, their designees 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

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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.

g. 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 (e.g., results of classroom assessments, midterm evaluations, peer observations, small group instructional diagnosis/focus groups) 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.

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

5. Action. Division directors will ensure that midshipman evaluation forms are prepared and used by each department in their divisions in accordance with this instruction.



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Distribution:

All Non-Mids (electronically)