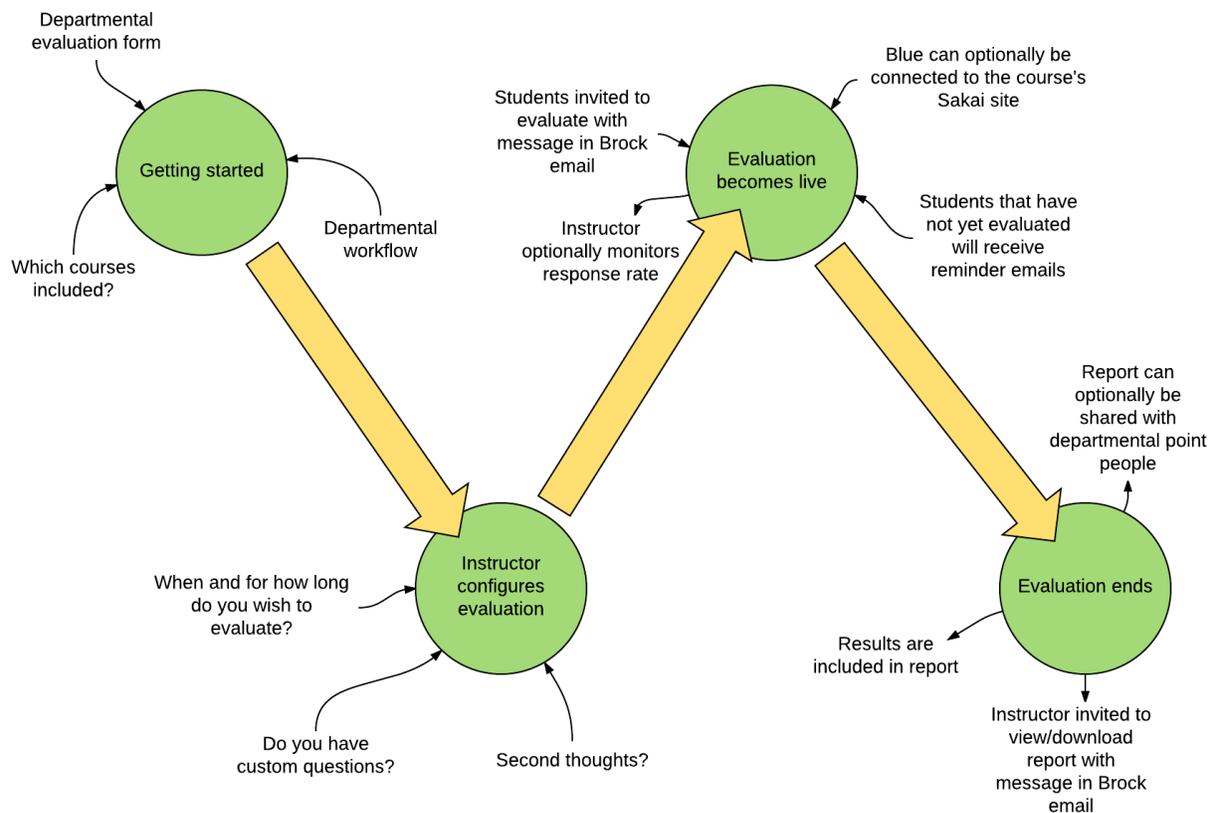


Evaluation of Brock courses with eXplorance Blue - an overview

What is Blue?

eXplorance's Blue software releases a digitized version of your departmental course evaluation to students at the end of an academic term. Students are notified through Brock email that an evaluation is available and can access the evaluation directly through the email and/or optionally through your Isaak-Sakai site. When the evaluation period closes, Blue compiles responses into a report and makes it available to the instructor.

Figure 1: the evaluation process with Blue



Participation

As Blue nears the completion of its third full year of use, participation of academic programs and departments continues to build. Some highlights:

- Nearly 1/3 of all Brock University courses offered in the 2017/18 academic year were evaluated online with Blue
- 24 departments use Blue as their principal course evaluation instrument
- 2844 courses have been evaluated online with Blue since the Fall 2015 pilot term

Many individual courses which are evaluated online with Blue. These can include the following:

- Courses which are delivered in a fully online format, making evaluation in an online format a necessity.
- Courses for which it is otherwise impractical to evaluate within a physical meeting space.
- Courses for which the instructor, regardless of format, has chosen to opt into online evaluation and is a member of an academic department that has established the instructor's privilege to do so.

Table 1: Participation by term since Fall 2015

Academic Term	Courses evaluated	%Change vs. term in previous year	Response rate
Fall 2015	175	-	31%
Winter 2015	184	-	40%
Spring 2016	130	-	34%
Summer 2016	85	-	34%
Fall 2016	370	+ 111%	45%
Winter 2016	432	+ 135%	35%
Spring 2017	167	+ 28%	25%
Summer 2017	70	- 18%	19%
Fall 2017	464	+ 25%	44%
Winter 2017	530	+ 23%	40%
Spring 2018	180	+ 7%	36%
Summer 2018	57	- 18%	30%

Some details of the evaluation process with Blue

An important goal with Blue has been to respect as closely as possible the existing course evaluation practices in participating departments:

- In most cases, the content of the existing departmental course evaluation form is made digital for delivery to students.
- When reports of student evaluation have been created by Blue, they are electronically delivered to the course instructor.
- Though evaluations are by default open within a two-week window at the conclusion of courses, the course instructor is provided with the option to adjust this timing, or to opt out of online evaluation with Blue.
- Evaluation reports are made available to instructors after each term's deadline for submission of final course grades.

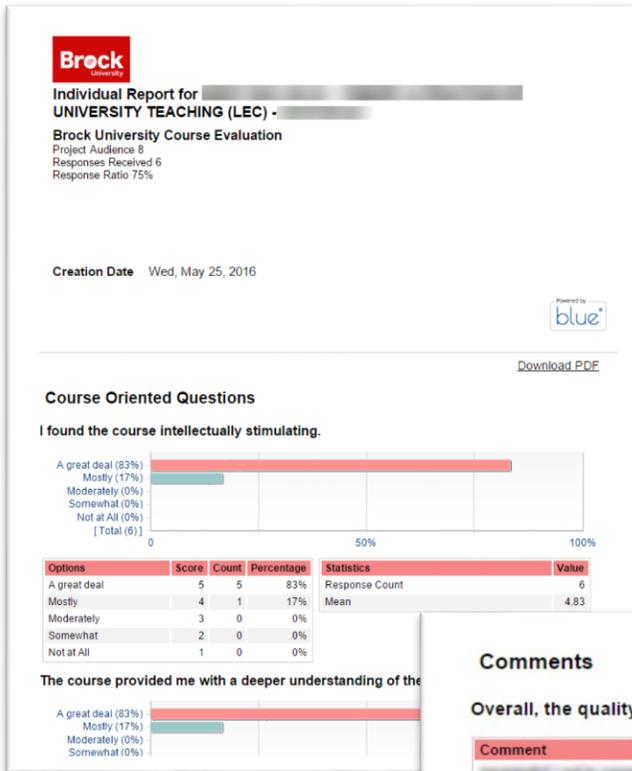
The online format lends a great deal of flexibility to the evaluation of teaching:

- For each individual course evaluation, instructors have the option to include additional questions to the existing departmental form. This provides an opportunity to seek feedback about something unique to the course's delivery.
- Instructors are encouraged to make use of the following rated questions:

- This is an excellent course
 - I learned a great deal from this course
 - This instructor was an excellent teacher
 - I learned a great deal from this instructor
- The window for online evaluation can be made significantly wider than that of traditional in-class course evaluation. Times can be shifted, extended, or decreased by the instructor as needed. This provides for more opportunity for students to consider their responses to evaluation and even to complete the departmental form in more than one sitting.
 - Students are informed through Brock email that an online evaluation of their course is awaiting their submissions. Students that do not respond after several days will receive reminder messages.
 - Cuts down on the logistics of evaluation for the instructor and the administrative support.
 - Optionally, reporting on response trends across courses within a department can also be created.

Best practices in evaluation of teaching apply here – consider the following:

- Remind students that their responses will remain permanently anonymous. Though this is indicated within the introduction of the online form that students receive, it is worth ensuring that students are not fearful of being honest.
- Note any processes that exist within your department that make use of student evaluation data. Remind students that their input is critical to the continued development of Brock's teaching environment!
- Providing an in-class opportunity for your students to respond, whether evaluation is done in an online or print format, does a great deal to demonstrate the importance and legitimacy of the evaluation of teaching. This practice has also been shown to substantially increase response rates.
- If you use Sakai as part of your course delivery, consider enabling the eXplorance Blue plugin tool. This will establish a direct connection to Blue that students will be able to see and click upon after logging into your course site, and authentication to Blue will not be required.



An evaluation report in snippets

Figure 2 (left) - the first page and a summary of some Likert-style questions

This is a snapshot of the first page of an individual evaluation report that's made electronically available to a course instructor.

Figure 3 (right) - a statistics report for Likert-style questions

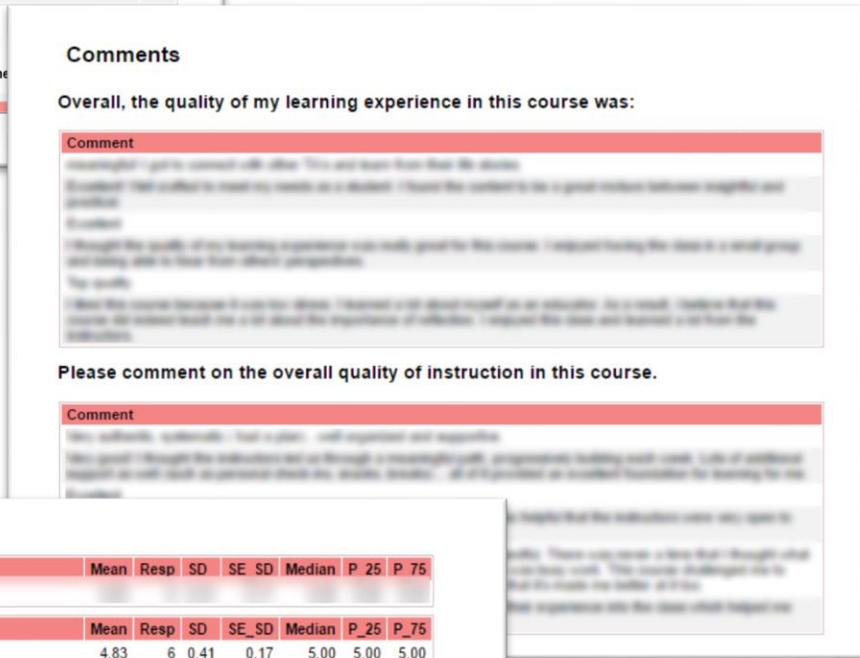


Figure 4 (left) - a summary of comments submitted to 2 open-response questions