SOS Manual
for Department SOS Coordinators
(Revised July 2016)

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INTRODUCTION
The student opinion survey (SOS) is the tool by which students evaluate an on-campus instructor. The SOS is one instrument instructors can utilize to demonstrate teaching effectiveness. The SOS results are used by university administration when evaluating an instructor for reappointment, promotion, or tenure consideration and post-tenure review. Finally, the SOS is the only instrument that is financially and administratively supported by the Office of Institutional Research (OIR).

The department’s SOS coordinator plays a key role in assembling and processing the SOS. While the procedures can be very detailed and time-consuming, the efforts of each department’s SOS coordinator can lead to accurate and timely results which strengthen the quality of CMU’s education. The following outline is provided as a guide to assist in the assembly and processing of the SOS for each semester.
COMMUNICATION

Each department’s chairperson and one specified coordinator, as well as each dean’s office, will receive SOS information during the semester via email. Please carefully review instructions received via email, as they will contain important information regarding the processing, including the deadline for submitting packets each semester.

Department’s may also specify a secondary contact to receive email communication only. All supplies and packet corrections will be sent directly to the department’s SOS Coordinator (primary contact).

SUPPLIES

Departments will receive two colored labels for each course. The labels will be sent around the 5th week of the fall and spring semesters (summer labels will be mailed in April or May).

During the 5th week of the fall and spring semesters, departments will receive a supply order form (which is also posted on the OIR website). Since no supplies are sent in the summer, the spring order must include supplies for any summer courses.

OIR will supply the following materials for the administration of the survey.

- One 10 x 13 envelope per section to be used for the administration, collection and processing of the survey scantrons (see note below). Please place one colored course label in the upper right corner of this envelope.
- One 6 x 9 envelope per section to be used for the collection and storage of individual opinion sheets (see note below). Please place one colored course label in the upper right corner of this envelope.
- One survey scantron form per student per section
- One header sheet per section
- One individual opinion sheet per student per section
- One faculty instruction form per instructor
- One student volunteer instruction form per section

Supplies will be delivered to each department approximately two weeks after the designated order deadline (about the 8th week of the fall and spring semesters).

NOTE: The envelopes will be reused. The 6 x 9 envelopes will only be distributed in the fall semester. Faculty should return the 6 x 9 envelopes to the SOS coordinators for future use.

Departments utilizing supplies in addition to those listed above will do so at their own expense.

THE IMPORTANCE OF GLOBAL ID’S

The data analysis program utilizes CMU’s Global ID to identify the instructor of a particular course. It will be the responsibility of the department SOS coordinator to maintain a record of current faculty and graduate assistant Global IDs.

To ensure the proper instructor is credited for the SOS results, please process the needed paperwork with the registrar’s office for any change in instructor before SOS processing occurs. Once the processing of the survey cycle is completed, all changes to the permanent records in the respective department and Dean’s offices, as well as the affected faculty members’ personnel file, must be done manually by the department.
TEAM-TAUGHT COURSES
Team-taught courses should have one packet assembled for each instructor. In other words, an SOS envelope never contains SOS forms for more than one instructor.

MULTIPLE CRN’S PROCESSED AS ONE SECTION
A department may choose to have multiple course reference numbers (CRN’s) to be processed as one section. If so, use the following procedures:

- Select one CRN number for all students to use on the scantron forms.
- Submit in a single envelope with all the appropriate CRN labels affixed to envelope. Write “ALL” on the label next to the CRN that is being utilized. Ensure the top and bottom forms are coded with the selected CRN.
- Use only one header sheet.

MISSING LABELS
If you do not have a preprinted colored label, please prepare a white label (printed or neatly handwritten) with the needed information:

- Full proper name (as listed in the online CMU directory, no nicknames)
- Global ID
- Short course name (e.g., BIO 101)
- CRN (8 digits)
- Brief explanation for change (e.g., GA, instructor change, team taught, etc.)

If you did not receive any colored labels (or you lost them), please contact OIR at 3933. If there is a significant number of labels needed and time to accommodate the request, labels may be reprinted.

INCORRECT LABELS
Cross off any incorrect information and clearly print correction on the label only. Or you can make a white label and follow directions above for missing labels.

ASSEMBLING SURVEY PACKETS FOR FACULTY
After receiving SOS supplies, the department SOS coordinators will assemble packets as follows:

- Labels – Place one colored label per section onto the front upper right corner of a 10 x 13 SOS envelope. Place one colored label per section onto a 6 1/2 x 9 1/2 envelope and place the envelope into the labeled 10 x 13 envelope.
- Student Volunteer Instructions – Fill in the blanks with the correct information and insert one instruction sheet per packet.
- Scantron Form – Insert one form per student.
- Individual Opinions Sheet – Insert one form per student.
- Faculty Instruction Sheet – Distribute one sheet to each instructor in your department. They will use the same instructions for all SOS administration.
WORKING WITH THE INSTRUCTORS
The department SOS coordinator disperses the SOS materials to the appropriate instructors. This is a
good time to ask if the instructor needs expedited service.

EXPEDITED SERVICE
The SOS coordinator should give top priority to preparing and delivering any SOS packet that requires
expedited service. If an instructor needs the SOS results expedited, please notify OIR at your earliest
convenience with the following information.

1. Why you need expedited service (such as tenure, promotion, reappointment decisions)
2. Name of instructor
3. CRN for each course

Attaching a hand-written note (such as on a post-it) to the SOS envelope also helps to expedite the
processing and preliminary results.

WHEN TO ADMINISTER SURVEYS
The time for administration of the SOS should be within the last two weeks of class prior to the final
exam. The SOS should not be administered before this timeframe or during final exam week.

STUDENT VOLUNTEER
It is strongly recommended that a student volunteer be selected by the faculty member to assist in the
administration and collection of the survey. This student will collect all survey and individual opinions
sheets, place them in separate envelopes and return them to the respective departmental office once
completed.

It is also strongly suggested the faculty member leave the classroom while the students are filling out
the survey forms.

1. The student volunteer will distribute a survey sheet and an Individual Opinions sheet to each
   student in the section and read verbatim the instructions below (which are also available on the
   OIR website).

   Instructions to be Read to Students by Student Volunteer:

   1. Please use only a #2 pencil and erase thoroughly if you change a response. (Note: The use
      of a pencil cannot be stressed enough. The scanner cannot “read” ink or marker. Due to
      this, surveys that are filled out with ink or marker become void.)

   2. The Course Designator/Number for this class is ________________. Please enter this
      information on the first line of the form.

   3. The CMU Faculty Global ID for this class is ________________. Please enter this
      alpha/numeric code in the section titled “CMU Faculty Global ID.”

   4. The Course Reference Number for this class is _____________________________. Enter
      this 8-digit number in the section titled “Course Reference Number.”
5. Please mark the appropriate response to the remaining questions. Please pay careful attention to the scale. For questions 1-7, 1 indicates “Strongly Agree” and 5 indicates “Strongly Disagree.” If you do not have an opinion with regard to any question, please leave the response to the question blank. When finished, return the completed survey to the front of the class.

6. You may express your personal reactions to this class on the accompanying “Individual Opinions” sheet that is provided for this purpose. Please include the instructor’s name and course reference number in the space provided. Once completed, these forms are to be placed in the 6½” x 9½” manila envelope and will not be returned to the instructor until after grades are finalized.

2. Questions 9 – 10 on the questionnaire are intended for department and/or faculty member use. Indicate to the class what these questions are. (Provisions for responses should be coded as in items 9-10).

3. The Individual Opinions sheet is an opportunity for the students to express their individual reactions to the class. These sheets will be returned (by the department) directly to the instructors at the end of each semester after final grades have been turned in.

4. The selected student volunteer will assist by collecting all survey sheets, and Individual Opinions sheets and place them inside the original numbered envelope. The student volunteer will then return the packages to the Department Office immediately after the administration of the survey.

5. (For multiple-instructor sections only). A survey sheet and Individual Opinions sheet is to be distributed for each instructor to each student. Instruct the student volunteer to include instruction 7 below in those that are read to the students:

7. A survey sheet is to be filled out for each instructor. Be sure the correct course reference number and CMU faculty Global ID code is included on each sheet.

PREPARING SOS ENVELOPES FOR SUBMISSION TO OIR
When the completed SOS forms are returned to the department, the SOS coordinator prepares the SOS envelopes by following the procedures below.

1. Retain small envelopes containing the individual opinion sheets (½ sheets). Place these in a secure location until after the instructor deadline for submitting (or changing) semester grades; you will then distribute the individual opinion sheets directly to the instructors.

2. Separate unused survey scantrons from completed forms (8½ x 11 scantrons). Store unused sheets for future use. Remove any extra papers such as student or faculty instructions.

3. Place all completed scantron sheets in the same direction.

4. Check the accuracy of information on the survey sheets for each packet (by comparing it to the label on the envelope) to ensure the correct instructor’s CMU Global ID and course reference number are listed and the appropriate corresponding fields (“bubbles”) are completed. Failure to provide the correct CMU Global ID and CRN may result in delays for the instructor’s
access to summary results.

5. Carefully verify that the first and last scantrons in the stack are legible, accurate (including the corresponding fields) and completed in pencil. Any forms that are inaccurate (related to the Global ID and CRN) or are completed in ink should be placed in the middle of the stack. As a rule, the SOS coordinator does not make changes to the scantron forms; however, if all scantrons are inaccurate (on Global ID and CRN), the SOS coordinator must correct the first and last scantron only. OIR will accept incorrectly completed forms that are placed in the middle of the stack, as long as the first and last scantrons are entirely correct.

6. Place one “header sheet” on top of the stack. The header sheet acts as a divider between each course. The header sheet has only the first six X’s filled in under the CMU Faculty Global ID section. No other information should appear on this form. Please do not write on the header sheet (so that these may be re-used).

7. Insert completed sheets (with header sheet on top) into envelope with appropriate label (furnished earlier in semester).

8. If you are submitting multiple sections that you want processed as one, please be sure to submit with:
   - Single header sheet
   - Single envelope with all CRN labels
   - Select one CRN number for all students to use on scantron forms. Write “ALL” on the label to indicate you want everything in the packet processed for this CRN. Ensure the top and bottom forms are ccded with the selected CRN.

9. Send completed envelope(s) to OIR in WA 312U. Please forward collected surveys for processing as soon as possible, and no later than the deadline. Please do not hold on to packets until the end of the semester or until they are all prepared.

**SOS SUBMISSION DEADLINE**

It is extremely important that all packets are received in OIR by the deadline. Please note that once processing has been completed for a semester (and department, college, and university reports are made available) OIR is not able to process late packets. The processing cycle is very time consuming and labor intensive. With the large volume of surveys that need to be processed in a relatively short amount of time, OIR asks that you follow the guidelines listed above to ensure the results are processed and communicated back to respective parties as quickly as possible.

**ERRORS TO AVOID**
The following are errors that delay the processing of the SOS.

- Incorrect faculty Global ID
- Incorrect course reference number (CRN)
- Incorrect faculty member credited for class
- Incomplete/missing information in the faculty Global ID, CRN and semester fields
- Packet is not properly labeled
  - Info is not printed legibly
- Instructor’s nickname is used or spelled incorrectly
- No explanation of instructor change
- Packets are not properly prepared
- Answer sheets are submitted without proper envelope and label

SOS packets that are improperly submitted will be returned to the department for correction before processing.

ACCESSING RESULTS

All faculty and staff may access the SOS results online from the OIR website. Located under the category of Student Opinion Survey Reports and Scores, there are different options to view results:

1. **Faculty Evaluation Reports**
   Summary results for the most recent five years are available for (1) faculty using their Global ID and password and (2) deans, department chairpersons and SOS coordinators using the administrative password provided by OIR. This area of the website will be locked (except to faculty) while the current semester’s SOS scores are being processed. (If this site is closed, use option 2 below.)

2. **Archive of SOS Reports (Internal Reports)**
   Archived SOS results are available to all faculty and staff using their Global ID and password.

3. **SOS Normative Distribution Reports**
   Normative Distribution Reports can be created on a variety of variables. These are also available to all faculty and staff.

SOS results will never be available before the semester deadline for submission of final grades. After that, faculty may begin to access preliminary results as they become available through https://ssl.cmich.edu/sos2. Faculty instructions for utilizing this site can be found on OIR’s website.

The fall and spring processing cycles can take over a month to complete due to the volume of packets that need to move through the final processing stage. Summer semesters will be completed mid to late August.

Data for the university, college and departmental reports are not valid until all survey packets have completed the processing cycle. Due to this, dean and departmental offices will not be granted access to the site until all SOS have been processed. OIR will provide deans, department chairpersons, and SOS coordinators the new password needed to access the current term’s information.

Due to space restraints, OIR recycles the completed survey scantrons after six months for a given semester.
Access to historical summary reports is also accessible through Park Library (Reserve Desk). Information prior to Summer I, 2003 is stored on microfiche, and reports from Summer 1, 2003 to current are available on CDs in .pdf format.

**QUESTIONS?**

If you have questions or need assistance, visit our website for more information or call OIR at 3933.