IDEA FAQs

Please do not hesitate to call or email John Walker, Associate Dean, with more questions if you have them.

I didn't think I need to attend an orientation session, what do I do now? Contact me, John Walker, at 8-8323 or jwalker@ilstu.edu. Either an orientation session will be made available to you or written instructions provided.

How do I administer the extra questions on the IDEA form, should I choose to have any? Should you choose to take advantage of the extra question component of the IDEA form you are responsible for distributing copies of the extra questions to students before they receive and complete the IDEA student form. Remember to keep a copy of the questions for your records. Unless otherwise arranged with your school director, it is not the responsibility of office staff to manage this aspect of the evaluation.

When do I need to complete the Faculty Information Form (the sheet with the blue writing) and turn it in? The sooner, the better, but definitely before the end of the semester so they can be submitted for processing with the student forms.

Where do I submit my completed Faculty Information Form? In the School of Art, submit them to Vikkie Cossio; in Music, submit them to Angie Scott; and in Theatre, submit them to Amy Coon.

I need more Faculty Information Forms where can I get them? From me, John Walker, in the Dean's office.

How do I know that my scores are kept confidential by IDEA? IDEA doesn’t release any individual or institutional results to anyone other than the person(s) listed as the on-campus contacts. Even if an individual wants a copy of "their" report, the request has to go through the appropriate channels. This is a very important process/policy for them. They know that the data they work with are important to the individuals and are serious about maintaining confidentiality in order to maintain the reputation and integrity of their organization.

Is the data sold to third parties? No. IDEA has participated in research projects with others in academia, but all individual or institutional information is stripped when data is provided for research purposes.

From what I can tell, there is no distinction in scores from one type of institution to another. I am concerned that I might be compared with instructors in research universities and I don't think that is fair. Isn't there a difference in evaluations from one type of institution to another? IDEA research shows that there are no significant differences by institution type; therefore, they don't provide different comparisons. However, if you are interested, I can send you a list of institutions that currently use or are piloting IDEA.

I teach a disciplinary history course, I don't think it is appropriate for this class to be compared to all courses in the school. Can I choose a general history code? It makes sense that a disciplinary history course is more like a general history course than a studio class; therefore, it may be appropriate to use a general history code as the comparison discipline. It is recommended to think more about the "discipline" rather than the "department." I recommend discussing this with your school director and colleagues in your discipline.

Are results of questions in "the Instructor" section of the Diagnostic Form (which are the first 20 questions on the student survey) tied to the learning objectives? The 20 "instructor" (method) items are not tied to what is reported or adjusted for the learning objectives on the score
for progress on relevant learning objectives. In the full report that you will receive in January, there will be feedback on these questions to let you know what is working in your class and what is not and provide “recommended actions” if they are related to the objectives that you have chosen.

**I don’t understand what the converted scores are or how they are derived.** In order to show how an individual's scores “compare” to someone else, IDEA converts them so that they represent a normal distribution (bell-shaped curve). IDEA is attempting to show how an individual's score "compares" to others who use IDEA. If someone's average on the 5-point scale is the same as the IDEA average (or discipline's or institutions), then the converted score will be a 50. If the scores are between 45 and 55, then they are like 40% of the other's who use IDEA and are said to be "similar."

Many of us are not "numbers" people, so this is shown graphically on the front page in the lower right section of the report returned to you once the surveys are processed. (you have a sample in the forms that I gave you at the orientation session.) If scores fall in the gray area, they are considered similar - which represents good teaching because scores are compared to others in the profession of teaching and are typically going to be pretty good at it. The converted averages are also "interpreted" with words (similar, higher, much higher, lower, much lower).

I hope this helps.

Again, thank you for your cooperation.