

IDEA Student Ratings of Instruction: Faculty Information Form




The Faculty Information Form (FIF) is an essential part of the IDEA Student Ratings of Instruction System. This document will introduce the purpose of the FIF, how to select Learning Objectives, and why your selection of objectives is important. These articles are extracted from a [series on the IDEA blog](#).

Purpose of the Faculty Information Form

Besides IDEA, most student ratings of instruction surveys, if not all, are designed as a single form process requiring only students to respond. This format is typically used because the goal is to collect student feedback on an instructor's teaching methods and behaviors. The results of these types of instruments are then usually compared to a model of what a teacher should be doing in order to judge teaching effectiveness.

The philosophy behind the IDEA system is different. The IDEA survey's chief indicator of teaching effectiveness is how well students rate their progress on the types of learning that faculty target. Since every course is different, faculty are requested to indicate targeted learning goals for each course on a separate form, called the Faculty Information Form, or FIF.

campuslabs  Sample ▾

Music 101 (02): Music Appreciation

Edit Learning Objectives Discipline Code: No Discipline Code set. Please contact Administrator.

Using the scale provided, identify the relevance of each of the twelve objectives to this course. As a general rule, prioritize what you want students to learn by selecting no more than 3-5 objectives as either Important or Essential. The weighting system used to generate the IDEA report weighs **Minor (M)** objectives "0," **Important (I)** objectives "1," and **Essential (E)** objectives "2."

Learning Objective	M	I	E
Gaining factual knowledge (terminology, classifications, methods, trends)	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Learning fundamental principles, generalizations, or theories	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Learning to <i>apply</i> course material (to improve thinking, problem solving, and decisions)	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Developing specific skills, competencies, and points of view needed by professionals in the field most closely related to this course	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Acquiring skills in working with others as a member of a team	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Developing creative capacities (writing, inventing, designing, performing in art, music, drama, etc.)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
Gaining a broader understanding and appreciation of intellectual/cultural activity (music, science, literature, etc.)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
Developing skill in expressing oneself orally or in writing	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Learning how to find and use resources for answering questions or solving problems	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Developing a clearer understanding of, and commitment to, personal values	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Learning to <i>analyze</i> and <i>critically evaluate</i> ideas, arguments, and points of view	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Acquiring an interest in learning more by asking questions and seeking answers	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Edit Learning Objectives:

Using the scale provided, identify the relevance of each of the 12 learning objectives. As a general rule, prioritize what you want students to learn by selecting no more than 3-5 objectives as either Important or Essential. The weighting system used to generate the IDEA report weighs **Minor (M)** objectives "0," **Important (I)** objectives "1," and **Essential (E)** objectives "2."

The FIF is a very important component to the IDEA student ratings system. Essentially, it gives faculty a voice in the rating process. It empowers the faculty member to be an active participant in the reflective process—reflecting upon what goals should be emphasized and then, when the results are returned, how well students rated their progress on those particular goals.

The Diagnostic Form Report also provides suggested action steps for improvement efforts. Based on a correlation study, IDEA identified which particular methods are associated with student progress on each learning objective. Based on the results of this study, faculty are provided with specific suggestions to consider (formative tab of the Diagnostic Report) as they work toward helping students make better progress on their learning goals.

IDEA is committed to student learning. As colleges and universities use IDEA, which highlights students' ratings of their targeted learning goals, they are putting a focus on student learning.

How to Select Learning Objectives

When faculty design courses, one of the first things they usually do is decide what they want their students to learn. They craft their learning targets into learning “objectives” or “outcomes.” It is important that these statements be focused on what the student will learn rather than on what the teacher will do in the class.

The IDEA Learning Objectives

If you are using the IDEA Student Ratings of Instruction survey, you will need to decide how your targeted learning goals match the IDEA objectives. The learning objectives you have written for your course are specific to the learning experience you have designed for your students. Your next step is to determine into which of the 12 general objectives your specific objectives would fit.

How many objectives should I select?

To begin this process, it is helpful to keep in mind that, as a rule of thumb, you may want to limit your selection to between 3-5 objectives. Although all 12 learning objectives sound like great learning goals for all students, it is unrealistic to expect that, in a single course, students could make significant progress on all or even most of them. As the FIF states at the top of the form above the objectives, try to “prioritize what you want students to learn by selecting no more than 3-5 objectives as Important or Essential.” However, be true to your course. If you are teaching a course where you are targeting only one objective (such as a lab experience), then it would be appropriate to select only one on the FIF. On the other hand, if you are teaching a capstone class in the major, and you have targeted many learning objectives, it would be appropriate for you to select more than five on the FIF.

Which objectives should I select?

How do you actually select which IDEA objectives are relevant (“important” or “essential”) to your course? Here are three different approaches that might help you with this task. First, you can use a three-question guide to assist you in your decision-making. Ask yourself these three questions about each of the 12 IDEA objectives:

1. Is this a significant part of the course?
2. Do I do something specific to help the students accomplish this objective?
3. Does the student's progress on this objective affect his or her grade?

If you answer “yes” to each of these questions regarding a particular objective, then you should rate that objective as either “essential” or “important.” Keep in mind that if you rate the objective as “Minor or No Importance,” you are not saying that the objective is unimportant. Instead, you are indicating that your course will not focus on that objective.

The second approach you might find useful is to think first about the very broad categories of the IDEA objectives. Below, you will see a table that shows how the 12 general IDEA learning objectives encompass six broad areas. Seeing how the 12 objectives fit into the six broad categories might help you as you think about which objectives are relevant to your course.

6 Broad Categories	12 General Learning Objectives
Basic Cognitive Background	1. Gaining factual knowledge (terminology, classifications, methods, trends) 2. Learning fundamental principles, generalizations, or theories
Application of Learning	3. Learning to apply course materials (to improve rational thinking, problem solving and decisions) 4. Developing specific skills, competencies and points of view needed by professionals in the field most closely related to this course
Expressiveness	6. Developing creative capacities (writing, inventing, designing, performing in art, music, drama, etc.) 8. Developing skills in expressing oneself orally or in writing
Intellectual Development	7. Gaining broader understanding and appreciation of intellectual-cultural activity (music, science, literature, etc.) 10. Developing a clearer understanding of, and commitment to, personal values 11. Learning to analyze and critically evaluate ideas, arguments, and points of view
Lifelong Learning	9. Learning how to find and use resources for answering questions or solving problems 12. Acquiring an interest in learning more by asking questions and seeking answers
Team Skills	5. Acquiring skills in working with others as a member of a team

The third approach we would recommend is to meet with colleagues at your institution who are teaching the same course or courses in the same discipline. Compare your thoughts with theirs.

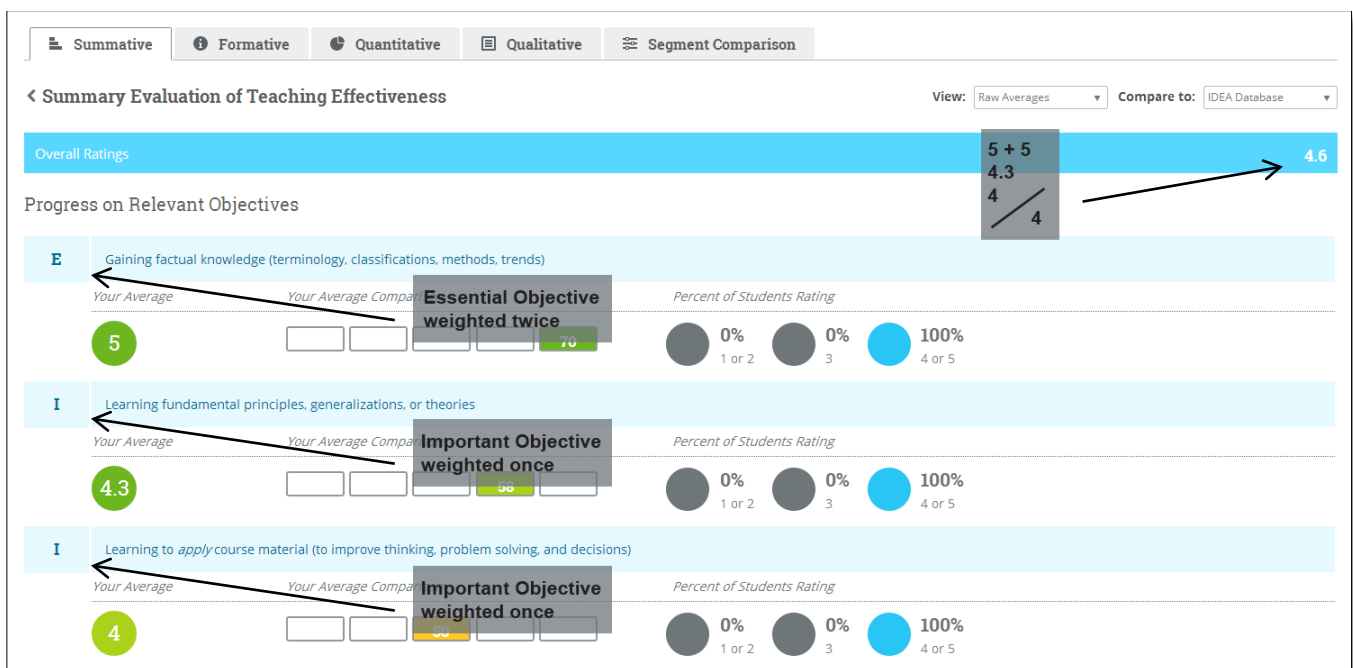
Why Your Selection of Objectives is Important

One reason your selection of objectives on the Faculty Information Form (FIF) is critically important is that your summative results are tailored to what you select as “important” or “essential.” Here is how it works:

1. If you select an objective (from among the 12 on the FIF) as “**essential**,” the average ratings that students provide on their progress on this objective will be double weighted in the process of calculating your summative score.
2. If you select an objective as “**important**,” the average rating will be single weighted.
3. If you select an objective as “**minor or of no importance**,” the average ratings that students provide will not be used at all in calculating your summative score since you are indicating on the FIF that it was not a target of the course.

- If you do not select any objectives, they will **all** default to "important" with single weight. The ratings for all 12 objectives would be used to calculate your summative score. In a case such as this, the report would not be tailored to your particular class, and it would have less meaning for you.

The following example illustrates how the "Progress on Relevant (meaning "important" or "essential") Objectives" is calculated. Only objectives marked as "important" or "essential" are calculated in the score. Objectives that were selected by this instructor as "minor or of no importance" are not displayed. Only one objective was marked as "essential" in this example. The average raw score rating for this objective was added twice in the calculation since objectives selected as "essential" are double weighted. Two other objectives were selected as important, and each of the average raw scores for those was added once. The sum of the averages is divided by the total number of scores that were added in order to provide the "Progress on Relevant Objectives" score.



As you think through the appropriate selection of objectives, you are deciding which scores will be used to calculate the "Progress on Relevant Objectives" part of your summative score. In this way, you are able to tailor the survey to the learning objectives you are targeting in your course.

For Formative Feedback

Another reason your selection of objectives is important is that the formative feedback you receive in the Diagnostic Report is also customized to the types of learning you targeted for your class. Your suggested action steps (for the next time you teach the course) will be directly related to the kinds of learning you want for your students.