

DATE: April 21, 2025
TO: Faculty and Lab Instructors
FROM: Jen Scanlon, Senior Vice President and Dean for Academic Affairs, and
Dallas Denery, Associate Dean for Curriculum
RE: **Spring 2025 Bowdoin Course Questionnaires**

All courses and labs will use the online Bowdoin Course Questionnaires (BCQs) to collect student feedback on courses and instructors. For more information on the use of BCQ data, please see [Faculty Handbook, Section V. L.](#) **BCQs will be available to students by 7:30 a.m. on Monday, April 28, and will remain available until 9:00 a.m. on Monday, May 12, at the conclusion of Reading Period.**

On April 28th, all students will receive an automated email from Dean Scanlon, explaining the importance of their feedback through the Bowdoin Course Questionnaires, instructing them to access their BCQs through Canvas, and noting that their instructor may designate a time in class to do so. Students will find a “BCQs for Students” link in Canvas in the left-hand menu of each of their courses, which will take them to their open BCQs. **Note:** If your students do not see the BCQs for Students link in a Canvas course, check your Canvas Settings as described at the bottom of this memo.

The single most effective method for ensuring strong response rates is to designate in-class time for students to fill out their BCQs. Although students may access their BCQs at any time during the fill-out period, **we urge you to schedule at least 15 minutes of class time for them to work on their BCQs.** We recommend you communicate about your plan in advance and that you leave the room during the scheduled time. For more on encouraging students to fill out BCQs, please refer to the Canvas site “Resources for Faculty and Instructors”, the module, “[Bowdoin Course Questionnaire \(BCQ\) Resources.](#)” and the page “**Setting up Students for BCQs: Slides, Script, and Video Recording**”.

As usual, automated reminders will be emailed in the final days of the fill-out period to each student who has not yet completed one or more of their BCQs. **In addition to these automated reminders, you may remind your students in any way you choose.** To help you determine the need, click the **BCQs Response Rates** link in any of your current courses in Canvas to find your live response rate data (the number of students who have submitted a BCQ for your course) during the student fill-out period. We also enlist the help of Bowdoin Student Government (BSG) in encouraging students to fill out their BCQs and doing so in a respectful manner. Recent BSG members suggested that faculty explain to students how BCQ feedback is typically used: to inform the instructor’s course design, pedagogy, and future iterations of courses, and to evaluate teaching and student learning (see above-mentioned Canvas page for video or adaptable script). Further, they suggested that we include a note about being mindful of the potential for bias (see message to students at the end of this memo).

Results of the BCQs will be available to instructors a day or two after the deadline for grade submission, which is May 27, 2025. You’ll be notified via email once they are ready and instructed to click on the **BCQs Reports** link in any current course in Canvas. Department chairs and program directors will see departmental BCQ reports for courses offered in or cross-listed in their department/program, as well as Question and Course Reports on instructors whose courses were taught in or cross-listed in their department/program, to support their responsibility for faculty mentoring. For courses with associated labs, the faculty instructing the course will receive access to the lab instructor reports. Note: At the top of the BCQ Reports page, you will find a worksheet for reflecting on student responses, which you may

download, modify, and use as you feel most appropriate.

- **Frequently Asked Questions** on the web at [BCQs Info Page](#)
- **For support**, contact Jeanne Bamforth, Assistant Dean for Academic Affairs (jbamfort@bowdoin.edu) or Dallas Denery, Associate Dean for Curriculum (ddenery@bowdoin.edu)
- **Make Sure the BCQs Link is Visible to Students in Canvas:**
 - Click on the **Settings** link at the bottom of the left-hand menu.
 - Look for the **Navigation tab** that runs along the top of the Settings page and click on it.
 - You will see two lists of menu items. Items in the top list are enabled and visible to students; items in the bottom list are disabled and hidden from your students.
 - Drag the BCQs options (BCQ Reports, BCQ Responses Rates, and BCQs for Students) from the bottom list to the top list.
 - Then click the **Save** button at the bottom of the page.
 - Note: Your students will not see the BCQs Reports or Response Rates links on the left-hand menu.

- **Message That Students Will Receive:**

Bowdoin values teaching excellence, and student feedback on our courses provides important information for the evaluation of teaching and curricular effectiveness. At the end of every semester, the College solicits your input and asks that you take a few minutes to complete an online Bowdoin Course Questionnaire (BCQ) for each of your current courses. All BCQs must be submitted by 9:00 am on May 12th. Your instructors will likely schedule a time in class for you to fill out your questionnaire. If not, or if you need more time to complete your BCQs, you will need to reserve time before the end of Reading Period to finish and submit.

Your responses to this questionnaire are of particular value to individual faculty members and lab instructors as they look to make improvements to the learning opportunities they offer in their courses. We also view the questionnaire as an opportunity for you to reflect on your role in advancing your learning.

You can find your course questionnaires via the BCQs for Students link in your courses in [Canvas](#). If you are unable to complete a questionnaire in one session, click SAVE to resume later. Be sure to complete and click SUBMIT before 9:00 am on May 12, the last day of Reading Period. Note: Once you click SUBMIT, you cannot revise your entry.

Your responses are completely confidential and will be available to the instructor only after final grades have been submitted to the Registrar.

We appreciate your taking the time to offer candid and substantive feedback; we ask that you do so in a constructive and respectful manner. Our review of BCQs suggests that Bowdoin students typically provide thoughtful, relevant feedback. That said, it's always good to consider the potential for unconscious bias, because [several studies](#) note that women and faculty of color receive more negative comments about attributes unrelated to teaching and learning, such as personality traits, appearance, or mannerisms.

If you have questions, please contact Jeanne Bamforth (jbamfort@bowdoin.edu).

Thank you.

Jennifer Scanlon

Senior Vice President and Dean for Academic Affairs