

# Maintaining a high response rate for course evaluation while assuring the feedback reliability



Sylvie Sebaaly Naous  
Quality Assurance and Institutional and Effectiveness Office  
Holy Spirit University of Kaslik, Lebanon

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# Outline

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- ✓ About the Holy Spirit University of Kaslik - USEK
- ✓ USEK and Blue by eXplorance
- ✓ Implementation of Course Evaluations with Blue
- ✓ Assurance of Course Evaluations reliability
- ✓ Future Projects

# USEK ...

*A Mission Driven and Strategic  
Agile Institution*



# LEBANON

We are all for the Country, the Sublime and the Flag

**4.1 million** Population

**8** Provinces

Capital : Beirut

Currency : Pound (LBP)

Languages : Arabic, French, English, Armenian

**ASIA**



# About USEK

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The Holy Spirit University of Kaslik (USEK) is a **private Catholic institution** of higher education founded and governed by the Lebanese Maronite Order (LMO) since **1938**.

## Students

**7386** students in Fall 2017

## Academic Programs

**176** Academic Programs

**56** Undergraduate

**70** Masters

**44** Doctoral

## Graduates

**1844** Graduates in 2016-2017

**20182** Total graduates since 2001-2002

## Human Resources

**875** Faculty Members

**354** Administrative and Technical Personnel

# USEK Mission

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Since its founding, USEK seeks, and in accordance with the Article 92 of the Constitutions of the OLM (ed. 2012) and the social teaching of the Catholic Church on universities, to contribute to the development of all its students through **quality educational programs** and **research in various fields of study**.

By providing a **high quality American-style education** to its students, USEK intends to prepare **future leaders for innovation, professional growth and life-long learning**, in Lebanon, within the Middle East and throughout the world. USEK is committed to a **faith-based educational development** of its students rooted in the Catholic tradition whereby **spiritual values and ethics** as well as **respect for cultural and religious pluralism** are promoted.

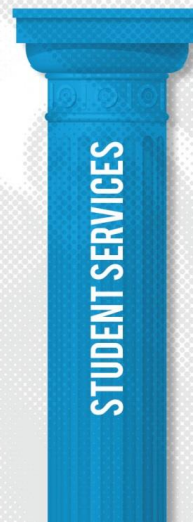
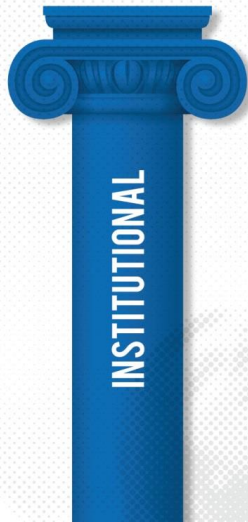
# USEK Values

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# Accreditation Pillars & Directions

## USEK ACCREDITATION 3PILLARS



## ONGOING...





# A View of the Campus



USEK  
&  
Blue by eXplorance

# The Turning Point ...

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## Paper Based Course Evaluations

- Coverage of 25% of the Courses
- Over 5 weeks of work to prepare and collect the data
- High paper and ink costs
- Form available in one language

Spring 2012

## Course Evaluations with Blue

- Coverage of 95% of the courses  
~90% response rate
- No manual work and fast data collection
- Zero paper and ink costs
- Form available in French and English

# Surveys Implemented using Blue

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Course Feedback by  
Students

Well Being  
on the Campus

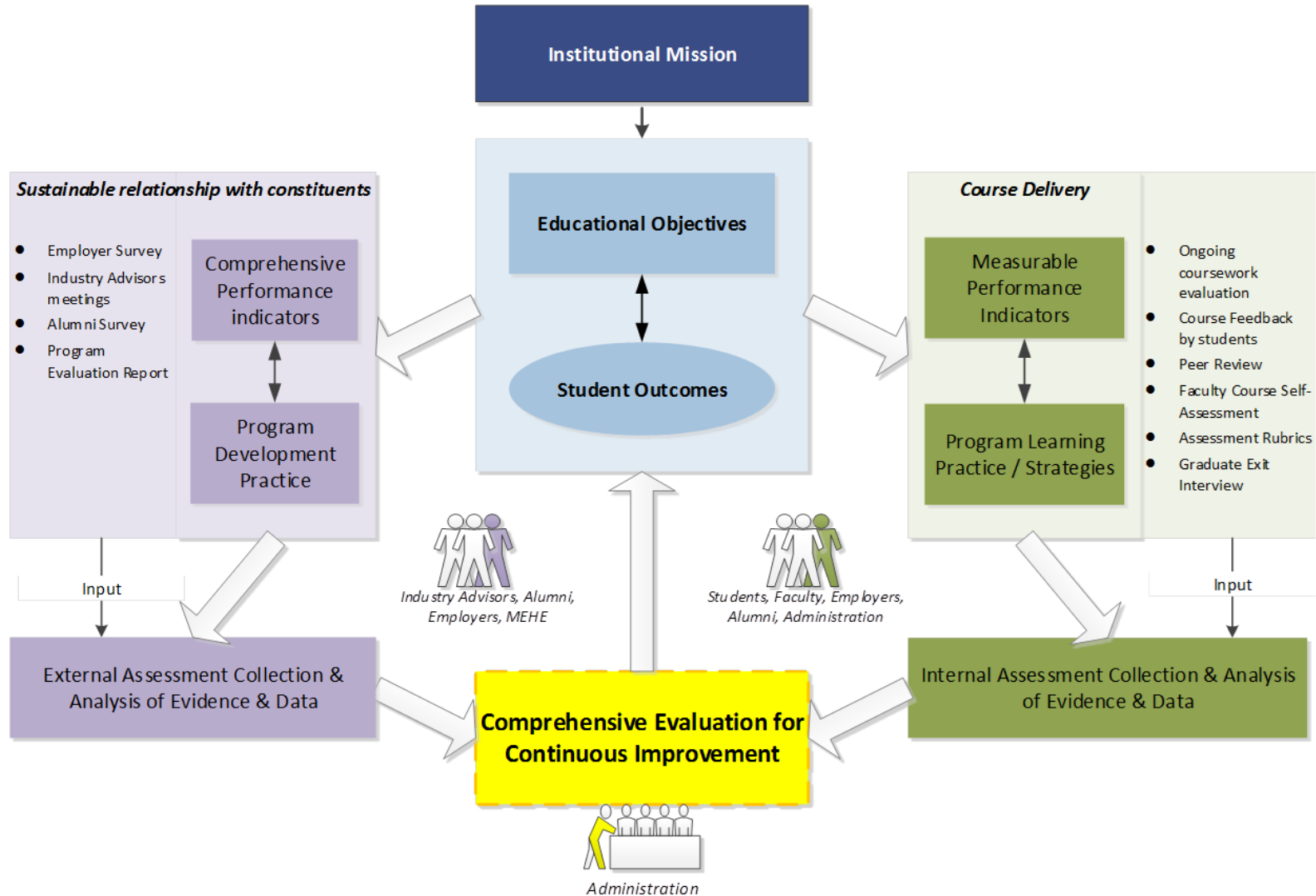
Course Self-  
Assessment by Faculty

National Survey  
of Student Engagement

USEK Alumni First  
Destination Survey /  
End of Program Exit Sur-  
vey

Performance Evaluation  
of Full-  
Time Faculty Members

# Programs Assessment Cycle



# USEK's Engagement with Bluenotes



## CASE STUDY

USEK's Office of Quality Assurance and Institutional Effectiveness Gets more Data with Lower Costs



"The learning experience of our students is our focus, and Blue provides the right tools to help make that happen."

Dr. Georges Yahchouchi,  
Deputy President for Quality Assurance and  
Teaching & Learning and the Director of the  
QAIE Office

**CLIENT:**  
Holy Spirit University of Kaslik (USEK)

**LOCATION:**  
Jounieh, Lebanon

**NO. STUDENTS:**  
~8,000 students

**SOLUTION:**  
Blue® course evaluations software

## Assessment practices and challenges: Case of USEK

Presented by Prof. Georges Yahchouchi, USEK Provost

*Bluenotes EMEA User Conference at Dubai, 2015*



# USEK

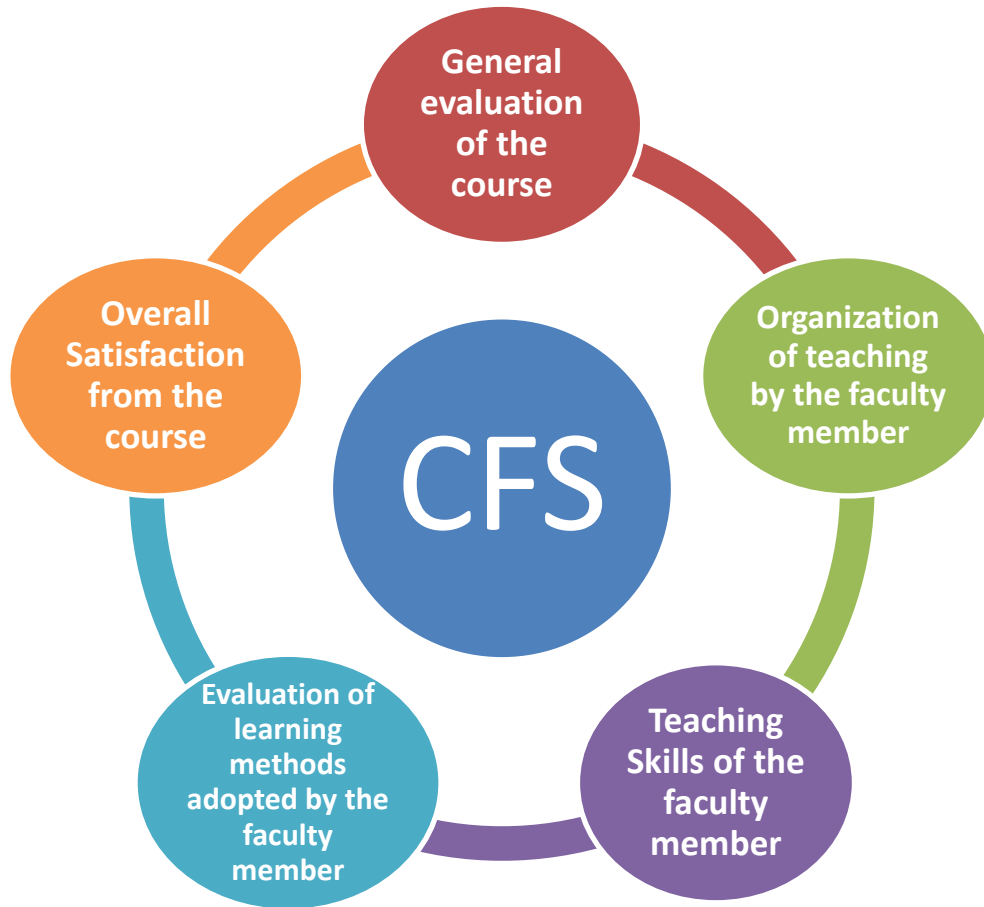
**Top Green University in Lebanon and among the 10  
Greenest in the Arab World**



# Course Evaluations Implementation



# Course Feedback by Students Survey

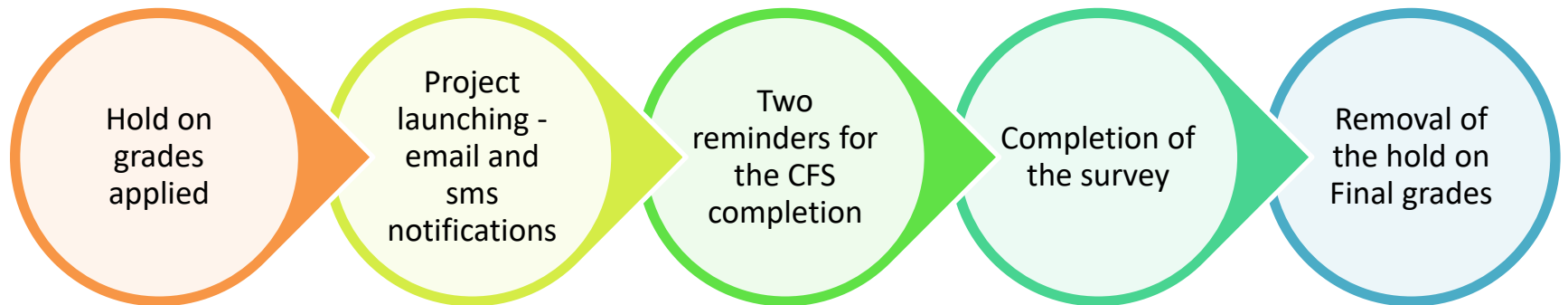


## Evaluation scale

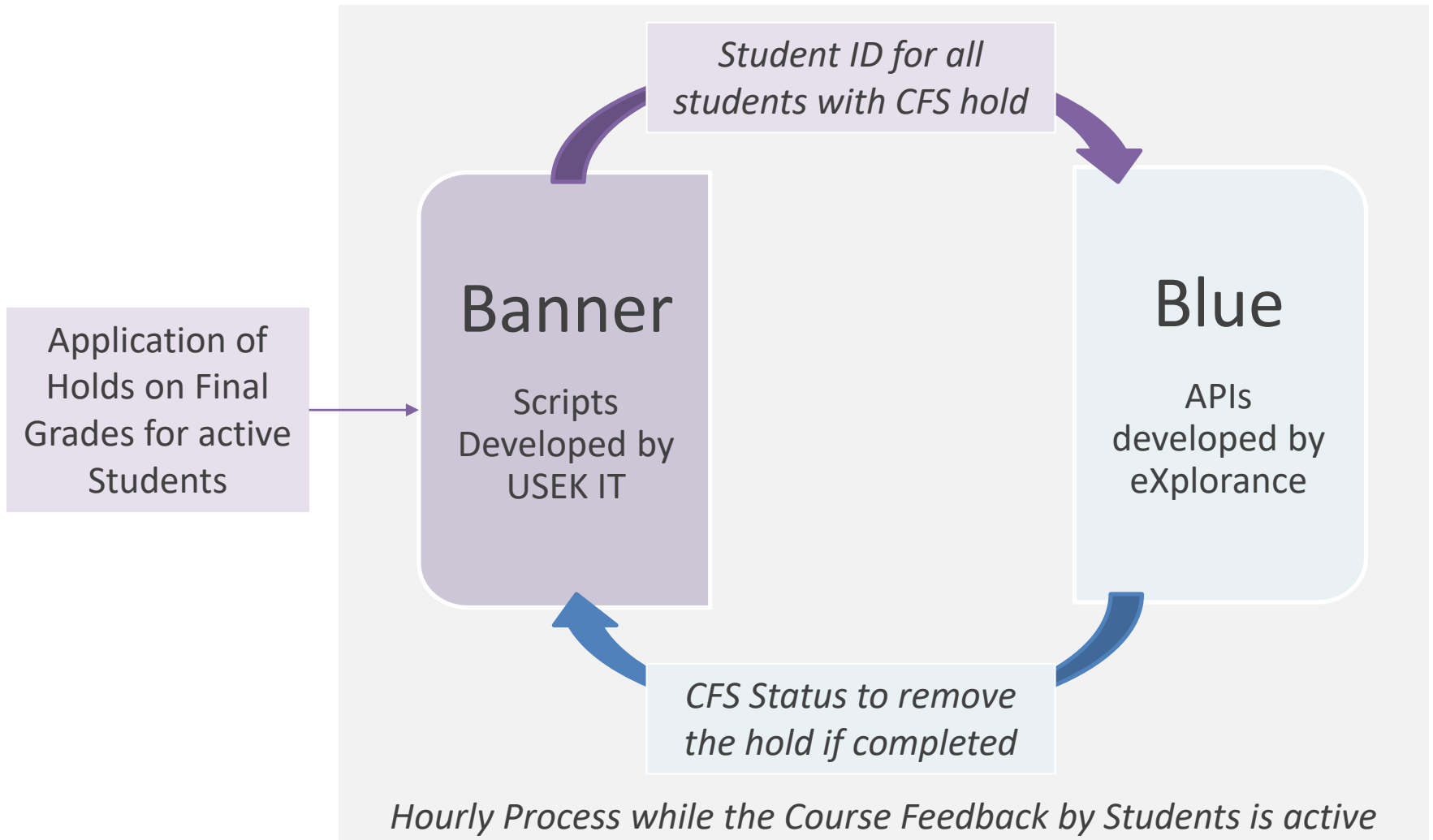
- 4 = Totally agree
- 3 = More or less agree
- 2 = More or less disagree
- 1 = Totally disagree

# Course Evaluation Process

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# Integration with Banner SIS



# The challenge

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How to assure the reliability of the Results of the course evaluations knowing that students are required to fill the forms to see their final grades?

# Assurance of Course Evaluations Reliability

# Techniques and Indicators

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- ✓ Use of a thresholds to identify weak results
- ✓ Association of quantitative data with qualitative data (comments analysis)
- ✓ Monitor evaluation results trends for both instructors and courses
- ✓ Cronbach's Alpha Reliability Indicator
- ✓ Association of evaluation results with students performance in the course

# Thresholds to identify weak results

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- The minimum threshold for the evaluation results to be considered acceptable was set to 3.2/4
- This threshold applies on the 4 categories of the survey and on the average of all questions
- Clearly communicated through all institutional, unit, and instructors reports
- This threshold motivated faculty members to investigate in the weak areas in their courses and improve it

## Report Comments

Grades less than 3.20/4 are considered not meeting the standards.

# Quantitative Data vs. Qualitative Data

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- Strong focus is put on students comments in the open-ended question
- A committee has been established to read every single comment and respond to it if necessary
- Weak results are selected based on the minimum threshold
- These results are then validated by associating it with students comments
- Actions are taken based on both quantitative and qualitative data (changes in the curriculum/syllabus, professional development for faculty, ...)



# Monitor evaluation results trends

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- All the historical results of the Course Feedback by Students are kept by the QA-IE
- Specific reports are generated from this data for multiple purposes:
  - Results by course used for the assessment of courses and programs and to support curriculum changes
  - Results by instructor for faculty promotion or when a weakness is identified

# Cronbach's Alpha - Definition

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Cronbach's alpha,  $\alpha$  (or coefficient alpha), developed by Lee Cronbach in 1951, measures **reliability**, or **internal consistency**. "Reliability" is how well a test measures what it should.

Cronbach's alpha tests to see if multiple-question Likert scale surveys are reliable.

# Cronbach's Alpha - Norms

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<b>Cronbach's alpha</b>	<b>Internal consistency</b>
$\alpha \geq 0.9$	Excellent
$0.9 > \alpha \geq 0.8$	Good
$0.8 > \alpha \geq 0.7$	Acceptable
$0.7 > \alpha \geq 0.6$	Questionable
$0.6 > \alpha \geq 0.5$	Poor
$0.5 > \alpha$	Unacceptable

*In general, a score of more than 0.7 is usually okay. However, some authors suggest higher values of 0.90 to 0.95.*

# Cronbach's Alpha - Output

## Fall 2017

### Case Processing Summary

		N	%
Cases	Valid	30513	89.4
	Excluded <sup>a</sup>	3619	10.6
	Total	34132	100.0

### Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
.977	.978	19

## Spring 2018

### Case Processing Summary

		N	%
Cases	Valid	28377	90.2
	Excluded <sup>a</sup>	3097	9.8
	Total	31474	100.0

### Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
.979	.980	19

# Evaluation results vs. students grades

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- T-test has been used to identify if the course evaluation responses are influenced by the student performance in the course and therefore his grade.
- Students were grouped into two categories:
  - *Failed/passed on average (grade 75/100 or below for undergrad courses)*
  - *Passed with Excellence (grade above 75/100 for undergrad courses)*

Suggested by a faculty member from the School of Business

# T-test Sampling

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1. One section of a Computer Science course
2. One section of an Audit course
3. All sections of one Computer Science Course
4. All sections of one Audit Course
5. All sections in the Computer Science Department
6. All sections in the Audit Department

# T-test Output

## One Section

Student grade	Two tailed P	Correlation
Evaluation of learning	0.632	✗
General evaluation of the course	0.774	✗
Organisation of teaching	0.560	✗
Teaching Skills	0.395	✗
Average feedback	0.610	✗

## One Course - Multiple Sections

Student grade	Two tailed P	Correlation
Evaluation of learning	0.020	✓
General evaluation of the course	0.001	✓
Organisation of teaching	0.013	✓
Teaching Skills	0.186	✗
Average feedback	0.007	✓

Computer Science

Student grade	Two tailed P	Correlation
Evaluation of learning	0.345	✗
General evaluation of the course	0.620	✗
Organisation of teaching	0.702	✗
Teaching Skills	0.371	✗
Average feedback	0.666	✗

Student grade	Two tailed P	Correlation
Evaluation of learning	0.025	✓
General evaluation of the course	0.552	✗
Organisation of teaching	0.284	✗
Teaching Skills	0.157	✗
Average feedback	0.158	✗

Audit

*Values < 0.05 indicate the correlation of the group with the results*

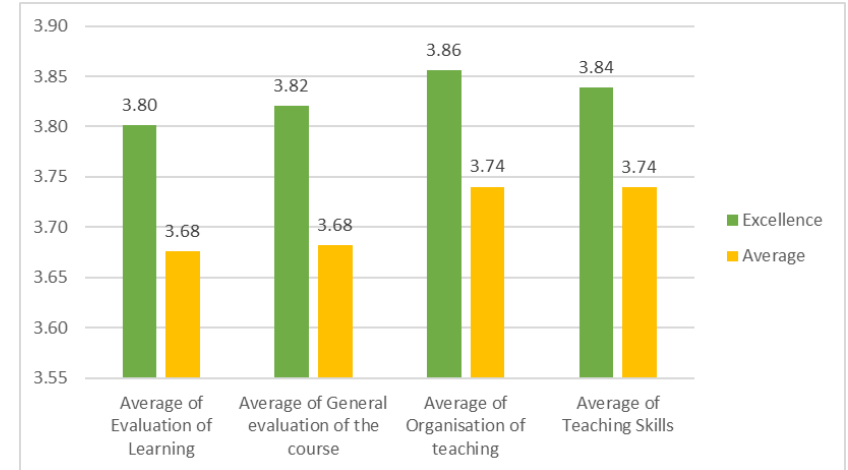


# T-test Output

## All Courses

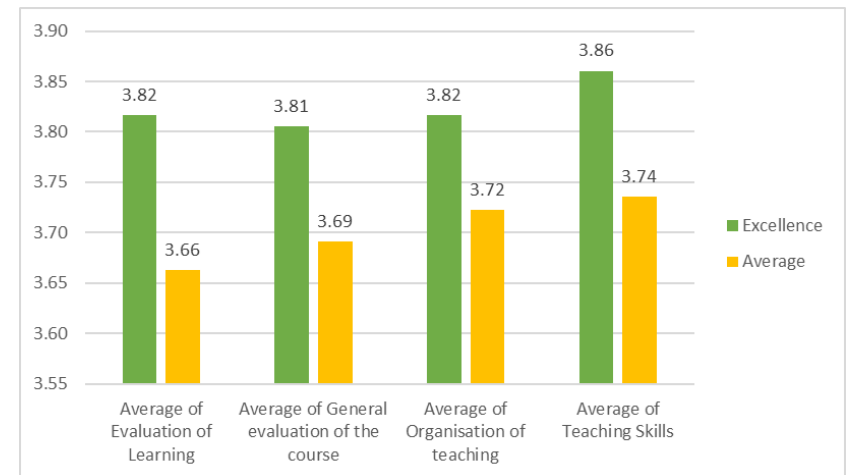
Computer Science

Student grade	Two tailed P	Correlation
Evaluation of learning	0.002	✓
General evaluation of the course	0.000	✓
Organisation of teaching	0.000	✓
Teaching Skills	0.006	✓
Average feedback	0.000	✓



Audit

Student grade	Two tailed P	Correlation
Evaluation of learning	0.001	✓
General evaluation of the course	0.017	✓
Organisation of teaching	0.035	✓
Teaching Skills	0.004	✓
Average feedback	0.004	✓

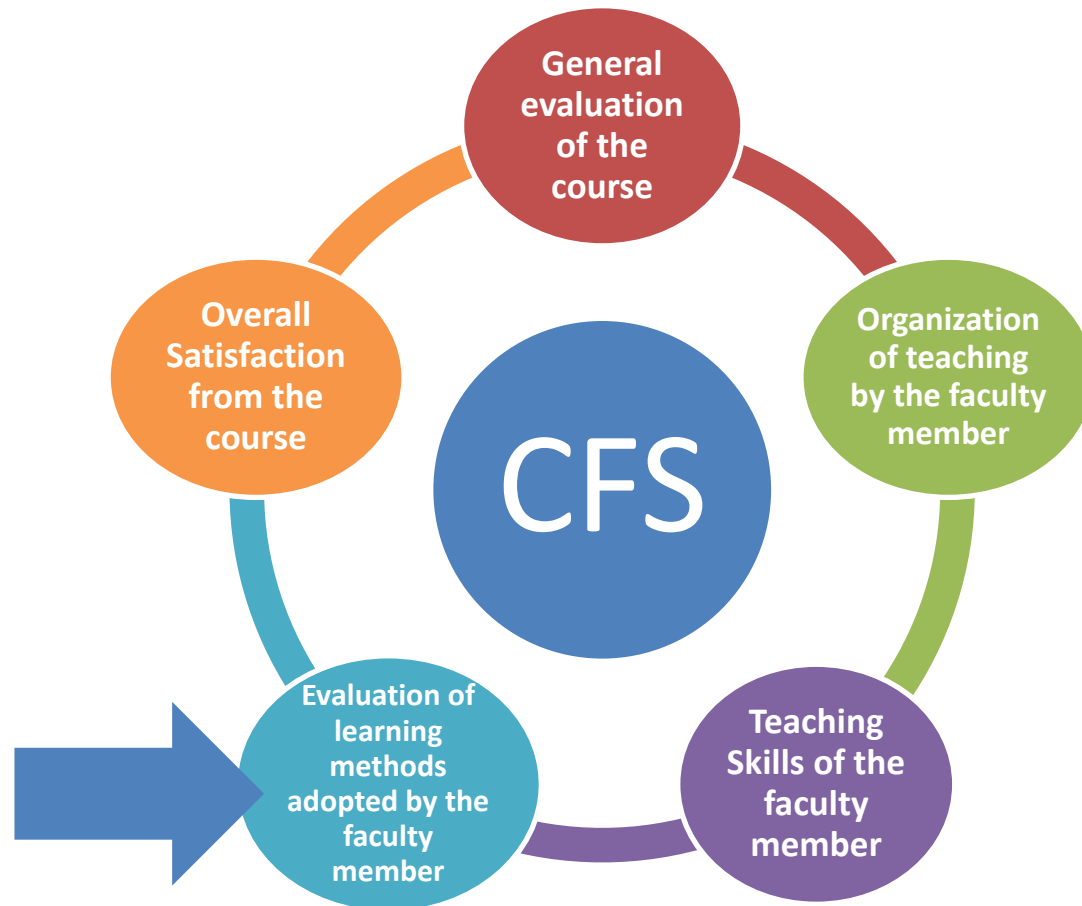




# Evaluation results vs. students grades

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*Conclusion based on T-test*



# Evaluation results vs. students grades

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## *Conclusion based on T-test*

### **Evaluation of Learning**

The exam questions are clear

The correction criteria are clear

The assessment methods reflect course learning objectives and outcomes

The assessment feedback is helpful and constructive

# Conclusion ...

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- The Course Feedback by Students survey is considered as a great asset for the evaluation and assessment for academic programs and courses throughout the campus
- The awareness of the instructors on the importance of the relative results is increasing every semester
- The reliability indicator showed the great the consistency in the survey and its results
- The main challenge now is to decrease the correlation between final grades and students responses => objective students feedback

# Future Projects

# Future Projects

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- Create a functionality to share the results of the course evaluations with students
- Make the best use of the Blue reporting to share the results of the different surveys with the relative stakeholders
- Create a tool to integrate the results of the different sources of assessment and produce reports for programs assessment
- ...



**Please meet USEK President, Provost and the QA-IE team!**

# Thank you!

[www.usek.edu.lb](http://www.usek.edu.lb)

[sylviesebaaly@usek.edu.lb](mailto:sylviesebaaly@usek.edu.lb)

+9619600357