Gender-responsive evaluation is an important tool to establish whether *any* given course:

- Achieves its learning outcomes on gender-related topics
- Provides both male and female learners with equal educational opportunities
- Is free of all forms of gender discrimination
- Contributes to the overcoming of restrictive gender norms in the wider institution/society

Note that writing gender-responsive course evaluations involves asking both gender-related questions and also sex-disaggregating responses to other questions in order to analyse gender.

Content

Gender **stereotypes** can reinforce notions that certain roles and professions are only appropriate for men or for women. **Generalizations** are also problematic because they exclude people who do not conform to social norms (e.g. "everyone has a mother and a father"). They can also put undue pressure on underrepresented groups (e.g. "it's great having men around to help you carry heavy equipment.") **Analogies** can also exclude those who are unfamiliar with what they refer to ("It's bottom of the ninth and the bases are loaded."[2]). It is important to assess the content of language used in the classroom, in any written form as well as of pictures, particularly with a view for balanced representation and taking into account any sensibilities learners may have.

Sample agree/disagree statements for learner evaluations

- Men and women are presented in course materials in non-stereotypical roles.
- Instructors and other learners use analogies and examples that I can relate to.
- Gender-neutral pronouns, or both male/female pronouns, are used during instruction.

Participation

Both instructor behaviour, and learner behaviours that an instructor tolerates or promotes, have a heavy influence on which learners participate in class. Instructors must prevent a minority of students from dominating class (e.g. students of a particular gender). Rather, they should identify quieter learners and develop strategies to foster their participation, giving opportunities to both men and women to show leadership. Common strategies include giving learners up to five seconds to think over a question before asking for an answer and not allowing individuals to shout it out. Group work and assigning individual presentations to each learner can also be effective, as can be setting ground rules for conduct in class. Promoting learner agency and encouraging critical thinking have the added benefit of preventing instructors from imposing their point of view, including on topics related to gender roles.

Sample agree/disagree statements for learner evaluations

- I feel comfortable raising my hand in class.
- The instructor fosters an environment where a diversity of opinions are expressed.
- I have been in a leadership role at some point during this course.
- I feel included in the group.

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[1] Compiled by Callum Watson, and incorporating participant feedback from the PfPC event "Gender-Responsive Evaluation in Military Education: Fourth Workshop on Teaching Gender to the Military" held 21-24 July 2014 in Geneva, Switzerland. The full after action report is available at: http://www.dcaf.ch/Event/Gender-Responsive-Evaluation-in-Military-Education-4th-Workshop-on-Teaching-Gender-to-the-Military.

[2] An analogy used to convey the last opportunity in a high stress situation. It refers to the second part of the ninth (final) inning of a baseball game where bottom refers to the home team's location below visitors on the scoreboard.

- I feel free to voice my opinion.

Learner appraisal

A learner's performance can often be predicted by the instructor's expectations, regardless of the learner's ability. These can be influenced by gender stereotypes ("men are more athletic and excel in sports," "women are more disciplined and excel in academia"). It is important that an instructor has equal expectations of women and men in order for them to have an equal opportunity to succeed. This involves placing equal demands on female and male learners in all subject areas. Care should be taken to appraise men and women according to the same criteria in order to avoid situations where, for example, women are praised on their work's *appearance* and men on its *intellectual content*. Anonymous, multimodal appraisal mechanisms can also help circumvent the problem of gender-biased appraisal.

Sample agree/disagree statements for learner evaluations

- The instructor gives all learners equally difficult tasks irrespective of their gender.
- The instructor has equal expectations of all the learners in the class.
- The instructor appraises the intellectual quality of my work, not just its presentation.
- I have different opportunities to demonstrate my knowledge (in writing, speaking, group work, etc.).

Access to instructors, other educational staff and mentors

Learners who have a good personal relationship with an instructor are more able to ask for (and receive) extra support than those who do not. Learners with a good personal relationship with the faculty in general may have more access to their institution's human resources such as subject-matter specialists, mentors and those who might be able to facilitate their access to certain professional roles. It is important that instructors address all of their learners appropriately and with equal levels of respect (i.e. all by first name or all by title and last name, with the same tone of voice). In this way they can avoid showing favouritism towards certain individuals or learners of a particular gender and further encourage any learners who need extra support to come forward.

Sample agree/disagree statements for learner evaluations

- I feel comfortable asking the instructor for more help outside the classroom if I need it.
- I have access to suitable mentors if I need them.
- The instructor treats all of the learners equally within the class.

Access to educational resources

The unequal distribution (or appropriation) of an institution's resources such as computers, books, pieces of equipment or permission to use rooms and other facilities can create an unequal learning environment. Furthermore, some learners may have access to private resources (such as personal laptops), while others do not. This may give some learners an unfair advantage in reaching the learning outcomes. Alternatively, it may simply reinforce the greater sense of entitlement that some students (e.g. those of a particular gender) feel they have over shared resources.

Sample agree/disagree statements for learner evaluations

- I have access to all of the resources I need to reach the learning outcomes of this course.
- Finite resources are distributed fairly (e.g. according to need, randomly, or on a first-come, first-served basis.)
- I was able to obtain all of the necessary materials for this course easily (either myself or through the support of others/the institution).