

Overview of Optical Scanning

Optical scanning is used at Ithaca College to process tests and course evaluation that use the “scantron” or “bubble sheets” for answers or feedback. The optical scanning system is used to collect raw data from answer sheets; it is also used to analyze and process that information and generate reports. Requests for optical scanning are dropped off in the ITS Main Office, Muller 102

Submitting Scanning Requests

It is important to note that when submitting scanning requests, only ONE type of form may be used for respondent's answer sheets. This means that **each job may only contain either blue answer sheets or green answer sheets, not both**. If a job is submitted with both types of answer sheets, it will not scan properly. ITS **will not** accept a request submitted with both types of answer sheets; to maintain the integrity of the information provided by optical scanning, ITS cannot separate or sort a scanning job into two individual jobs.

Test Scoring

Administering Tests

Every respondent's answer sheet must be completed in a #2 pencil and must have a unique ID number in the appropriate field, entered from left to right starting in column A, without the use of blanks. At Ithaca College, this field is the Identification Number field on the blue and green answer sheets. The Identification Number field must contain a value or the sheet will not be scored. The value could be the student's College ID number, or any unique number 2 digits or more assigned by the instructor.

Key Sheets and Subtests

Every test scoring request must be accompanied by at least one key sheet. Key sheets designate to the system which answers are correct; multiple answers can be designated correct for any item on a test. When using subtests, no master key sheet is required; **only key sheets for the individual subtests are necessary**. If not using subtests, then only the one key sheet is needed.

Filling out Key Sheets

Key sheets must be filled out with specific information. The test (or subtest) should be given the name “Key” or “Subtest 1, Subtest 2, etc.” in the Name field. Most important is a sequence of numbers in the “Identification Number” section of the key sheet. When filling out key sheets, follow these steps for the Identification Number section of the key sheet:

1. In the first column of the Identification number field, enter the number of the sheet in the sequence of key sheets for the test and fill in the corresponding bubble. For only one key sheet (a Master Key) use a “1”; when using subtests, enter “1” for the first subtest key sheet, “2” for the second subtest key sheet, and so on (up to nine subtests total).
2. Skip a column. Do not fill in a number; **do not fill in any bubbles for this column**.
3. In the next columns enter the number of items marked on the specific key sheet. This number can be between 1 and 360, depending on the form. Fill in the bubbles below the numbers.
4. If using subtests with specific point values for each subtest (i.e. 1 point for each question on subtest one and 2 points each for questions on subtest two), enter the value of the questions in column “P” of the Special Codes section of the subtest key sheet and fill in the corresponding bubble.

Course Evaluations

Course evaluations are used by departments to survey students about their courses. Course evaluations do not require key sheets or unique ID numbers on respondents' answer sheets. Course evaluations

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require configuration files for the software used to process responses; because of this, only previously established surveys can be processed by the system. In certain circumstances, configuration files can be made to run custom surveys, **but several weeks advance notice is needed to handle these requests.**

Raw Data Files

It is possible to have raw data files emailed to an Ithaca College email account. Currently, only comma-delimited text files are available through the optical scanning system. For course evaluations, these files will be a ".txt" file. For test scoring, these files will be a ".dlm" file. Both of these file types can be imported into a variety of analysis programs, including Microsoft Excel.

Test Header Sheets - All Fields Must be Bubbled In

Test Header sheets are required for each job request. This means that every set of answer sheets that needs a separate report requires its own Test Header sheet; for tests, key sheets must also be included with every set of answer sheets that needs a report (i.e. a class section). See the example of the new Test Header Sheets below for more information on how to fill them out.

The Test Header Sheet

MARKING INSTRUCTIONS
Use a No. 2 pencil only.
Make dark marks that fill the oval completely.
Erase cleanly any mark you wish to change.

TEST HEADER

Test Name
Give the test a name in this field. The name can be whatever you choose, but should be something clear and recognizable.

Instructor's Name
The last name and first name of the instructor submitting the request.

Test ID
Leave this blank. Do not fill in this number, the number will be provided by the ITS Main Office.

Formula Scoring
Not in use. *Fill in No.*

Test Date
The date the request is submitted, formatted *mm / dd / yyyy.*

Class/Subgroup
The section number of the class (i.e. 001).

Sub Tests
The number of subtests.

Performance Assessment
Not in use. *Fill in No.*

Printer
Not in use. *Fill in Off.*

Grade/Group
The three digits of the course number (i.e. "101" for an Intro Class).

Versions
Not in use. *Fill in No.*

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