SCOT FAQs
Frequently asked questions from you, the professors at Brigham Young University.

What is SCOT?
Students Consulting on Teaching (SCOT) is a program sponsored by BYU’s Center for Teaching and Learning. It employs BYU students as student consultants (SCOTs) to provide you with feedback about teaching and learning in your courses.

What do SCOTs do?
A SCOT can provide many services at your request. A SCOT can record observations of classroom activities, video record a class session, interview students, and provide other feedback to improve teaching and learning.

Who are the SCOTs?
SCOTs are BYU students who receive ongoing training in basic pedagogy and classroom observation practices. They are never enrolled in a “client professor’s” class, which allows them to offer an unbiased external perspective.

What types of things might SCOTs observe?
SCOTs notice what is being done well (e.g., well-facilitated discussion, clear examples and explanations, effective use of media); what can be improved to increase student learning; and what might be hindering student learning. You may ask your SCOT to observe particular aspects of your teaching that concern you or your students.

Why not have a colleague or department chair observe my teaching?
Of course! Invite a colleague or department chair to observe your class and get his or her feedback on your course, as well. Credible feedback from virtually any source will assist in your quest to improve teaching and learning in your classroom. SCOTs are valuable in unique ways, however; the feedback they provide is completely confidential, remaining strictly between you and the SCOT (and, occasionally, the SCOT coordinator). Further, SCOTs are not involved in department politics, thus enhancing the comfort level they provide. Finally, and perhaps most significantly, SCOTs are students themselves. They can offer insights and suggestions from a student perspective.

Can a SCOT major in the same department as the one sponsoring the course he or she observes?
No, SCOTs do not study in the same department as the client professor. This allows SCOTs to provide an impartial outside perspective without fear of retaliation at grade time. SCOTs focus only on teaching behaviors, student participation, and learning—not on content.

Why consider having a SCOT interview your students?
When a SCOT conducts an interview in your class, your students have the opportunity to freely (and anonymously—to you) share what parts of the course help them learn and what parts hinder their learning. This provides insight to how your students perceive the class and allows you to
make midcourse corrections instead of waiting for a new semester to implement possible changes.

**How can I know if the SCOT will provide helpful feedback?**
The SCOT will be able to provide the most helpful feedback if, in the initial meeting, you explain what you hope to gain from using the SCOT program and what type of feedback you are expecting. If you are not satisfied with the feedback you receive, please invite your student consultant to revisit your class and perform another service. You may also request a different SCOT in order to gain another perspective. SCOTs have chosen to participate in this program because of their interest in the teaching and learning process; they are eager to serve you in whatever capacity you think will be most helpful.

**How do I request a SCOT?**
You can request SCOT services online at ctl.byu.edu/scot, or contact the SCOT student coordinator at 801-422-9383. You may also simply send an email to scot@byu.edu.

**How often can I request a SCOT?**
You can request a SCOT every semester, at any time during the semester, for any course you teach or for multiple courses simultaneously. SCOT services are typically most valuable when they are limited to one visit and one or two follow-up visits as you implement suggestions or seek additional feedback through the course of the semester.