Guidelines for the Evaluation of Teaching

An advisory document presented by

Faculty Senate Evaluation and Assessment Committee

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Introduction

In February 2013, the Faculty Senate Executive Committee charged the FS Evaluation and Assessment Committee to take a comprehensive look at evaluation of faculty teaching that could be used as part of every department's retention, tenure, and promotion guidelines. We were asked to provide a recommended structure and framework to better evaluate faculty teaching that goes beyond relying only on the current SEOI structure. The committee consulted many resources, including a broad view of evaluation of teaching offered in a report by the Senate Ad Hoc Committee on Evaluation of Instruction, submitted in March 2005; an oft-quoted primary source for research in this area is: Arreola, Raoul. *Developing a Comprehensive Faculty Evaluation System,* 3rd ed. Anker Publishing, 2007. A preliminary framework was proposed and passed by the Faculty Senate in May, 2013. In the Fall of 2014, the Faculty Senate Evaluation and Assessment Committee was charged to "Continue work on comprehensive look at evaluation of faculty teaching that could be used as part of every department's retention, tenure and promotion guidelines." This document is the result of the committee's work.

We recognize that colleges, departments, and individual faculty perceive aspects of good teaching differently. We also believe, however, that the five parameters of teaching recommended, i.e., content expertise, instructional design, delivery, assessment, and course management are a part of teaching in all fields, even if they are viewed, valued, implemented, or assessed differently. We also believe that all four sources of information, i.e., students, peers, supervisors, and the individual, should be sought out and considered with clear understanding of, and agreement on, their respective roles, perspectives, and assessment procedures in support of credible evaluation. This clarity of understanding should extend to the differences between formative and summative assessment, as well as to the distinctions between "effective" and "excellent" teaching. As a result, we hope colleges and departments will find these guidelines useful in determining their own evaluation procedures. **The collective use of these parameters by various participants and personnel committees will create a common vocabulary for identifying successful teaching as well as tangible areas for improvement.**

We know that some additional training for all faculty may be desirable, and strongly suggest the following university-wide faculty development activities with an eye for common ground as well as unique challenges for colleges and departments:

- SEOIs-How to Interpret and Respond to Student Evaluations
- Peer Evaluation—Understanding Peer Evaluation, Evaluating Syllabi, Observing Peers, Online vs. Face-to-Face distinctions and evaluation strategies
- Writing effective Self-Evaluations
- How Faculty can improve their skills related to specific parameters, e.g.:
  - Instructional Design
  - Instructional Delivery
  - Instructional Assessment
  - Course Management

Respectfully submitted,
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<div align="center">**Guidelines for the Evaluation of Teaching**</div>

When evaluating teaching, it is recommended that colleges and departments consider the following four (4) guidelines:

1. Evaluation of faculty teaching should be expressed in terms of the following parameters:
- Content Expertise
- Instructional Design Skills
- Instructional Delivery Skills
- Instructional Assessment Skills
- Course Management

For suggestions regarding how these parameters can be understood and evaluated, see "I. Descriptions of Teaching Parameters" below.

2. These five parameters should be evaluated using:
- Student Evaluation
- Peer Evaluation
- Supervisor Evaluation
- Self-Evaluation

For suggestions regarding the possible roles of these participants in evaluating these parameters, see "II. Roles of Participants in Evaluation" below.

3. Formative vs. Summative Assessment

When determining the roles of Formative and Summative Assessment, it is recommended that colleges and departments have clear timelines for formative and summative assessments in terms of the entire review period in question. Specifically, over the review period, teaching evaluations should initially emphasize formative assessment, with increasing emphasis on summative, based on the following parameters that are rooted in prevailing research on evaluation of teaching:
- Progress/continued success in all teaching parameters
- Responsiveness to recommendations made for improvement
- Contributions to curriculum and/or program needs (current and potential)
- Student progress and achievement
- Growth in faculty reputation and recognition in teaching

4. "Effective" and "Excellent" teaching

University policies recognize a distinction between "Effective" and "Excellent" teaching. Distinctions should be established by each college and department, with criteria emphasizing evidence of or levels of success in:
- All teaching parameters
- Responsiveness to recommendations made for improvement
- Contributions to curriculum and/or program needs (current and potential)
- Student progress and achievement
- Growth in faculty reputation and recognition received

The following descriptions are designed to offer guidance to colleges and departments in evaluating and establishing their own criteria that are aligned with the parameters above, in understanding the roles of each participant in the evaluation parameters, in combining and weighting the information gathered. All are supported by prevailing research in the evaluation of teaching.

I. Descriptions of Teaching Parameters

A. Content Expertise includes both <u>actual</u> expertise that can be evaluated by peers and supervisor, and <u>perceived</u> expertise as evaluated by students. The parameters of content expertise may include but are not limited to: evidence of faculty currency in the field, accuracy and appropriate level of information presented to students, and the students' confidence in the instructor's knowledge of the content.

B. Instructional Design Skills may include but are not limited to the designing and sequencing of information or activities to promote learning/achievement. Peers are in the best positions to evaluate course syllabi, appropriateness of learner objectives, handouts, media used, content organization, grading standards and tools. Students also participate by adding their perceptions of course difficulty, grading standards, connections of content to examinations, sequencing of information, etc.

C. Instructional Delivery Skills involve human interaction—the ability to motivate, generate enthusiasm, and communicate effectively using various forms of transmittal—thus contributing to the creation of an environment conducive to learning. These skills may include clarity in oral and written communication and presentation skills, as well as the use of technology appropriate to content and setting (lecture, lab, online, etc.). Written skills may include but are not limited to clarity of syllabi, handouts, feedback to students, graphs/charts/maps, notes, case studies, etc. Skills in technology may include but are not limited to utilization of video, audio, computers, software, web resources, etc. appropriate to course content/objectives. Students are in the best position to evaluate delivery (i.e., interactive skills) and learning environment in the context of the appearance of competence as a teacher. Peers and other experts in delivery may participate by observing classes, but research suggests that videotaping for later study is considered much better than individual classroom visits.

D. Instructional Assessment Skills may include but are not limited to the development of tools, procedures, and strategies for assessing student learning and then providing meaningful feedback during the course, leading to achievement and learning—effective grading practices, valid and reliable exams, meaningful feedback. These skills are usually evaluated primarily by peers, tempered by student perceptions.

E. Course Management Skills may include but are not limited to respectful treatment of students, handling student/course paperwork, ensuring working, useable technology, making appropriate materials available, providing timely feedback, ensuring a proper physical environment, arranging field trips, coordinating guest speakers, etc., appropriate to course content/objectives. These are evaluated best by peers and supervisors, with some student input.

II. Roles of Participants in Evaluation

A. Student Role in Evaluation

Research suggests that students are in the best position to evaluate Delivery Skills, and can add important perceptions to Content Expertise, Instructional Design, and Assessment skills. Students may participate in this evaluation process through such assessments as SEOIs (treated as snapshots of courses in a given quarter, or grouped together to show progress over longer periods), and perhaps in measures to evaluate "deep learning," such as assessing student performance in subsequent classes or using alumni surveys.

B. Peer Role in Evaluation

Likewise, peers are considered to be in the best positions to evaluate Content Expertise, Instructional Design, and Assessment Skills, with some added perspectives on Delivery and Course Management. Peers may participate in this process through such activities as evaluation of syllabi, course materials, course content and design, assessment strategies and tools, observations of video-recorded classes (preferably for formative evaluation only), peer review of SEOIs (individual quarters and long-term),

creating/reviewing measures to evaluate "deep learning" (student performance in subsequent classes), alumni surveys, and through classroom visitations (preferably for formative evaluation only).

C. Supervisor/Department Chair Role in Evaluation

Supervisors are considered to be in the best position to evaluate Content Expertise and Course Management, with added perspectives on Design, Delivery, and Assessment. Supervisors may participate in this process in ways such as providing evidence/documentation of expertise leading to workload assignments, addressing of classroom management concerns, reviewing of SEOIs, syllabi, and professional development activities, conducting classroom observations (preferably for personal reasons or for review of documented observations), and observing video-recorded classes.

D. Self-Evaluation

Self-Evaluations are excellent opportunities for faculty to address their Content Expertise, Design, Assessment, and Course Management Skills, with some added perspectives on Delivery. Faculty should use their Self-Statements for Teaching to reflect on SEOI and other results of assessments, to present evidence of development activities related to teaching, to explain goals and objectives of courses, and to present evidence of success in teaching (student achievement, deep learning). Faculty being evaluated should also participate in the review of classroom visits and video-recorded classes.

III. Weighting System for Parameters and Participants

Research for evaluation of teaching suggests that some colleges and departments may desire a weighting system for teaching parameters and evaluation participants that clarifies the roles and values of different sources of information, setting some limits yet remaining somewhat flexible. This concept can be seen as complicated and even controversial, but to those who may find it useful, a weighting system offers the opportunity to balance or re-balance the information provided to take advantage of the strengths and perspectives of the various participants and types of assessments used. Based on the research, the following is an example of a weighting system that uses simple emphasis.

Weighting of Teaching Parameters and Participant Information using Simple Emphasis
(+ = more emphasis; 0 = middle; - = less emphasis)

	Student	Peer	Supervisor	Self
Content Expertise	-	+	0	+
Inst Design Skills	-	+	-	+
Inst Delivery Skills	+	0	-	0
Inst Assessment Skills	0	+	-	+
Course Management Skills	-	+	0	+

The feedback from all participants must be considered for each teaching parameter.

Weighting of Teaching Parameters

Once weighting of parameters and participants has been established, it may be desirable to weight the overall parameters themselves in the evaluation process. The following emphases are supported by research (+ = more emphasis; 0 = middle; - = less emphasis):

Content Expertise	0
Instructional Design Skills	+
Instructional Delivery Skills	+
Instructional Assessment Skills	0
Course Management	-

The overall evaluation must take into account all five teaching parameters.