

UNIVERSITY OF KENTUCKY SENATE AD HOC TEACHING EVALUATION COMMITTEE

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

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Lisa Tannock, M.D., Associate Provost of Faculty Advancement (served years 2023-2024; Sue Nokes, Ph.D. served years 2022-2023)

Committee convening bimonthly from January 2023-March 2024

COMMITTEE CHARGE

The charge to the committee is as follows:

The Senate Council has appointed this subcommittee to undertake a two-part activity related to UK's teacher-course evaluations. First, the committee is charged with reviewing aspects such as (but not limited to) the following:

- *past relevant faculty reports on teacher-course evaluations*
- *the current TCE survey instrument*
- *potential new software for TCE survey distribution*
- *appropriate uses of TCE results*
- *national standards*

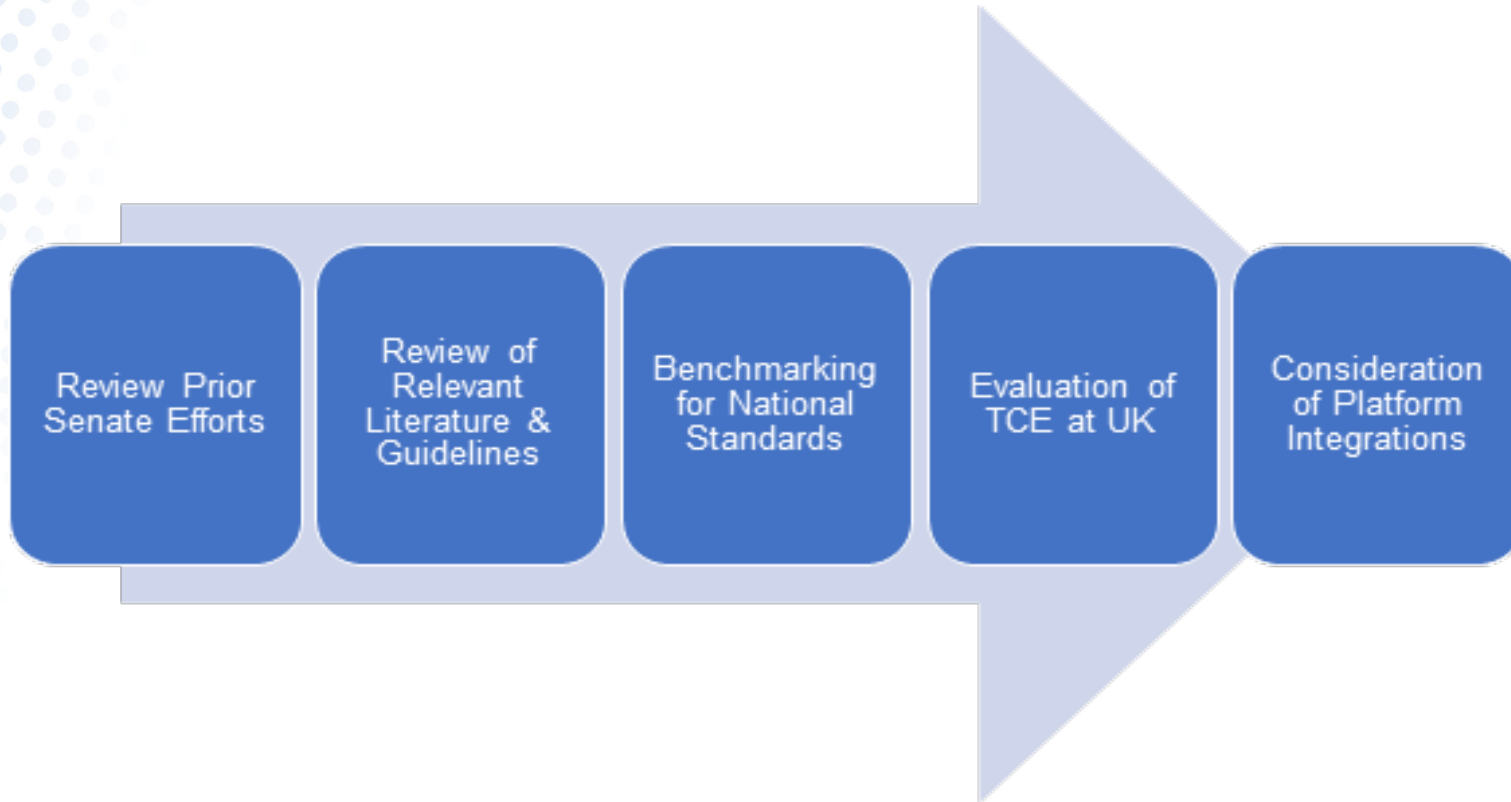
The second part of the activity is for the committee to provide recommendations, based on national best practices, to improve UK's teacher-course evaluation process broadly, including suggestions to decrease bias.

OF NOTE: TCE refers to the currently used version of student survey of the instructor and course titled "Teacher Course Evaluations".

RATIONALE FOR COMMITTEE CHARGE

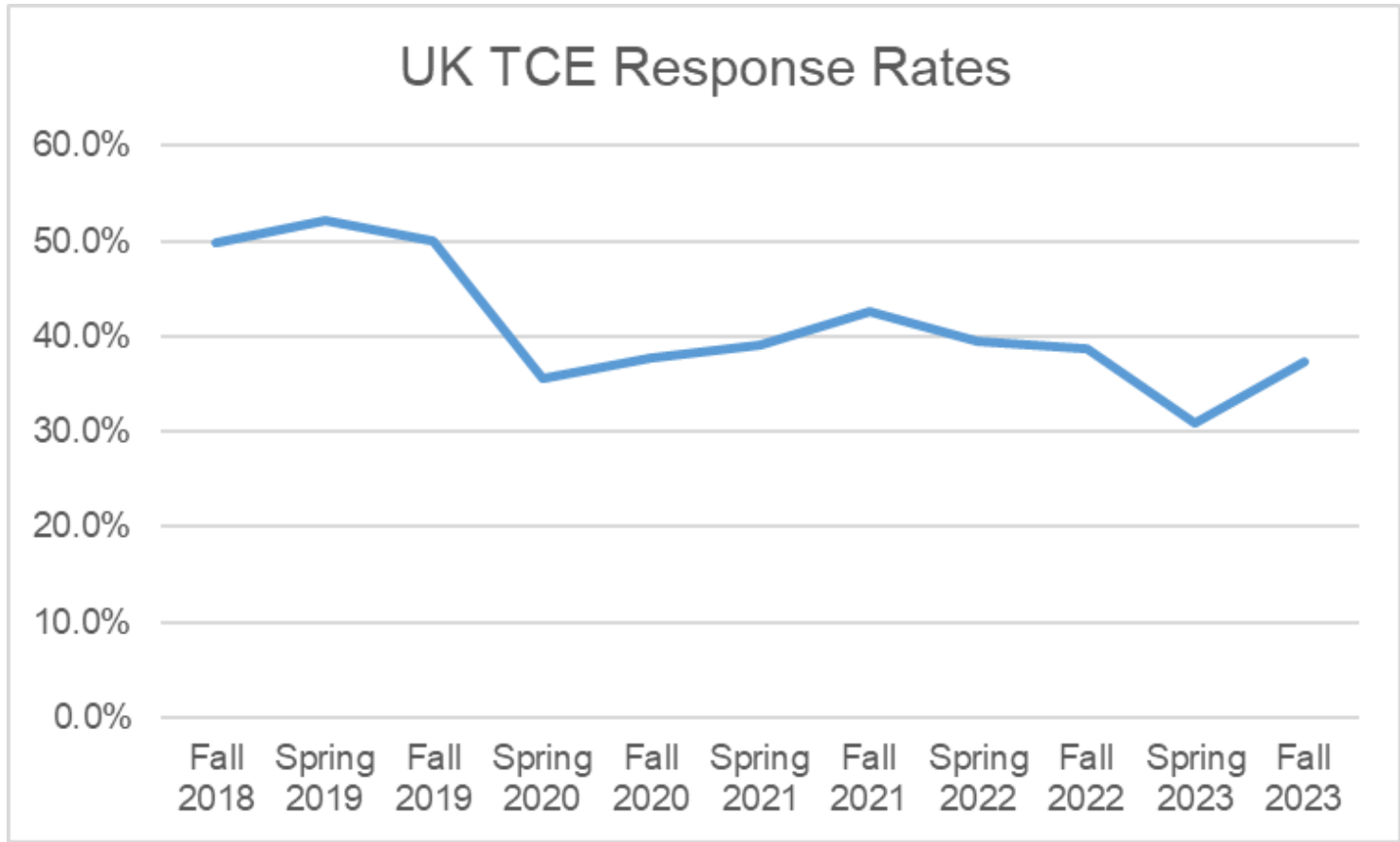
- Recognition of recent efforts of 1) institutions of higher education and 2) organizations representing U.S. research institutions to improve the evaluation of teaching.[1 2]
- Recognized limitations of the historical use of metrics, most notably the student evaluation of teaching.[2]
- Recognition that the student evaluation of teaching has been widely recognized as a biased metric (i.e., racial, ethnic and gender bias, non-responses bias and measurement bias).[3-7]
- Teaching evaluation has not been systematically evaluated by a Senate committee since 2017.

APPROACH TO CHARGE



CURRENT TEACHER COURSE EVALUATION

In 2015 a [standard set](#) of TCE questions were approved by Faculty Senate.



HISTORICAL EFFORTS TO ADDRESS TEACHER COURSE EVALUATIONS

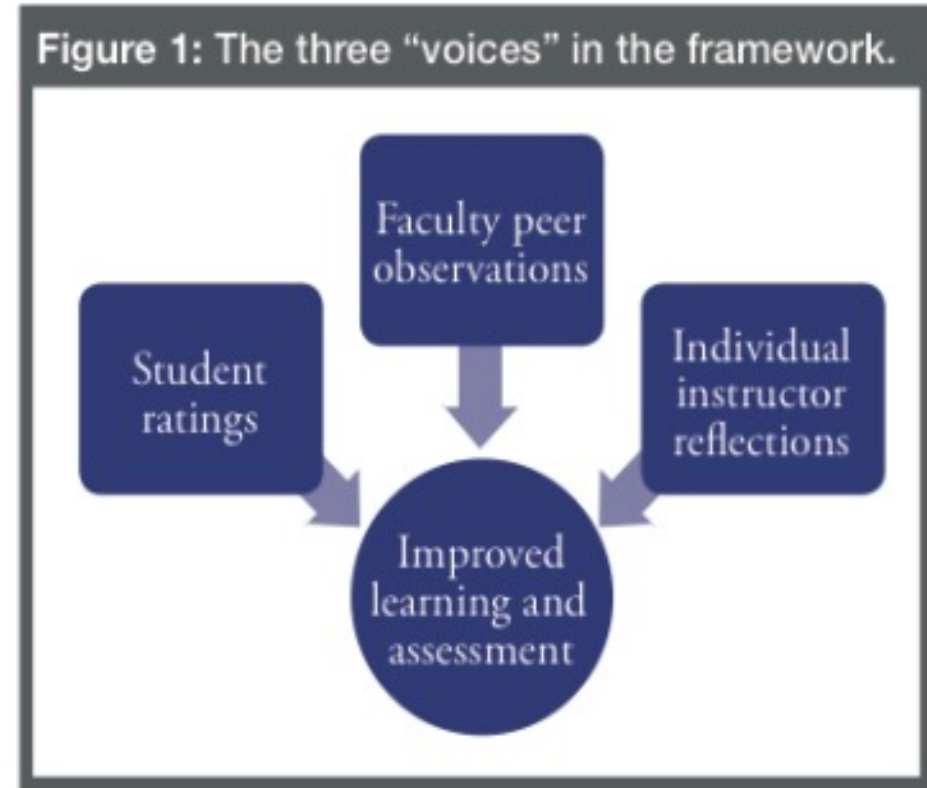
- In 2015, the Senate passed a motion (50 in favor, 9 opposed and 3 abstaining):
 - 1) accepted the report by the ad hoc Committee on Teacher-Course Evaluations;
 - 2) endorsed the mandate that these questions will be the **common questions** that all programs will use on their TCE with exceptions made for courses with certain characteristics; and
 - 3) requested that the implementation, which must be endorsed by the Senate, of the new questions be effective as soon as practically possible.
- In 2016, a motion was approved (67 in favor and 3 opposed) that made the **numerical scores from TCE available to students and faculty** (i.e., no written comments).
- Intramural access to TCE results concerning either **course academic content or instructor performance continued to be managed in accordance with existing academic policy of the University Senate and administrative faculty personnel policy (AR 2:1)**, with the recommendation that course instructors with a supervisory role in a course (course directors, course coordinators) and the department chairs and the college deans of the unit housing the course had access to both numerical and written comments of instructor performance for all instructors in that course.
- To safeguard student **anonymity and comply with FERPA**, any results (numerical ratings and written comments) **for classes with < 5 TCE responses were not available to anyone**. However, results were included in the aggregated UK, College, and Departmental TCE means.

POTENTIAL NEW SOFTWARE DISTRIBUTION PLATFORMS

- In Spring 2023 the university pursued demonstrations of student evaluation software platforms.
- The chair of the Senate Ad Hoc Teaching Evaluation Committee and Senate Council attended those demonstrations and reported features to the committee.
- The features of these platforms were considered in the development of the committee's recommendations.

BENCHMARKS EVALUATION


- The committee completed a thorough review of 40 benchmark universities (Appendix 2 in the Full Report).
- The committee used *University Benchmarks* list provided by the *Institutional, Research Analytics and Decision Support (IRADS)* office and the *Office of Strategic Planning and Institutional Effectiveness*. [8 9]
- Personal communication with Claire Berg the Higher Education Project Assistant for the *Association of American Universities* assisted in the identification of other institutions who have completed significant work in the area.




University of Colorado

BENCHMARKS

BENCHMARKS FOR TEACHING EFFECTIVENESS



The Center for Teaching Excellence has developed a framework called Benchmarks for Teaching Effectiveness to support better methods of reviewing, documenting, and evaluating teaching. The framework is organized around a multidimensional rubric for reviewing faculty teaching. Seven rubric dimensions (below) have been designed to capture teaching in its totality. The rubric includes guiding questions and defined expectations for each dimension (see reverse). Departments are encouraged to adapt the rubric to fit disciplinary expectations and to weight areas most meaningful to the discipline.



- GOALS, CONTENT, & ALIGNMENT
- TEACHING PRACTICES
- ACHIEVEMENT OF LEARNING OUTCOMES
- CLASS CLIMATE
- REFLECTION & ITERATIVE GROWTH
- MENTORING & ADVISING
- INVOLVEMENT IN TEACHING SERVICE, SCHOLARSHIP OR COMMUNITY

Benchmarks Goals and Objectives

- Broaden faculty perspectives on and build consensus on effective teaching
- Encourage the use of multiple sources of information to evaluate teaching (instructor, peers, and students)
- Improve synthesis and representation of this information at the department or school level.

EXPLORING APPLICATIONS OF THE FRAMEWORK

CTE has received funding from the National Science Foundation for a 5-year-project that supports department-level adaptation and use of the Benchmarks framework. With assistance from CTE, participating departments are having conversations about what effective teaching is and how it should be evaluated. As they do this, they are adapting the rubric and identifying materials that that could provide information for each category. They are sharing their efforts with colleagues in other departments and with colleagues at the University of Colorado, Boulder and the University of Massachusetts, Amherst, which have created similar programs. The goal is to develop models that can be applied in other departments and other institutions.

Benchmarks Contact Information

If you have any questions or if you would like more information, please contact:

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WHY WE ARE DOING THIS

Most evaluations focus on a narrow range of teaching practice and prioritize a limited source of evidence. Often, teaching is measured either through student evaluations, which contain inherent biases, or peer observations of a single class period. The Benchmarks framework provides a comprehensive, balanced view of faculty teaching contributions by broadening the types of activities that are reviewed and the sources of information on those activities. Thus, the Benchmarks aligns with KU policy, which requires multiple sources in teaching evaluation and specifies students, peers, and the faculty member as required sources in promotion and tenure and progress-toward-tenure processes.

*See reverse for complete rubric

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ACE Overview

ACE Task Force Summary

The 19-person ACE Task Force began in Spring 2018 as an effort to revise the end-of-semester Assessing the Classroom Environment (ACE) survey, but the scope of the effort grew. After reviewing initial objectives, the committee agreed that the guiding principle should be promoting high quality instruction and its continual improvement. This principle, coupled with the desire to increase student input and minimize well-documented biases in student ratings, demanded that we expand the measures used to assess teaching. [Downloadable Version](#)

Getting Started

ACE End-of-Semester Evaluations

Assessing the Classroom Environment (ACE) is an online evaluation system that collects student opinions about an instructor and provides a standard set of summary results. Instructors may or may not be required to use ACE and should check with their department to determine their options.

Key Features

- Allows for greater access to course evaluations for students and faculty
- Will distribute evaluations for all courses regardless of enrollment (independent studies excluded)
- Flexible configuration and easy distribution
- Quick access to results and reporting features

Ongoing Formative Assessment

Formative assessment is an ongoing process that provides information about teaching, learning, or both. High-stakes assessments such as midterm and final exams and papers help instructors monitor student learning and can also help them plan future courses. But frequent, low- or no-stakes learning assessments throughout the semester help instructors better understand and revise their teaching to address their students' immediate learning needs.

Please visit the [Formative Assessment Strategies](#) page for ideas on how to gain valuable feedback from your students.

University of Oregon: Revising UO's Teaching Evaluations | Office of the Provost (uoregon.edu)

Penn State's new **Faculty Teaching Assessment Framework** assesses teaching using evidence from three sources: peer review, student feedback, and self-assessment. The framework identifies four Elements of Effective Teaching, which serve as standards against which the combined source of evidence are assessed.

Read the [University Faculty Senate reports](#) that created the framework and additional reports from the subsequent Joint Implementation Taskforce and its subcommittees.

Click on each item below for more details.

Elements of Effective Teaching

The framework identifies four Elements of Effective Teaching, which include Effective Design, Effective Instruction, Inclusive and Ethical Pedagogy, and Reflective and Evolving Practice.

The framework uses the following sources of evidence.

<p>Peer Review</p> <p>Peer reviews are conducted by colleagues and may include a course observation and/or review of course-related materials.</p> <p>Academic units are updating their Peer Review Guidelines during the 2023-2024 academic year.</p>	<p>Student Feedback</p> <p>The Student Educational Experience Questionnaire (SEEQ) gathers feedback from students about their learning experiences in a course.</p> <p>The SEEQ is in use for Fall 2023.</p>	<p>Self-Reflection</p> <p>Self-reflection is the practice of thinking about one's teaching experiences and how they will inform course improvements.</p> <p>Faculty will include a self-reflection in their Annual Review for 2023.</p>
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Quick Links

Assessment of Teaching
Elements of Effective Teaching
FAQs
Student Feedback
End of Semester Feedback
Increase Response Rates
Interpreting Student Feedback
Annotating Student Feedback or Midsemester Feedback
Self-Reflection
Teaching Inventories
Teaching Philosophy
Peer Review
Peer Observation of Teaching
Peer Review of Materials
Peer Review of Teaching Grants



If you would like to discuss any aspect of teaching assessment, please reach out to any [SITE faculty consultant](#) or send an email to SITE@osu.edu.

ANALYSIS OF TCE USING MIXED METHODS APPROACH

SELF-REPORTED DATA COLLECTED BY THE COMMITTEE AND IRB APPROVED

Instructor Thoughts on TCE Qualitative Response Themes (N = 144)

- Comments are of use (seems to be a driver of the use scores)
- Faculty are soliciting feedback outside of the TCE
- Response rate is a concern/poor sampling
- Concerns about validity of the measure
- Not a measure of teaching quality or learning, impact or skills obtained
- In-person administration might improve response rates
- Self-reflection and peer observations equally important tools to improve teaching
- Course difficulty affects scores
- Bias (gender, race/ethnicity, sexual identity; response)
- Unit specific teaching evaluation development
- Standards-based approach
- TCE disincentivizes challenging assignments
- More effective tools to improve course (self-learning assessments)
- Should be allowed to complete after final grades
- Students are unable to assess “quality” for a course or instruction
- Highly impacted by the grade the student will receive in the course
- Triangulation (student surveys should not be the only metric)
- Exiting surveys are used
- Contradictory scores
- Numeric scores are of little value
- Some comments are personal and attacking
- Incentivized student completion
- Measure of customer satisfaction
- Small class sizes/no TCE results
- Should not be used for performance evaluation

ANALYSIS OF TCE USING UNIVERSITY LEVEL DATA

- **Comparison Between Variable**

TCE Scores by Age	
TCE Scores by Age (Sample or Subsample N)	Mean ± Standard Deviation/p value
Overall (N = 153)*	
Course	4.33 ± .48/ p = 0.109)
Instructor	4.49 ± .48/ p = 0.017)
<35 years (n = 20)	
Course	4.48 ± .33
Instructor	4.70 ± .30
35-44 years (n = 43)	
Course	4.52 ± .34
Instructor	4.69 ± .26
45-54 years (n = 37)	
Course	4.23 ± .47
Instructor	4.29 ± .53
55-65 years (n = 41)	
Course	4.25 ± .57
Instructor	4.47 ± .50
>65 years (n = 6)	
Course	4.15 ± .33
Instructor	4.32 ± .31

- **Predictive Models.**

- Course ratings could be predicted using models and the variables of faculty perception of speech, class size, student population and race.
- Instructor score could be predicted by the variables of faculty perception of speech, class size, age, student population, teaching experience in higher education, and race.

TCE ANALYSIS USING INSTITUTIONAL DATA

DATA AVAILABLE THROUGH UNIVERSITY DATASETS- COLLATED AND ANALYZED BY IRADS

Academic Year	Academic Term Id		Grand Total
	Fall	Spring	
2018-19	80,149	69,758	149,907
2019-20	81,374	52,586	133,960
2020-21	57,142	52,583	109,725
2021-22	62,963	55,271	118,234
2022-23	62,566	44,429	106,995
Grand Total	344,194	274,627	618,821

Instructor Title Series (Class Section Event Schedule Instructor1)	Count	Avg. Q10	Std. dev. of Q10	Avg. Q19	Std. dev. of Q19
Adjunct	7,089	4.10	1.05	4.30	0.99
Clinical	11,832	4.31	0.93	4.42	0.91
Extension	2,770	4.26	0.96	4.41	0.91
Lecturer	122,518	4.16	0.98	4.37	0.92
Library	77	4.13	1.08	4.35	0.96
Military	1,008	4.50	0.72	4.58	0.69
Part-Time	53,473	4.17	1.01	4.33	0.97
Post-Retirement	1,428	4.23	0.94	4.31	0.95
Regular	195,534	4.14	1.03	4.29	1.00
Research	1,104	3.93	1.16	4.18	1.08
Special	54,046	4.30	0.92	4.47	0.84
Temporary	7,775	3.97	1.11	4.14	1.07
Visiting	2,084	4.31	1.01	4.40	0.98
Voluntary	242	4.33	0.72	4.41	0.79
Grand Total	460,980	4.17	1.00	4.34	0.96

TCE ANALYSIS USING INSTITUTIONAL DATA

Predictive Models:

- TCE item of “I consider this to be a quality course”,
 - Developmental/remedial and program-required courses were evaluated less favorably
 - Professional and graduate courses (or mixed undergraduate and graduate courses) tended to be evaluated more favorably
 - Course level was the most useful variable for predicting course scores
 - Evaluations in academic years 2023 and 2020 tended to be very slightly more favorable than those in other recent academic years
 - Distance learning courses (except hybrid) tended to be evaluated less favorably than traditional or off-campus courses
 - Variation across colleges, both in terms of which colleges are hosting the courses and which colleges are employing the instructors
 - Less favorable for instructors who are not citizens.
 - Some instructors appear to obtain consistently higher course scores than others.
- TCE item of “the instructor provided quality teaching”,
 - Instructors of developmental/remedial and program required courses tended to be evaluated less favorably,
 - Instructors of professional and graduate courses (or mixed undergraduate and graduate courses) tended to be evaluated more favorably.
 - Course level is perhaps the most useful variable for predicting instructor scores, among the variables considered.
 - Distance learning courses (except hybrid) tended to be evaluated slightly less favorably than traditional or off-campus courses.
 - Evaluations to be less favorable for instructors who are not citizens or who are racial/ethnic minorities.
 - There is some variation across colleges, in terms of which colleges are hosting the courses.
 - Evaluations from the most recent academic years tended to be very slightly more favorable than those from a few years back.
 - Older instructors tended to receive very slightly less favorable evaluations.
 - There is slight variation associated with instructor credentials (highest degree).
 - Some instructors appear to obtain consistently higher instructor scores than others.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1. The current instrument, known as the Teacher-Course Evaluations (TCE), should be considered only a measurement of the student's perception of the learning experience and titled accordingly. Similarly, the TCE should include items that are able to produce a valid and reliable measure of the same.**
- 2. The committee recommends that the survey of the student's evaluation of the learning experience be titled Survey of the Student's Learning Experience (SSLE).**
- 3. Items of the SSLE should be applicable to all teaching modalities (i.e., in-person, online, hybrid, asynchronous, etc.) and phrased accordingly. Future efforts to address teaching evaluation should evaluate and adapt current items to accommodate this recommendation.**
- 4. The measure of the student's perception of the learning experience should be one of multiple sources of the evaluation of teaching or course quality. The evaluation of teaching effectiveness and course quality should include two additional metrics, to represent the three relevant perspectives of teaching and learning- 1) peers or content expert, 2) student experience as a learner, and 3) self (instructor). Specifically, evaluation tools representing these broad categories could include peer evaluation/observation, alumni letters, exit exams or success on professional licensure exams, student exit interviews, and/or mid or periodic course reviews. All sources of evaluation should include a described process of self-reflection because substantive change is contingent on this iterative practice. Standardized rubrics or templates for self-reflection and peer observation should be adapted by a unit.**

RECOMMENDATIONS

5. Students should be offered resources on providing constructive feedback.
6. Instructors should be provided with resources on interpreting students' evaluation of the learning experience and approaches to improve teaching.
7. To the greatest extent possible, the university unit should surveil and delete student feedback relaying inappropriate or abusive comments and personal attacks prior to providing the course evaluations to instructors.
8. In the case of response rates that do not meet the threshold for reporting survey results, aggregated data by instructor and course over time should be made available to faculty. These results are important for multiple reasons including but not limited to, the improvement of courses and teaching.
9. Mechanism to improve the response rates for the survey of the student's perception of the learning experience (proposed SSLE) should be integrated into courses. A not exhaustive list includes: 1) reinforcing the value of the survey by providing examples of positive course changes that resulted from student feedback, 2) reminder systems, 3) dedicated class time to complete surveys, and 4) a clear description of the purpose and directions for completion of the survey how the survey results are used at multiple time points in the semester. The consideration of survey distribution platforms that are easily accessible and user friendly should be used.
10. Work on improving the evaluation of the student learning experience should continue and should involve all stakeholders.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Perception: The TCE should be considered only a measurement of the student's perception of the learning experience and titled accordingly.

Title: Survey of the Student's Learning Experience (SSLE).

Modalities: SLE should be applicable to all teaching modalities (i.e., in-person, online, hybrid, asynchronous, etc.) and phrased accordingly.

Evaluating Teaching/Course Quality: Student Perception + Peer/Content Expert + Self (Instructor)

Student Resources: How to provide constructive feedback

Instructor Resources: Interpreting feedback to understand the perceptions and make informed decisions


Eliminate inappropriate/abusive comments

Provide aggregate data for response rates under the reporting threshold


Higher response rates lead to more reliable information.


Pursue the understanding and improve the evaluation of student learning experiences.

10 RECOMMENDATIONS


- **01. Perception**

Survey of the Student's Learning Experience (SSLE).


The TCE should be considered only a measurement of the student's perception of the learning experience and titled accordingly.
- **02. Title**


SSLE should apply to all teaching modalities (i.e., in-person, online, hybrid, asynchronous, etc.) and phrased accordingly.
- **03. Modalities**

Student Perception + Peer/Content Expert + Self (Instructor)


04. Evaluating Teaching/Course Quality
- **05. Student Resources**

Interpreting feedback to understand the perceptions and make informed decisions


How to provide constructive feedback
- **06. Instructor Resources**

Eliminate inappropriate/abusive comments
- **07. Surveil**

Provide aggregate data for response rates under the reporting threshold

08. For Low Response Rates
- **09. Increase Response Rates**

Pursue the understanding and improve the evaluation of student learning experiences.

Higher response rates lead to more reliable information
- **10. Improve**

SENATE RULES RECOMMENDATIONS

The committee crafted the above recommendations and then considered the appropriateness of codifying into Senate Rules. The committee felt that some of the recommendations are best practices for implementation of teaching evaluation and would not be appropriate as a Senate Rule. Yet, the committee did feel that a new section of Senate Rules to address teaching and course evaluation is necessary considering that is one of the three missions of the university and University Senate determines broad academic policy. The committee felt that teaching evaluation is a core academic function to improve teaching and learning and thus a policy should exist. As such, we have provided the two recommendations below to be considered for codification as Senate Rules.

We recommend the following text be included as part of a new proposed Senate rule:

SENATE RULE RECOMMENDATION 1.

The committee recommends that a new section of Senate Rules be developed and titled “Evaluation of Courses and Teaching”.

SENATE RULE RECOMMENDATION 2.

The evaluation of teaching effectiveness and course quality should be comprised of three distinct perspectives of teaching and learning- 1) peers or content expert, 2) student experience as a learner, and 3) self (instructor).[4] Implementation should be tailored to meet the needs of colleges/unit.

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QUESTIONS? COMMENTS?

