

COLLEGE OF THE ARTS
Policy on Assessment of Teaching Effectiveness for Full-time Faculty

The College of the Arts is committed to the assessment of teaching as a means of determining effectiveness in promoting student learning and of identifying constructive ways of improving teaching performance for all faculty. Even highly effective instructors can benefit from regular feedback on their performance as measured by a variety of significant criteria. Such feedback can help faculty gauge their effectiveness and guide reflection on the continued improvement of their teaching.

The results of the annual assessment of teaching effectiveness, which is part of the annual review process outlined in the Policy of Annual Evaluation of Regular Faculty, should inform efforts to improve instruction. As appropriate, the department/school (hereafter referred to as “department”) chair/director (hereafter referred to as “chair”) should use these results to mentor faculty for the sake of improving their teaching and to propose ways to utilize departmental, college, and university resources, including those provided by the Center for Teaching and Learning.

It is expected that the specific nature of instructional activities will vary as a function of the mission of the department and the workload assignment of the faculty member. Thus, it is expected that the distribution of effort across different instructional activities will vary and that evaluators will assess the effectiveness of teaching across the full range of instructional activities. Among the factors to be considered are:

Quality of Course Content

Quality of course content will be assessed through a review of syllabi, examinations, and other (supplementary) materials. Syllabi should be reviewed for conformity with university guidelines, differentiation of graduate and undergraduate expectations, reading assignments appropriate to course level, and catalog description. Course materials should also be assessed for their appropriateness in relation to the current state of knowledge in the field. Credit should also be given to faculty whose courses are structured in ways that cultivate curiosity, creativity, and critical acumen in their students.

Direction of Undergraduate and Graduate Students

- a. The extent and quality of faculty efforts in the direction of graduate theses, recitals, and dissertations and/or artistic/creative activities and in the supervising of graduate teaching or practica will be assessed. The effectiveness of these efforts can be judged by such outcomes as presentations at professional meetings, publications, performances, recitals, and exhibitions.
- b. The extent and quality of faculty efforts in the direction of undergraduate independent studies, practica, and honors theses will be assessed. The effectiveness of these efforts can be judged by such outcomes as student success in acceptance to graduate or professional schools, scores on national examinations, and special awards or achievements.

New Courses, New Teaching Practices, and Other Contributions to Instructional Programs

The effective development and execution of new courses, significant involvement in the development of new instructional programs, the use of new teaching techniques and practices, teaching awards, and/or the faculty member's level of commitment and contribution to the quality of the teaching program will be assessed.

Student Evaluations

a. Student evaluation numerical scores should be considered according to such variables as the context of the range of scores for specific courses and for similar level courses (i.e., 1000, 2000, etc.) both within the department and within the disciplinary area, class size, whether the course is required or an elective, the response rate on the evaluations, the number of students enrolled in the course, and other factors that may significantly influence instructional effectiveness (e.g., availability of facilities, equipment, and materials).

b. Student evaluation written comments, and especially significant patterns in the comments, should also be considered.

In general, student evaluations are indicators of student perceptions. The evaluations should be judged in the context of other information and should not be the sole basis for evaluating teaching effectiveness or for making fine-grained distinctions.

Teaching Portfolios

To facilitate the evaluation process, each faculty member shall compile a teaching portfolio that contain the materials required for the above assessments. Portfolios shall include numerical evaluations for all courses and a list of all independent studies, theses, and other such courses one has directed. In addition, faculty shall include in the portfolios more complete data (syllabi, exams, written student evaluations, and other materials) from two courses per year – generally, one specialty course and one more general course. A one-page narrative statement explaining and/or expanding on the other contents of the teaching portfolio may also be included. (In consultation with the chair, faculty members shall vary the courses in the portfolio so that over a three-year period it will contain a broad representation of the courses they have taught.) It shall be the faculty member's responsibility to have these portfolios ready for review in January at a date set by the chair.

Additional Methods

Departments may consider developing additional assessment methods, which may vary from unit to unit as best suits particular disciplines and departments. Among the alternatives that might be explored are, for example, peer review, mentoring of junior faculty by accomplished senior faculty, and teaching "pairs" (where each faculty member provides feedback to the other). Departments should include procedures that provide ongoing monitoring of instruction, teaching mentoring, and written documentation of teaching progress. Adoption of such additional

measures and procedures shall require support by a majority of the tenured and tenure-track faculty.