




CALIFORNIA  
STATE  
UNIVERSITY,  
FRESNO

## MEMORANDUM

**DATE:** November 21, 2011

**TO:** Faculty  
Department of Art & Design  
M/S CA 65

**FROM:** William A. Covino   
Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs

**SUBJECT:** Approval of your Department Policy on Peer Evaluations  
and Student Course Evaluations (RE: APM 322)

I have received and reviewed your departmental documents, and they are tentatively approved for implementation during the remainder of AY 11-12.

However, I am deeply concerned about your department's selection of a statistical standard for student ratings that is extraordinarily low—the lowest of any department in the entire University. This is a “standard” that renders that word largely meaningless. I am also concerned about the impact this decision will have on the AY 12-13 RTP process. This artificially low mean will surely undermine personnel recommendations attempting to persuade upper levels of review regarding relative teaching effectiveness in your unit.

Thus it is my hope that, once Fall Semester data becomes available, you may wish to adjust your departmental standard upward to a more realistic measure of teaching performance.

In the meantime, I want to reiterate my commitment to our Academic Senate's stated beliefs that student feedback is best viewed from a multi-year perspective, and considered within the larger context of all evidence presented in support of a colleague's teaching effectiveness.

WAC:kyp

cc: Jose Diaz, Acting Dean, College of Arts & Humanities  
Ted Wendt, AVP, Academic Personnel

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Department of ART and DESIGN  
POLICY ON ASSESSMENT OF TEACHING EFFECTIVENESS

Teaching is central to the mission of the University and, therefore, its effectiveness must be assessed. The dual purpose of the assessment of teaching effectiveness is to provide the individual instructor with specific information to enhance instruction and to provide information for use in personnel actions. The primary responsibility for assessing all aspects of teaching effectiveness rests with the faculty.

This policy establishes the framework for the assessment of teaching effectiveness, including procedures for the two major components of the assessment: (a) reports of classroom visits by peers and (b) student evaluation of instruction.

Although the reports of classroom visits by peers and student evaluation of instruction are the principal components of assessment of teaching effectiveness, additional information such as review of textbooks, course syllabi, representative assignments, examinations, and student projects should be incorporated into the assessment. Care should be taken to examine the number of course preparations, level and type of classes taught (graduate, undergraduate, required, elective, etc.), the instructional format (lecture, discussion, lab, seminar, etc.), time of day and length of class period, and any other factors which may affect teaching effectiveness or its assessment. Individuals involved in the assessment of teaching effectiveness must be most careful to avoid bias based upon race, color, religion, national origin, marital status, pregnancy, age disability, veteran's status, sexual preference, or sex. Everyone also must be alert to the possibility of such bias on the part of others.

Statistical data must be analyzed in the context of the foregoing paragraphs and with the realization that serious limitations exist relative to the accumulation and analysis of such data. For example, because the precision of most student ranking data is limited, computations such as arithmetic means should be reported only as whole numbers or to the first decimal place. Frequency distributions are an appropriate way of illustrating results of student evaluation and, generally, are less likely to lead to over-interpretation of data than other mathematical computations, which may suggest more precision than actually exists. The assessment of statistical data should always attempt to identify and focus upon patterns of performance rather than upon idiosyncratic responses.

Statistical data shall not be the only information considered in evaluating teaching effectiveness. Department faculty are expected to go beyond the examination of numerical data and the comparisons of numerical rankings in their assessment of teaching performance. Qualitative analyses of reports of classroom visits by faculty peers as well as student evaluations and assessment of course materials should provide a non-quantitative component to the overall assessment of teaching effectiveness. It is expected that the faculty member shall meet or exceed the department standard of **2.0 out of 5.0** (*at least until such time as data trends of student responses can be properly evaluated*) using adjusted or unadjusted scores, whichever are higher, on a regular basis; however, it is more important to evaluate on the basis of multi-year trends rather than focusing on a single course or narrow time frame.

**I. The assessment of teaching effectiveness shall address four basic elements of instruction:** course content, instructional design, instructional delivery, and assessment methods.

- A. **Course Content.** The assessment of course content shall include a review of the currency of the content of a course, the appropriateness of the level of the content of a course, and the appropriateness of the sequencing of the content to best achieve the learning objectives for the course.
- B. **Instructional Design.** The assessment of the instructional design of the course shall include a review of learning objectives, syllabi, instructional support materials, organization of lectures, and the use of technology appropriate to the class.
- C. **Instructional Delivery.** The assessment of delivery shall include a review of oral presentation skills, written communication skills, skills using various forms of informational technology, and the ability to create an overall environment conducive to student learning.
- D. **Assessment Methods.** The evaluation of assessment methods shall consist of a review of the tools, procedures, and strategies used for measuring student learning, and providing timely and meaningful feedback to students.

## II. Peer Visit Forms and Student Evaluation questionnaires

- A. The department's peer evaluation form will assess course content, instructional design, instructional delivery, and assessment methods. The department will adopt a protocol for face-to-face real time peer observations of teaching where applicable. The results of these peer evaluations may be used both formatively and summatively.
- B. Student rating questionnaires shall provide for the assessment of the applicable components identified in Section I. The student rating questionnaires shall be unsigned. Departments shall select questions having demonstrated reliability and validity from a campus-wide pool approved by the Academic Senate and Provost. When possible, the instructor should also receive adjusted scores that take into account external factors beyond the control of the instructor.
- C. The data from peer evaluations and student ratings shall be used in personnel decisions relating to retention, tenure and promotion.
- D. Additional student ratings of courses may be requested by the instructor or required by the college/ school Personnel Committee, Dean or Provost.

## III. Frequency of Implementation

### A. Reports of Classroom Visits by Peers

- 1. The department has established the following written policy that describes the frequency and scheduling of classroom visits by peers.
  - a. For part-time temporary faculty, the first time a course is taught by the instructor and, thereafter, at least one course every other year of employment regardless of a break in service;
  - b. For full-time temporary faculty, two courses each semester for the first year and two courses each academic year thereafter.
  - c. For probationary faculty, two classes (to include as many courses as possible) every semester.
  - d. For tenured faculty, one course each academic year on a rotating basis such that during a five year period the maximum number of different courses is evaluated.
- 2. Additional classroom visits by peers may be requested by the instructor or required by the Dean or Vice President for Academic Affairs.

### B. Student Ratings of Instruction

The department has established the following written policy that describes the frequency and scheduling of student evaluations.

- 1. Tenured faculty shall have a minimum of two courses evaluated by students annually.
- 2. Tenure Track faculty shall have ALL courses evaluated each semester.
- 3. Part-time temporary faculty shall have ALL courses evaluated each semester.
- 4. Full-time temporary faculty shall have ALL courses evaluated each semester.

*While the IDEA Short Form will be the standard paper instrument for the campus, faculty may elect to use either the Diagnostic Form or Online version.*

## IV. **Confidentiality**

Information obtained from peer evaluation reports and/or student rating questionnaires shall be confidential. Possession or use of this information shall be restricted to

- A. the instructor, who may at his/her discretion, make such information available to others;
- B. those charged with conducting evaluations or administering this policy;
- C. those with access to the Open Personnel File.

## **V. Use and Housing of Student Ratings Data**

A. Student ratings data shall not be used for any extraordinary purposes including, but not limited to, comparison of programs, departments, colleges, or any external entity or institution without the approval of the Academic Senate.

B. Data collected from the assessment of teaching effectiveness will be housed in the Offices of the Academic Senate on behalf of the Academic Assembly.

## **VI. Administration of Questionnaires for Student Ratings of Instruction**

### **A. Administration of Student Rating Questionnaires**

1. Student rating questionnaires shall be proctored by a faculty member, student, or administrative assistant. The questionnaire may not be proctored by the instructor of record for the course.
2. The instructor being rated may not be present in the classroom during the administration of the questionnaire.
3. Proctor Responsibilities.
  - a. The proctor shall not interview students before, during, or after the class session.
  - b. The administration of the questionnaire shall occur during the last half of the scheduled term of instruction and shall be administered during the first fifteen minutes of class. Nothing besides a pencil and the rating form shall be handed out during the administration of the questionnaire.
4. Standardized instructions to the rating questionnaire will be provided by the proctor. All proctors will receive standardized written instructions on administering the forms as well as a written statement about the use and processing of the evaluations to be read to the students. These standardized instructions shall:
  - a. inform students that the results will not be available to the instructor until after final grades have been submitted.
  - b. inform students of the purpose of the questionnaire, which is to enhance teaching effectiveness and to provide information for staffing decisions including retention, tenure, and promotion (if any);
  - c. inform students that the original or a copy of the original of the comments (if any) will be given to the instructor;
  - d. inform students that the instructor may not be present in the classroom during the administration of the questionnaire.
  - e. inform students that care should be taken to avoid bias based upon race, color, religion, national origin, ancestry, marital status, age, physical disability, mental disability, medical condition, veteran's status, sex, and sexual orientation.

### **B. Analysis of Student Rating Data**

#### **1. *Quantitative Results***

- a. A statistical summary of the quantitative results of the student ratings shall be generated. This summary shall be user- friendly. This summary shall be known as the Statistical Summary. The department uses the quantitative data from the Statistical Summary to compare against departmental standards.
- b. The instructor shall receive a copy of the statistical summary. In the interest of instructional improvement and fairness to retention/tenure/promotion candidates, these copies should be provided to the instructor as soon as possible after final grades are turned in. Candidates for retention/ tenure/ promotion should have priority over temporary and tenured faculty in the receipt of this information.
- c. After final grades are turned in by the instructor, the Statistical Summary shall be placed in the Open Personnel File.

## *2. Open-Ended Student Comments*

- a. The department may require that students be given the opportunity to provide comments in conjunction with numerical student ratings. A copy of the student comments shall be given to the department chair and the faculty member. The department chair shall not share the student comments with review committees. The department chair shall review the student comments in a timely fashion for evidence of gross violations of university policy.
- b. In the interest of instructional improvement and fairness to retention/tenure/promotion candidates, these copies shall be provided to the instructor as soon as possible after final grades are submitted.

## **VII. Preparation of an Overall Evaluation of Teaching Performance**

For recommendations regarding personnel actions such as retention, tenure and promotion, five year review, contract renewal of lecturers, and peer evaluation of courses, the statistical summary of student ratings along with other appropriate information in the Open Personnel File shall be assessed to identify patterns and trends of teaching performance and effectiveness.

The preparation of the overall assessment of teaching effectiveness shall be conducted by a review committee composed of faculty of appropriate rank. Probationary faculty may only perform evaluations of temporary faculty. In general, tenured faculty shall be evaluated only by other tenured faculty at a higher rank, except full professors who may evaluate faculty at any rank.

*The Department will follow the guidelines in APM 325, APM 327 and APM 328 when electing committees selected to prepare the overall evaluation of teaching.*

## **VIII. Summary of Policy**

In accord with the foregoing provisions, the department has and will continue to develop written policies and procedures in accord with the college and university as appropriate that describe:

- A. the selection of items from the campus-wide pool of validated items.
- B. the frequency (if the minimum described above is to be exceeded) and scheduling of student ratings.
- C. how faculty peers will be selected to prepare the overall evaluation of teaching.
- D. the minimum standards for teaching effectiveness.

DEPARTMENT OF ART AND DESIGN  
**PEER EVALUATION FORM TEMPLATE**

Professor Evaluated: \_\_\_\_\_ Rank: \_\_\_\_\_

\*Course: \_\_\_\_\_ Term/Year: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Classroom Visitation: \_\_\_\_\_

Evaluator \_\_\_\_\_ Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

**INTRODUCTION**

**Course Content.**

*The assessment of course content shall include a review of the currency of the content of a course, the appropriateness of the level of the content of a course, and the appropriateness of the sequencing of the content to best achieve the learning objectives for the course.*

**Instructional Design.**

*The assessment of the instructional design of the course shall include a review of learning objectives, syllabi, instructional support materials, organization of lectures, and the use of technology appropriate to the class.*

**Instructional Delivery.**

*The assessment of delivery shall include a review of oral presentation skills, written communication skills, skills using various forms of informational technology, and the ability to create an overall environment conducive to student learning.*

**Assessment Methods.**

*The evaluation of assessment methods shall consist of a review of the tools, procedures, and strategies used for measuring student learning, and providing timely and meaningful feedback to students.*

**Summary**

*\* For online courses, the instructional, support materials will be posted online.*