![ILLINOIS College of Liberal Arts & Sciences]

LAS Guidelines for Best Practices in Evaluation of Instructional Contributions of Faculty

Executive Summary

This document outlines best practices in evaluating the effectiveness of faculty instructional contributions (including but not limited to classroom teaching) for both tenure-track and Specialized Faculty, as well as required procedures for annual review of teaching and teaching-related activities. It includes the following:

• A statement from the college regarding the importance of intentional, systematic evaluation of teaching as linked to AAUP principles

• Links to Provost Communications relevant to the Promotion and Tenure process, and to the evaluation (and promotion) of Specialized Faculty

• Information on and best practices for conducting peer reviews of teaching

• Information on the inclusion of ICES forms in annual reviews as well as third-year and promotion dossiers

• Information on reflective self-assessment of one's teaching

• A list of recommended further reading on evaluating teaching and teachers

• A list of what types of information may be included in documenting teaching effectiveness, across five different categories (Curriculum, Classroom Instruction, Extra-Classroom Instruction, Administration/Service Related to Teaching, and Scholarship of Teaching and Learning)

While this document may be most useful for new Executive Officers and others in departments who are in charge of annual faculty reviews, it is designed also to be a helpful reference document for returning and experienced EOs, as well as an archival record of LAS policies and values as relevant to teaching and learning.

Introduction

As the largest and most diverse college at Illinois, enrolling 99.9% of all students in one or more courses during their time on campus, the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences (LAS) values excellence in teaching alongside excellence in research. From its annual teaching awards to its recognition of outstanding junior faculty through the LEAP initiative, LAS is committed to providing the highest quality educational experiences for students enrolled in General Education offerings, undergraduate major and minor requirements and electives, and graduate courses.

To that end, we recognize the importance of the longstanding principles outlined in the AAUP *Statement on Teaching Evaluation* (1975), which may be summed up in four main points:

1. That any and all department, college, and/or university-level expectations, criteria, and procedures for the evaluation of teaching be clear and accessible to all faculty;
2. That accurate and systematically collected data on faculty teaching be put into institutional context (as relevant to support, resources, and types of teaching done) in order to be assessed fairly and without unwarranted assumptions or conclusions;
3. That differing measures of evaluation emphasize different aspects of the classroom experience and are thus each part of a fuller portrait of teaching effectiveness; these measures include student evaluation forms/questionnaires (perception), peer evaluations (observation), and self-evaluation (reflection), as well as, where applicable, outside opinions (external review). For this reason, "faculty members should have a primary though not exclusive role in evaluating an individual faculty member's performance as a teacher" (*Statement* 202);
4. That evaluation of teaching is beneficial for both faculty development and instructional effectiveness, and that distinguished teaching resulting from the evaluation of faculty should be recognized accordingly; in other words, that evaluation is not a simply punitive mechanism but also an opportunity for pedagogical growth, and recognition of excellence.

This LAS guidelines document is designed to help Executive Officers engage in these best practices regarding regular and systematic evaluation of the instructional contributions of tenure-track and tenured faculty, which includes but is not limited to classroom teaching of undergraduate and graduate students. Progress and improvement in instructional effectiveness can most easily be documented by systematic review and regular communication with faculty about their strengths and weaknesses; this document outlines those review components.

Below, we outline the three internal types of evaluation noted by the AAUP in its *Statement*, and provide resources for best practices in completing each of these in LAS units, per the calendar for required evaluation of faculty teaching. As noted below, some of these practices are more or less applicable to tenure-track or Specialized Faculty members, but each department should maintain and publicize its specific processes for evaluation of instruction for each category of faculty it employs. In providing these guidelines for best practices, LAS recognizes the importance of quality, innovative instruction for all students on campus, and seeks to promote a culture that values teaching and rewards excellence in the classroom and in other instructional settings.

I. Occasions for Evaluation

As outlined by the Office of the Provost, there are three occasions for which a tenure-track faculty member's teaching must be reviewed or evaluated by the department and/or the college and university, and two occasions for Specialized Faculty. These are:

A. For Tenure-Track Faculty:

Annual Evaluations, as outlined in Communication #21 (https://provost.illinois.edu/policies/provosts-communications/communication-21-annual-faculty-review/).
As part of a department's annual review of faculty for both merit considerations and overall effectiveness and potential improvement, departments should ask that faculty members write a brief overview of their contributions to teaching, including information about Q1 and Q2 scores on any **ICES forms** and any specific improvements or changes made to teaching during the year under review. In addition, departments should provide opportunities for **peer review** of teaching in each of the six years of the probationary period leading up to tenure review.

Third-Year Review, as outlined in Communication #13 (https://provost.illinois.edu/policies/provosts-communications/communication-13-review-of-faculty-in-year-three-of-the-probationary-period/)

Third-year review is an important milestone in a tenure-track faculty member's career, one that includes a review by LAS of both research and teaching progress as well as a summary of the previous annual reviews by the EO, indicating in particular any difficulties in progress in research or teaching. For third-year review, both peer evaluations and ICES data for Questions 1 and 2, from all courses taught prior to the point of the review, **must be included** in the review packet. The third-year review should ideally include three or more peer evaluations, summarized by the EO, as well as a self-assessment of teaching by the candidate.

Promotion and Tenure, as outlined in Communication #9 (http://provost.illinois.edu/policies/provosts-communications/communication-9-promotion-and-tenure/)

Promotion and tenure (and promotion to full professor) is the most critical juncture in a faculty member's career; as such, the packet for promotion and tenure must include a summary of all of the teaching evaluation items in the third-year review (and any others conducted subsequent to it) as well as external letters of review regarding the candidate's research, plus all ICES score information. The promotion and tenure packet should contextualize teaching effectiveness, particularly in the case of courses commonly ranked low by students across multiple instructors, and should clearly assess the candidate's success as a teacher as well as a researcher.

B. For Specialized Faculty:

Annual Evaluations:
The above processes for annual reviews (ICES forms, peer review) should also be used to evaluate the teaching of Specialized Faculty members each academic year, with particular attention to excellence in teaching as the primary criterion for reappointment. Annual reviews must be conducted for Specialized Faculty per Communication #25, which can be found here: https://provost.illinois.edu/files/2017/09/Provost-Comm-No-25-Specialized-Faculty.pdf

Promotion:
For general promotion procedures for Specialized Faculty, see the guidelines in Communication #26: https://provost.illinois.edu/policies/provosts-communications/communication-26-promotion-to-teaching-research-or-clinical-associate-or-full-professor-titles/. In addition to what is in these Provost's guidelines, each unit should also have a document outlining its specific departmental procedures for promoting Specialized Faculty.

II. Types of Evaluation

Each of the above processes, as noted, involves multiple measurements of teaching, including but not limited to: ICES surveys completed by enrolled students, faculty (peer) review of teaching by fellow UIUC colleagues (and external review of teaching where applicable, e.g. Specialized Faculty promotion cases), and self-assessment of teaching by the faculty member him or herself. The following briefly outlines what each of these measurements entails, with links to resources for more information. Additional artifacts that may document teaching excellence are listed in the Appendix to this document.

   A. *ICES (Instructor and Course Evaluation System) forms*

All tenure-track and Specialized Faculty members, as well as graduate teaching assistants (at the direction of their supervising course faculty, where applicable) should distribute or in the case of online forms make available electronically, **ICES** (Instructor and Course Evaluation System) forms **near the close of each semester** in which a course is taught. ICES scores are required for all tenure and promotion files per Provost Communication #9. Beyond this use of ICES scores, however, student feedback collected in the surveys (including written comments) can be valuable for faculty, providing students with an opportunity to further engage in and reflect upon their own learning. Therefore, the use of ICES forms should be an ongoing, iterative process that engages students in relation to instructors' individual goals for teaching improvement and professional development, and should be an occasion for dialogue between faculty and their respective EOs.

Faculty members who are interested in capturing student feedback that is more specific to individual course or instructor goals may also design and distribute their own alternative course surveys or evaluation forms that are specific to a course or courses, which may augment or complement ICES or other institutional student-centered measurements. If faculty members choose this method, they should follow collection procedures that protect students' identity and confidentiality in the evaluation process.

Finally, departments and faculty may work with CITL to design or redesign the questions in their disciplinary "core". For frequently asked questions about ICES form content and design, and the process of using ICES, please see http://citl.illinois.edu/citl-101/measurement-evaluation/teaching-evaluation/teaching-evaluations-(ices)/ices-faq.

   B. *Faculty (Peer) Review—internal and/or external*

While institutional student course surveys (here, ICES) capture one important audience and provide useful data on student perceptions of courses and of individual teaching methods, they can also reproduce and perpetuate biases, especially toward women faculty members and faculty members of color (see section IV of this document for selected further readings on this topic, and others related to teacher evaluation). Therefore, they should **not** be the sole measure of teaching excellence, but instead, one of multiple measures put into a larger context. **Faculty peer review**

is one such important measure, as it is a contextual, professional perspective on how a faculty member's teaching succeeds in the context of larger pedagogical aims and disciplinary norms.

Each pre-tenure faculty member should be observed **multiple times before** both the third year review and before application for tenure and promotion to Associate Professor. In addition, Specialized Faculty members and graduate students with teaching responsibilities should be observed on a regular cycle to ensure that their development and growth as teachers is being supported by their departments, and to identify any classroom instructional issues relevant to reappointment. All persons with teaching responsibilities in a department should have at their disposal a mechanism for peer review—whether it be formal (included as part of an annual, third-year, or promotion and tenure review) or informal (done outside official review cycles by colleagues or mentors)—and should be able to use these peer reviews to both improve their teaching and create a portfolio of positive reviews for occasions such as teaching awards and other internal or external recognitions of teaching excellence.

Best practices for peer review dictate that:

1. The faculty member being observed choose the course that will be visited, and the date of the visit (within parameters of availability for both the faculty member and the peer doing the observation);
2. The faculty member be notified no later than one week prior to the visit of the impending observation, and, if possible, be provided with any specific questions the peer has regarding the course or the observation;
3. The peer doing the observation have a copy of the faculty member's syllabus and at least a brief sketch of what will happen during the class period that he or she is observing;
4. Within a reasonable period of time following the classroom observation, the faculty member be provided with a written overview of the visit, including any specific suggestions for improvement. This should be in the form of a letter dated and signed by the peer doing the observation;
5. The faculty member and his or her peer, if desired, have a follow-up conversation after the visit to discuss what transpired, including any specific action plan if a need for improvement in any area of teaching is noted;
6. If the department head or chair observes the faculty member, the faculty member has access to peers who can provide a second review should the evaluation of the head or chair be significantly negative in nature;
7. In any case, the faculty member being observed should have reasonable choices of reviewers for any formal classroom observation that will be recorded toward annual review, third year review, or tenure and/or promotion.

From the LAS Teaching Academy, a more detailed outline of the above processes, with a document outlining pre-observation conference goals for faculty and the peer, can be found here: http://www.las.illinois.edu/faculty/services/academy/resources/pota/. For another more streamlined outline of peer review processes, see also this example document from the College of ACES: https://academics.aces.illinois.edu/files/documents/peer-observation.pdf.

Additionally, for a helpful rubric for the peer observation itself, see this document from the College of Engineering's AE3 program: http://publish.illinois.edu/academyforexcellenceinengineeringeducation/files/2014/09/AE3-Peer-Observation-Instrument.pdf.

C. *Faculty Self-Assessment*

A third and important mechanism for evaluation of teaching is the faculty self-assessment. This self-assessment may take many forms that are typically not formally published, but may be memorialized in the aggregate in a statement of teaching included in promotion and tenure review packets, as well as in other portfolios of teaching designed for awards or other recognition.

Self-assessment should be designed by the faculty member with his or her own goals in mind, and can be done periodically (i.e., every year) or more regularly (i.e., after every semester, or mid-way through each semester). It can be constructed to assess overall teaching goals across a number of courses, or be course or course-type specific (e.g., one's effectiveness in teaching graduate seminars versus undergraduate lecture courses). Most importantly, faculty self-assessment should be constructed to be flexible in its structure; to help faculty create pedagogical goals for themselves that connect to learning goals, formally or informally, for their students; and be both iterative and reiterative in nature. The self-assessment should be a central part of any faculty member's annual review, alongside peer reviews and ICES forms.

For a description of the typical components of self-assessment portfolios, as well as individual self-assessment documents, see this helpful overview at Washington State University's Center for Teaching and Learning: https://www.washington.edu/teaching/teaching-resources/assessing-and-improving-teaching/evaluation/self-assessment/

IV. Recommended Further Reading

Below is a partial list of resources not noted in the sections above that may be of use in constructing reviews of faculty teaching effectiveness, and/or in talking with faculty about documentation of their own teaching.

Miller, J. Elizabeth and Peter Seldin. "Changing Practices in Faculty Evaluation." *Academe* May-June 2014. https://www.aaup.org/article/changing-practices-faculty-evaluation#.WmesJUtG2fc

Center for Research on Teaching and Learning, University of Michigan. *Gender and Student Evaluations: An Annotated Bibliography*. http://www.crlt.umich.edu/sites/default/files/resource_files/gsebibliography.pdf

Huston, Therese A. "Race and Gender Bias in Higher Education: Could Faculty Course Evaluations Impede Further Progress Toward Parity?" *Seattle Journal for Social Justice* 4.2 (2005). https://www.uis.edu/aeo/wp-content/uploads/sites/10/2014/09/Race-and-Gender-Bias-in-Higher-Education-Could-Faculty-Course-Ev.pdf

Ohio State University Center for the Advancement of Teaching. "Writing a Philosophy of Teaching Statement." https://ucat.osu.edu/professional-development/teaching-portfolio/philosophy

Ray, Victor. "Is Gender Bias an Intended Feature of Teaching Evaluations?" *Inside Higher Ed.* February 11, 2018. https://www.insidehighered.com/advice/2018/02/09/teaching-evaluations-are-often-used-confirm-worst-stereotypes-about-women-faculty

Teoh, Siew Li, Long Chiau Ming, and Tehir Mehmood Khan. "Faculty Perceived Barriers and Attitudes Toward Peer Review of Classroom Teaching in Higher Education Settings." *SAGE Open* 6.15 (2016). http://journals.sagepub.com/doi/10.1177/2158244016658085

Vassey, Craig and Linda Carroll. "How Do We Evaluate Teaching?" *Academe* May-June 2016. https://www.aaup.org/article/how-do-we-evaluate-teaching#.WmewE0tG2fe

Appendix:

Guidelines for Evaluating Teaching Effectiveness for LAS Professors
University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

Faculty teaching responsibilities frequently fall into four broad areas: curriculum, classroom instruction, extra-classroom instruction, and teaching-related service. In addition, faculty members are increasingly making important contributions to instruction through the scholarship of teaching and learning. The evaluation of individual faculty members along these dimensions will vary according to a number of factors including departmental norms, assigned responsibilities, and rank. Listed below are indicators that have been found applicable in different disciplines for assessing teaching effectiveness, and that may be used as evidence in the required processes discussed in this document.

I. Curriculum: the development of course and curriculum content

Evidence/Indicators:
- Syllabi with course goals and learning objectives
- Writing assignments, examinations, and other evaluation instruments
- Peer evaluations of course content from colleagues
- Comparison of course materials between sections of the same course
- Importance of instructor's courses for the departmental curriculum or disciplinary core
- Development of new courses or significant modification of existing courses
- Revision or development of new degree programs, curriculum, and the like
- Content suitability for and student performance in follow-on courses
- Grants and Awards for course or curriculum development

II. Classroom Instruction: teaching specific courses in standard classroom settings

Evidence/Indicators:
- Lesson plans, Power Point presentations of lectures, and Websites for courses
- Student course evaluations (e.g., ICES), written student comments, and other student input
- Multiple peer evaluations from colleagues
- Incorporation of technology into instruction
- Development of new teaching techniques, materials, or exercises (e.g. simulations, case study materials)
- Guest lectures in other courses
- Awards for instruction

III. Extra-Classroom Instruction: teaching outside of standard classroom settings

Evidence/Indicators:
- Direction of independent studies (graduate and undergraduate)
- Direction of senior honors theses, master's theses, and doctoral dissertations
- Membership on graduate review, qualifying examination, and dissertation/theses

committees
- Supervision of internships
- Presentations before student organizations
- Co-authorship of papers and publications with undergraduate and graduate students
- Involving undergraduate students in research (e.g., SROP program)

V. Administration/Service Related to Teaching: at department, college, campus, profession, and community levels

Evidence/Indicators:
- Student advisement and service as a faculty advisor to student organizations
- Service on instruction-related department, college, and university committees
- Service on education-related local, state, national, and international committees
- Service on an editorial board of an education journal or as a reviewer of educational grants applications and/or publications
- Leadership roles and presentations at education workshops
- Service as a teaching mentor for an undergraduate student, a graduate student, or another faculty member
- Supervision of large, multi-section courses

V. Contributions to and Dissemination of the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning
(*Except for those faculty specifically hired for such duties, including Specialized Faculty, contributions in this area are not a substitute for discipline-based scholarship. Contributions of this should therefore be rewarded under teaching and not research*).

Evidence/Indicators:
- Authorship of textbooks
- Adoption of one's textbooks by other institutions
- Grants related to the scholarship of teaching
- Technology and software development related to instruction
- Instruction-related publications, papers, and reports
- Participation in teaching seminars (e.g., RTS), courses, short-courses, and other teaching improvement programs.