

College of Arts & Sciences

Guidelines for the Evaluation of Teaching

In order to ensure consistency in the evaluation of teaching, the College has adopted the following guidelines, which establish minimum expectations. Evaluation of teaching must include student ratings for all instructors and peer observations for Assistant and Associate Professors (in preparation for tenure or promotion), but departments* are encouraged to use other means of evaluation as well, such as teaching portfolios.

Student evaluations of teaching: The following minimum frequencies of evaluation will be used by all departments and programs, although departments may choose to conduct evaluations more frequently for tenured faculty if they wish:

- Assistant Professors, non-tenure-track faculty, TAs – every course taught
- Associate Professors – every course in one semester per year
- Professors – every course in one semester every other year

Administration of student rating forms:

- Departments are strongly encouraged to use online evaluation forms for student ratings
- If paper forms are used, the instructor must leave the room while evaluations are being completed and someone other than the instructor must deliver them to the department office for processing
- The instructor may not have access to the results until after final grades are turned in
- Copies of the results provided to instructors must be kept in department personnel files

Peer observations:

- Peer observations are required for Assistant and Associate Professors and are optional for other instructors. Assistant Professors should be observed in at least two classes each year; Associate Professors should be observed in at least two classes every other year.
- Peer observations must include a written report by the observer(s) to be provided to the department head within a reasonable time after the visit (as determined by the head).
- It is the head's responsibility to ensure peer observations for evaluation purposes, although faculty are free to arrange additional visits if they wish.
- The College imposes no restrictions on the assignment of faculty to serve as observers (by rank, department, or discipline) although departments may do so if they wish.
- Peer review of online courses is expected and should be ensured by means that are not dependent on classroom visits, such as review of online materials, assessment of the navigability of the site, engagement of students in discussion boards, etc.

Availability of evaluation materials:

The results of teaching evaluations are confidential documents and become part of the instructor's personnel file. Access to them by the instructor must be provided on request. In addition, they must be made available to the person(s) – the head or a faculty committee – making merit determinations or other personnel decisions, and to reviewers outside the department in the case of reappointment, tenure, or promotion decisions.

*The terms “department” and “head” include programs and their directors.

Approved by Administrative Council, October 13, 2011