

Policy on Student Evaluation of Teaching (Fall 1993 Revision)

INTRODUCTION

In the 1983-86 and the 1986-88 collective bargaining agreements between Wayne State University and the American Association of University Professors, there was agreement on the desirability of formulating and implementing a standard form and procedures for student evaluation of faculty teaching. An *ad hoc* committee to advise the Provost was established to recommend a form and procedures. That committee reported on November 21, 1986.

This policy establishes a standard form and procedures for student evaluation of teaching, taking into account the report of the *ad hoc* committee and other University policies.

SCOPE OF EVALUATION PROCESS

Students in all classes shall be given the opportunity to evaluate faculty teaching, subject to such exceptions as are set forth below. This policy does not apply to students in individual directed studies courses, in individual directed readings courses, in master's thesis or doctoral dissertation supervision courses, and in other one-on-one teaching situations in which the confidentiality of student evaluations cannot be maintained.

The deans of each academic school/college/division may exempt a class from student evaluation of teaching under this policy, upon written application of the faculty member, under limited circumstances set forth below. The dean's decision whether to grant such an exemption rests on his/her best academic judgment. There is no right to be granted an exemption.

Ordinarily, deans may consider granting exemptions under the following circumstances:

1. When a faculty member is teaching a course for the first time and needs an opportunity to explore the appropriate instructional methods during the first semester in which the course is taught.
2. When a faculty member has been assigned to teach a course, which he/she has not taught during the past three years, on short notice in order to:
 - a. fill an unexpected vacancy in the academic unit's teaching ranks, or
 - b. fill an unanticipated need to maintain the academic unit's curriculum, or
 - c. meet any other circumstance in which the faculty member has not had usual notice of an assignment to teach a course which he/she has not recently taught and which assignment could not have been anticipated by the academic unit to allow giving of the usual notice.
3. When a faculty member, because of ill health, family emergency, or other unforeseen personal circumstance, may reasonably be believed to have suffered a sufficiently extensive disruption of his/her normal teaching activities to make student evaluation of teaching unrepresentative of the course and/or the faculty member's teaching abilities.

Within three weeks after the end of each semester, each dean shall provide the Provost's office with a list of all exemptions from teaching evaluation under these provisions. The list shall include the name of the faculty member, the academic unit, the course or courses for which exemption was granted, and the reason(s) why such exemption was granted. The Provost may, after consultation with the deans, provide a standard form for filing these reports.

METHOD OF EVALUATION

Students shall be given not less than fifteen (15) minutes of "in class" time to complete the student evaluation of teaching (SET) form. SET forms are not to be completed at home, or during examination periods.

The faculty member shall give notice in advance of the class meeting at which the students shall have this opportunity to complete the evaluation of teaching form. This opportunity shall occur within the last three weeks of regular classes during the fall and winter semesters and during the last week of regular classes during the spring/summer semester.

To assure confidentiality of student evaluations of teaching pursuant to existing University policy, the faculty member shall designate a student to distribute the SET forms and to collect them. The student shall be provided a large envelope into which to place the completed forms, and he/she shall read the instructions on this envelope to the class as SET forms are distributed. He/she shall also be given instructions as to where this envelope is to be deposited. (This shall usually be the department/school/college/division office). No student shall be asked or requested to sign his/her name to an evaluation of teaching form, although a student may do so if he/she wishes. The instructor should not be present in the room while students are completing SET forms. The department/school/college/division shall be responsible for assuring that the completed forms, properly identified by section number, instructor, class, department, and school/college/division descriptors, are delivered in the sealed envelope to the Course Evaluation Office. The forms should be delivered within ten (10) days of the last regular day of classes. The Course Evaluation Office staff will separate the "comment" sheet from the "scannable" portion of the SET form, and notify departments that student comments are ready to be picked up by academic units within fifteen working days of receipt. Student responses to the open-ended questions are for use of the instructor only, and are NOT to be circulated to the dean, chair, or faculty personnel committees. Comments should be returned to the appropriate instructor as soon after final grades are posted as possible, for the semester in question.

The Course Evaluation Office shall tabulate the results for all sections with five or more completed evaluation forms, and mail them to the appropriate academic unit, whenever possible, within four weeks of receiving the completed forms from that unit.

The results of the tabulations shall be made available to the individual, to the unit committee(s) charged with making personnel decisions (to include, but not limited to, renewal, tenure, promotions, and salaries adjustments), and to the chairperson and other appropriate administrative officers for the purpose of assessing the individual's teaching performance and for the purpose of program review.

The Course Evaluation Office may undertake additional analyses at the request of an academic unit, at that unit's own expense and within such time as is allowed by the office's other functions and responsibilities. Each semester's tabulations for each course section and for the academic unit shall be made available to selective salary committees and to promotion and tenure committees.

THE EVALUATION FORM

The current SET instrument may be viewed at <http://www.otl.wayne.edu/set.html>

REVIEW OF EVALUATION FORM

After the standard University form has been in use for two years, the Provost may at any time establish a committee to determine whether additions or modifications to the form would be desirable. Such a committee shall consist of members selected pursuant to Article XXX of the collective bargaining contract, members selected by the president or his/her designee, and two (2) members selected by the University Student Council. The Provost shall select the chair of the committee, prepare the charge to the committee, and establish procedures for its work.

SUPPLEMENTARY EVALUATION FORMS

An academic unit may institute a supplementary evaluation form to obtain further information about student evaluation of teaching. This may be a separate form or it may add questions to the standard form. The academic unit shall bear any additional costs that may be incurred in the implementation and/or analysis of such supplementary evaluation forms.

MODIFICATION AND AMENDMENT OF THIS POLICY

It is recognized that this policy may need to be modified or amended from time to time. Such modifications and amendments may be made at the initiative of the Provost.

IMPLEMENTATION

Changes in the student evaluation of teaching process established by this policy shall be implemented in all units in the fall semester, 1993.