

UND Policy on Teaching Evaluation

Approved at May 1, 2003 Senate meeting.

The evaluation of teaching has two distinct purposes: formative and summative. Formative evaluation is that which gathers information for the use of the instructor in improving his or her own teaching. Summative evaluation gathers information to be used by colleagues and administrators for the purpose of making decisions about retention, tenure, promotion, and merit salary increases.

Although the policy set forth here applies only to summative evaluation of teaching, the information collected in the course of the evaluation process may also be used for formative evaluation when appropriate. It is important to note, however, that information gathered solely for purposes of formative evaluation is intended only for the use of the faculty member, and should be used in summative reviews only with his/her permission.

1. Frequency and Extent of Evaluation

The teaching performance of all instructors, regardless of their academic rank or tenure status, is subject to evaluation annually.

* All faculty, regardless of status (probationary, tenured, and non-tenure track), must be evaluated as part of the annual review process, as well as for decisions regarding tenure and promotion. In each case, the faculty member being evaluated is expected to provide evidence of effective teaching in the form of at least three sources of data, one of which must be students.

* Graduate teaching assistants must be evaluated annually as well, in a manner appropriate to their teaching assignment.

2. Aspects of Teaching to be Evaluated

The evaluation process should reflect the full range of teaching activities, including classroom teaching, mentoring, course and curriculum development, laboratory, clinical, or studio supervision, direction of independent research projects, scholarly/grant activity related to teaching, learning assessment activity, advising, etc.

Although it is important to acknowledge the unique nature of each individual's teaching situation, and to set flexible standards accordingly, it is expected that all instructors will be able to show evidence of these five basic hallmarks of good teaching:

- respect for students
- command of the subject matter
- careful preparation
- effective communication
- continuing professional growth.

3. Roles of the Various Parties

Role of the College. It is the role of the college to ensure that evaluation of teaching is conducted in a fair and reasonable manner, and with as much consistency as possible across the college. In addition to the expectations outlined here, each college may specify other aspects of

teaching to be evaluated and other sources of data on teaching to be supplied by the department and/or faculty member.

Role of the Department. It is the role of the department to set reasonable expectations in regard to teaching, to communicate those expectations clearly, and to assist and support faculty in their professional development as teachers. Toward this end, each department shall develop a written statement of expectation for effective teaching within the department. At minimum, this statement should address the basic expectations outlined in (2) above. In addition to university and college expectations, each department may specify other aspects of teaching to be evaluated, additional expectations to be met, and additional documentation materials to be supplied by the faculty member. The department's statement on teaching evaluation policy should be kept on file in the department, distributed to each department member, and attached to all recommendations regarding retention, tenure, promotion, and reward going beyond the department. The department should also be prepared to assist faculty in meeting departmental expectations, and/or to refer them to appropriate campus resources to support their teaching.

Role of the Faculty Member. It is the role of the faculty member, in collaboration with the department chair, to take an active part in his or her evaluation by providing materials that give a complete picture of his/her teaching, by organizing those materials in an accessible manner, and by making herself/himself available for discussion of those materials with peers and administrators. In addition to materials required by the department, college, and university, the individual faculty member may submit any additional materials deemed appropriate to the evaluation process.

4. Potential Sources of Data

As noted earlier, each faculty member being evaluated is expected to provide evidence of effective teaching in the form of at least three sources of data in consultation with the chair, one of which must be students.

Student-Provided Data - may be gathered using the USAT or other student feedback forms, and/or by carefully documenting student feedback gathered by the department chair or immediate teaching supervisor. All student data will be offered voluntarily.

The other two sources of data to be used in the evaluation of teaching may vary from one department to the next. They include:

Instructor-Provided Materials/Portfolios - may include reflective statements on teaching, syllabi, descriptions of class activities, writing assignments, tests, videotapes, evidence of scholarly activity related to teaching, lists of classes taught, independent projects or theses supervised, graduate committees served on, reports on course or curriculum development work, written responses to student feedback, etc.

Documented Evidence of Student Learning or Performance - student work samples, performances, test results, etc.

Documented Data from Peers - based on formal observation of classroom teaching, review of teaching materials/portfolios, or observations of other teaching-related work (in graduate committees, curriculum planning sessions, etc.)

Documented Data from the Chair - based on formal observation of classroom teaching, review of teaching materials/portfolios, or observations of other teaching-related work (in graduate committees, curriculum planning sessions, etc.)

5. Use of Student Feedback

NDUS policy states that "evaluations of all teaching faculty must include significant student input" (Section: 605.1.6 - Academic Freedom and Tenure; Academic Appointments). In order to present a broad and accurate view of teaching, summative data should be gathered regularly, from a wide range of classes over several semesters. It is the responsibility of the department and/or college, to create appropriate mechanisms for gathering student input.

Informal Feedback. In addition to soliciting formal feedback for summative purposes, faculty are encouraged to solicit frequent informal feedback for purely formative purposes--that is, for the sole purpose of improving teaching and learning. Informal feedback may take the form of SGIDs, informal surveys, or other classroom assessment techniques and may be used by the individual teacher as he or she sees fit. Unless and until the instructor chooses to offer such data to evaluators, it should not be part of the evaluation process.

Mixed Data. When formal numerical data is mixed with informal written data, as is often the case with student feedback forms, only the numerical data will be reported to the chair and dean. However, because it is important that teaching not be reduced to a numerical rating, it is recommended that faculty share student written comments with evaluators as well. At the same time, because written student comments represent only the perspective of those who choose to make them, it is also recommended that department and college evaluators recognize the limitations of such data and seek to corroborate it using other sources. Because written data provided by students on anonymous end-of-semester questionnaires is protected by FERPA (Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act), all reasonable care must be taken to see that such data is not traceable to individual students.

Aggregate Data. Aggregate data from the USAT forms will be compiled by the Office of Institutional Research and distributed to individual faculty members, department chairs, and deans. Any other aggregate data used for comparison purposes in the evaluation of individual faculty members should also be made available to those faculty members.