

The University Senate of Michigan Technological University

Proposal 41-19

Update Senate Procedure 504.1.1: Teaching Effectiveness Evaluations

Purpose: Addressing Bias in Teaching Evaluation

Submitted by: Ad hoc Committee on Bias in Teaching Evaluation

Background/Rationale: This ad hoc committee was put together to address the potential bias in teaching evaluations. Bias can be generated from a variety of sources which is why it is best to include multiple perspectives when evaluating teaching. Research suggests that a three component approach which includes a student, peer, and self evaluation piece is best-practice.

Proposal: Updated current proposal language and add language to allow for alternate methods of evaluation of teaching for faculty.

Revised proposal (newly proposed language highlighted below).

The University Senate of Michigan Technological University

TEACHING EFFECTIVENESS EVALUATIONS

(PROPOSAL 12-03)

(PROPOSAL 22-13)

(PROPOSAL 22-18)

Senate Procedures 504.1.1

The Senate recommends that:

1. The University establish a permanent professionally staffed center for teaching excellence where individual faculty members can obtain help in developing teaching skills and improving instruction, and
2. The University adopt an equitable and standardized teaching evaluation system that will provide information for individual faculty to use in improving teaching performance and for administrators to use in making personnel decisions.

The following definitions are used in this proposal [from [2-87](#)]:

1. Faculty Member refers to all persons responsible for teaching courses. This includes tenured and untenured faculty, non-tenure track faculty (adjunct, visiting, instructor, lecturer, faculty assistant, temporary, part-time, etc.) and graduate teaching assistants.

2. Academic Administrator refers to department head, department chair, dean or director of a college or school, the chief academic officer and others who supervise faculty members.

- I. CENTER FOR TEACHING, LEARNING, AND FACULTY DEVELOPMENT

A Center for Teaching, Learning, and Faculty Development is a professionally staffed facility which will sponsor workshops and training programs for faculty and graduate teaching assistants, as well as provide private consultation for individual faculty members. Individual faculty consultations with the Center for Teaching, Learning, and Faculty Development will be kept confidential and will not be made available to administrators.

- II. TEACHING EVALUATION SYSTEM

Each department or school will establish an internal mechanism by which it evaluates the appropriateness of level, content, and currency of courses taught by individual faculty members and the quality of the instructor's contribution to the teaching mission of the university.

A three-tiered approach to evaluation of teaching has been found to be the current best practice. Therefore, in addition to student evaluation of teaching effectiveness, the instructor has the right to include peer and/or self-evaluation in the evaluation of their teaching. No single measure should constitute the majority (more than 50%) of the teaching evaluation. The Center for Teaching and Learning will be responsible for establishing and maintaining a webpage that provides materials and best practice procedures for evaluation of teaching.

- A. Student Evaluations of Teaching Effectiveness

1. Evaluation instrument:

The Center for Teaching, Learning, and Faculty development will be responsible for developing and distributing appropriate instruments to allow MTU students to provide meaningful and comprehensive feedback to those charged with instructional duties. The instrument should include language to inform students of potential bias during evaluation. Instruments will consist of a series of items pertaining to generally recognized features of quality instructional practices and will also give students the opportunity to provide their written opinions and suggestions for instructional improvement.

All such instruments, or any changes to existing instruments, will be presented to the University Senate Instructional Policy Committee for consideration. Any changes to the evaluation instruments or implementations of new instruments are subject to the prior approval of the University Senate.

2. Frequency of required student evaluation:

Faculty members and graduate teaching assistants will evaluate at least one section of each different course preparation each semester unless required to do more by the academic unit(s) associated with that course. Student rating of instruction surveys will be sent and summaries delivered only in sections with an enrollment of six or more students unless otherwise specified by an individual academic unit.

3. Procedures for student evaluations:

The Center for Teaching and Learning will electronically direct end-of-term-survey requests to students only during the last 3 weeks of any term. Faculty will be notified when surveys are opened, and have opportunities to see response rates and encourage responses according to their own discretion during the evaluation period.

The Center for Teaching and Learning will electronically release ~~all written comments and~~ the summarized numerical responses to the faculty member, their direct supervisor, and their supervisor's supervisor. ~~For teaching assistants, this release will be done to an instructional supervisor designated by the department chair or Dean. The~~ Provost ~~chief academic officer~~, or ~~her/his~~ their designee, as well as other academic administrators will also be provided with copies of relevant section summaries. The written comments will only be shared with the supervisors two weeks only after being opted in to by the faculty member. During this two week period, the faculty may appeal to the Provost the release of the written comments. No comments will be released during the appeal process.

Summaries from general education core course sections will constitute a special case and also be sent to the relevant core course coordinator and to the person charged by the ~~chief academic officer~~ Provost with general education instructional oversight.

The Center for Teaching and Learning will not release any information related to the student rating of instruction scores of any instructor prior to the end of the grade submission period for that term. No release will occur at any time to any other parties without the prior written permission of that instructor.

The Center for Teaching and Learning will present an annual report on teaching at Michigan Tech to the Senate. This report must include but is not limited to statistical analysis of the university required questions.

~~There is increasing pressure for accountability at public universities, and several states have already mandated posting of student evaluation data for all courses. The~~

~~Michigan Tech undergraduate student government made a similar request in Fall 2012. The Instructional Policy Committee suggests that a move to an online tool avoids a crisis should a mandate come.~~

4. Uses of the results of student evaluations:

The appropriate academic administrator will use the ratings derived from student evaluations in partial support for and justification of personnel decisions (reappointment, promotion, tenure, and yearly salary adjustments) concerning the faculty member being evaluated. [from [5-99](#)]-~~No more than 50 percent of any evaluation of teaching should rest on the evaluation instrument.~~ The appropriate academic administrator will list on the Senate website their evaluation instruments and processes (peer evaluation form, self-evaluation forms, etc.) in sufficient detail for new faculty to understand the basis on which their teaching is being evaluated, and the percentage weight given to each instrument.

The evaluated faculty member will be able to use the information derived from student evaluations to identify strengths and weaknesses. The responsibility to act on evaluation information to improve instruction rests with the evaluated instructor.

5. Trial usage of alternative student evaluations instruments: [from [2-97](#)]

Any alternative instrument will be furnished by the Director of the Center for Teaching, Learning, and Faculty Development. These are understood to be trial instruments being considered for adoption by the University.

The instrument will be used only by those ~~tenured~~ faculty members who freely elect to use the instrument in their classes. These faculty members will cooperate with the Director in the administration of the evaluation.

The results of the evaluations will be furnished to the faculty members and department chairs, following current policy. The results of the evaluation will also be furnished to the Director.

Before the administration of the evaluation, faculty members may elect to have the results of some or all items of the trial instrument released for publication, e.g., by the USG Teaching Standards Committee.

The results of the evaluation will be retained by the Director, who will maintain the results in strict confidence. The results will be used only for assessing the usefulness of the trial instruments, unless other use is granted in written permission from the individual faculty member to the Director.

B. Peer or Colleague Evaluation of Teaching Effectiveness

1. Scope

~~Peer or colleague evaluation applies to all instructors except graduate teaching assistants.~~

2. Mechanism of peer or colleague evaluation:

~~Each department or school will establish an internal mechanism by which it evaluates the appropriateness of level, content, and currency of courses taught by individual faculty members and the quality of the instructor's contribution to the teaching mission of the university.~~

3.1. Procedures for peer or colleague evaluation:

Peer or colleague evaluations of teaching will be conducted according to departmentally established procedures and reported initially to the evaluated faculty member. After ~~he or she has~~ **they have** had the opportunity to respond to the evaluation, the evaluators will report a final summary evaluation to the head/chair/dean. The evaluated faculty member may then submit a written statement if ~~he/she wishes~~ **they wish to** formally ~~to~~ rebut or affirm the evaluation. **All instructors have the opportunity to provide a peer or colleague evaluation as part of their evaluation of teaching.**

4.2. Uses of peer or colleague evaluation:

The evaluated faculty member will be able to use the evaluations guidance in course development and teaching improvement. Peer or colleague evaluations are intended to ensure that instructors receive constructive advice concerning their professional development, but the responsibility for using that advice to improve instruction rests with the evaluated instructor.

The information derived from peer or colleague evaluations may be used by academic administrators as partial support of and justification for personnel decisions (reappointment, tenure, promotion, and yearly salary adjustments). The evaluation of teaching will be weighted in a manner which is commensurate with the assigned teaching responsibilities of each faculty member.

C. Self-Evaluation of Teaching Effectiveness

1. Procedures for self-evaluation:

Self-evaluations of teaching will be conducted according to departmentally established procedures. All instructors have the opportunity to provide a self-evaluation as part of their evaluation of teaching to the head/chair/dean.

1. Uses of self-evaluation:

The instructor will be able to use the evaluations guidance in course development and teaching improvement. Self-evaluations are intended to serve as a documentation of and reflection on the instructional experience.

The information derived from self-evaluations may be used by academic administrators as partial support of and justification for personnel decisions (reappointment, tenure, promotion, and yearly salary adjustments). The evaluation of teaching will be weighted in a manner which is commensurate with the assigned teaching responsibilities of each faculty member.

D. Proposal 12-03:

Adopted by Senate: 23 April 2003

Approved by President: 19 May 2003

E. Proposal 22-13:

Introduced to Senate: 27 March 2013

Approved by Senate: 10 April 2013

Approved by Administration: 27 April 2013

F. Proposal 22-18:

Introduced to Senate: 11 April 2018

Approved by Senate: 25 April 2018

Approved by Administration: 21 May 2018

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Proposal 41 – 19
(Voting Units: Academic)

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B. Peer or Colleague Evaluation of Teaching Effectiveness

5.3. Procedures for peer or colleague evaluation:

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6.4. Uses of peer or colleague evaluation:

The evaluated faculty member will be able to use the evaluations guidance in course development and teaching improvement. Peer or colleague evaluations are intended to ensure that instructors receive constructive advice concerning their professional development, but the responsibility for using that advice to improve instruction rests with the evaluated instructor.

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