

# The University Senate of Michigan Technological University

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## PROPOSAL 12-03

### TEACHING EFFECTIVENESS

(Related proposals 10-85, 2-87, 18-97, 2-97, and 5-99)

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

##### 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. 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:

[from 18-97] 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 forms will be scanned and summarized only in sections with an initial enrollment of six or more students unless otherwise specified by an individual academic unit.

3. Procedures for student evaluations:

Following directions provided with the student rating of instruction instruments, the instructor will give the evaluation materials to a student in the class and then leave the room. The student will distribute the forms and then collect and return the completed forms in a sealed envelope to the relevant departmental office or to the Center for Teaching, Learning, and Faculty Development. Departmental offices are to send these sealed envelopes containing the completed evaluations directly to the Center for Teaching, Learning, and Faculty Development.

After scanning the forms, the Center for Teaching, Learning, and Faculty Development will return the original forms and sheets summarizing numerical responses to the faculty member and the faculty member's immediate instructional supervisor. The chief academic officer, or her/his designee, as well as other academic administrators will also be provided with copies of the relevant section summary sheets.

Summary sheets 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 with general education instructional oversight.

The Center for Teaching, Learning, and Faculty Development will not release any information related to the student rating of instruction scores of any instructor to any other parties without the prior written permission of that instructor.

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 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. 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 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 formally to rebut or affirm the evaluation.

### 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.

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.

**Adopted by Senate: 23 April 2003**  
**Approved by President: 19 May 2003**  
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