

Final Report

University Senate Teaching Effectiveness Committee

Ad Hoc Committee on Teaching Evaluations

Teaching Effectiveness Committee (2004—2007)

Members in 2004-2005

Gisela Buschle-Diller (Polymer & Fiber Eng., Chair)
John Heilman (Provost)
Howard Clayton (Management)
Al Fromhold (Physics)
Sareen Gropper (Human Sciences)
Raymond Kessler (Horticulture)
Marcus KIELTYKA (Library)
David LaBand (Forestry)
Jill Salisbury-Glennon (Educational FLT)
Saralyn Smith-Carr (Vet. Medicine)

Carole Johnson (Communication Disorders)
Kem Krueger (Pharmacy)
Scott Kramer (Building Science)
Hakan Balci (graduate student)
Marianne Clancy (undergraduate student)
James Groccia (Biggio Center)

New members in 2005-2006

Peter Livant (Chemistry)
Juliet Rumble (Library)
David Weaver (Agronomy & Soils)

William Boulton (Management)
Kristen Helms (Pharmacy)
Mert Serkan (graduate student)
Virginia Planz (undergrad. student)

New members in 2006-2007

Linda Ruth (Building Science)
Peggy Shippen (Rehab. Spec. Ed.)
Jan Kavookjian (Pharmacy)
Selda Tarkin (grad. student)
Amanda Cummings (undergrad. student)

Executive Summary

The Ad Hoc Committee herein provides recommendations for action by the Faculty Senate and others to improve and reward teaching on the Auburn University campus.

- 1. The Auburn University Senate shall update the policies and procedures for the teaching evaluation system (TES). Policies and procedures will allow for multiple forms for evaluating teaching and for providing instructor feedback:**
 - a. Every instructor of record will conduct a student evaluation of teaching in every class/lab every semester.**
 - b. Feedback from students is required as part of the TES. All units will use the same administrative procedures.**
- 2. The AU Senate, through its Teaching Effectiveness Committee will review TES policies and procedures every three years, beginning in 2010.**
- 3. University of Washington will provide the forms, scoring services and feedback system for use in AU's TES.**
 - a. The TES will provide separate data for merit performance and self improvement, as well as information to aid students in selecting courses and instructors.**
 - b. Instructors will select the appropriate form for use in each class, based on the size, type and methodology used in the classroom.**
 - c. The Provost's Office will be responsible for funding the TES implementation, including the cost of forms, processing, and reports.**
- 4. Administrators and instructors responsible for TES assessments will receive instruction regarding the use of teaching evaluation materials.**
 - a. The Biggio Center for the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning will be responsible for organizing periodic workshops related to TES implementation and use.**
 - b. The Biggio Center will provide an annual report on workshops and implementation issues to the AU Senate, including feedback from administrators and instructors.**

**Auburn University Senate Teaching Effectiveness Committee
Ad Hoc Committee on Teaching Evaluations
Final Recommendations**

We recommend the following be adopted as campus wide policy:

1. All academic units on the Auburn University campus will adopt the Senate approved policies and procedures for evaluating teaching and disseminate them to all faculty and others engaged in teaching.
2. Individuals (administrators and faculty) with responsibilities for evaluating teachers for merit-performance or promotion and tenure will receive instruction regarding the use of teaching evaluation methods. Instruction will include information on reliability, validity, and interpretation of relevant data. Such instruction will be provided on the campus annually.
3. All academic units will follow the guidelines provided for teaching evaluation when formulating and implementing evaluation procedures.
4. The student ratings forms developed by the University of Washington will be used at Auburn University. There are multiple versions of these rating forms tailored to different teaching environments and teachers will choose the form that most closely matches his/her teaching environment.
5. All teachers and academic units will follow the same administration procedures.

We recommend the following actions for implementation:

1. University Senate will act on the recommendations herein. The Provost's Auburn Council of Deans will be given the opportunity to endorse the actions of the Senate. If both bodies concur, the recommendations will be forwarded jointly to the Provost as soon as possible.
2. University Senate, through its Teaching Effectiveness committee will review these policies and procedures for evaluating teaching every three years beginning in 2010.
3. The Biggio Center for the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning will prepare a campus handbook for teaching evaluation for use by colleges/schools/instructors. Information will identify strengths and weaknesses of various evaluation methods and include such items as sample questions, relevant references, and the like. Additionally, guidance will be provided for valid and useful interpretation of evaluation results.
4. The Biggio Center for the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning will be responsible for organizing annual workshops or other instruction on teaching evaluation for administrators and faculty. The Provost will be responsible for ensuring that all appropriate individuals have received instruction before participating in evaluations for merit performance or promotion and tenure. Costs for these services, as well as for purchase of forms and scoring services will be provided by the Provost or President.

We recommend the following administration procedures

Administration procedures should be explicit and should be followed by all instructors and departments. Each college/school, department or instructor may include additional optional questions, but not in lieu of university forms. While their classes are being evaluated, instructors must not be present in their classrooms. Persons conducting the class evaluations should encourage students to print their comments. It is recommended that handwritten comments be typed before they are returned to the instructor after grades are recorded for that specific class. It is inappropriate for instructors to contact students to discuss individual evaluation responses. The evaluation data is reported to the instructor, department head/chair, and dean.

1) Procedural/Organizational Guidelines

- a) Allow time at the beginning of class for students to complete the forms; leaving them until the end of a class period often results in minimal open-ended feedback and students rushing to leave the classroom.
- b) Prior to administering the evaluations, the instructor should tell students that you want candid and constructive responses. Remind students that their feedback will not influence their course grade as the instructor will not receive a synthesis of the data until after the semester is over.
- c) The evaluation should not be conducted by the instructor. The instructor should leave the room before the evaluation is conducted.
- d) Designate a student or an administrative assistant from the departmental office to distribute and collect the evaluation forms.

2) Instructions for Course Evaluations

At the beginning of each semester, each instructor selects the form that he/she wants to use based on the type of instructional environment for the class being evaluated. A department secretary prepares an evaluation packet for each instructor and provides this to the instructor at least one class session prior to the session being evaluated. The course evaluation packet should contain the following:

- Evaluation Cover Sheet
- Student Comments Cover Sheet
- Course evaluation forms
- Student Comments sheets
- Instructions

Note: Both the Evaluation Cover and Student Comments Cover sheets must be returned for processing.

Step 1—Correct the Cover Sheets

Examine the information printed on the Evaluation and Student Comments Cover sheets and correct any errors.

Step 2 – Create additional items (optional)

You can add questions to the standard IAS evaluation forms. Answers to categorical, scaled, or numeric items can be recorded on the back of the course evaluation forms. Response positions are provided for up to 35 items in two different formats and will be tallied and reported as part of your course evaluation report. Instructions and templates are available online (<http://www.auburn.edu/biggio>) to assist you in creating additional items.

Step 3 – To administer the forms, choose someone other than yourself to distribute, collect, and return the forms to the designated office.

Step 4—Read the statement below to the students and then leave the room while the survey is being administered.

*I am going to distribute course evaluation forms so you may rate the quality of this course. Your participation is voluntary, and you may omit specific items if you wish. To ensure confidentiality, do not write your name on the forms. There is a possibility your handwriting on the student comment sheet will be recognizable; however, I will not see the results of this evaluation until after the quarter is over and you have received your grades. Please be sure to use a **No. 2 PENCIL ONLY** on the scannable form.*

I have chosen (name) to distribute and collect the forms. When you are finished, he/she will collect the forms, put them into an envelope, and mail them to the Office of Educational Assessment. If there are no questions, I will leave the room and not return until all the questionnaires have been finished and collected. Thank you for your participation.

Step 5—Collect and return the forms

The individual assigned to collect the forms should:

- Stack the course evaluation forms and student comment sheets separately;
- Place the Evaluation Cover Sheet on top of the completed course evaluation forms, and the Student Comments Cover Sheet on top of the completed Student Comment sheets;
- Insert all materials (used and **unused**) into the confidential envelope. Return the envelope to the designated office either in person, or through campus mail (**not the U.S. mail**).

Appendix A: Charges to Committee

The Faculty Handbook provides the following mandate to the Teaching Effectiveness Committee: The committee shall review what is currently in place in the University with respect to appropriate and reasonable teaching assignments. The committee shall establish policy for the Teaching Grant-in-Aid program and review and recommend proposals for funding. *It shall also evaluate existing resources for teaching, provide systematic approaches to faculty evaluation, offer formal faculty development programs, and recognize excellence in teaching.*

The specific charge of the TEC was to:

1. Design an instrument for the end-of-semester evaluation of teaching with proven validity and reliability
2. Develop standardized administration procedures to insure that all departments/schools/colleges follow these procedures to increase reliability and validity of comparisons
2. Develop suggested guidelines and procedures to assist with the interpretation and formative and summative use of evaluation results by individual faculty members, department chairs, deans and tenure and promotion committees

Appendix B: Background to Recommendations:

On September 6, 2005 the University Senate Teaching Effectiveness Committee (TEC) was charged by the Senate leadership to review the current policies and procedures to evaluate teaching at Auburn University. Initially, the TEC were asked to develop and present to the University Senate results of a faculty survey conducted by the committee assessing faculty attitudes and satisfaction with the teaching evaluation instrument and how it is used. This survey was conducted during Fall 2005 and results presented to the Senate on November 8, 2005 (found in the senate minutes at <http://www.auburn.edu/administration/governance/senate/evaluations-report-2005.htm>). After consideration of this survey, the senate charged the TEC to investigate the evaluation of teaching further and propose a more useful, valid and reliable alternative to the currently used evaluation instrument.

The TEC, after careful consideration, identified three approaches to the evaluation of teaching (those developed and used at Carnegie Mellon University and the University of Washington, and an instrument developed by Dr. Bill Buskist at AU) that it felt held promise for adaptation or adoption at Auburn University. The TEC, to stimulate campus-wide involvement invited all instructional staff to an Open Forum where developers of these three teaching evaluation instruments provided an overview including: underlying philosophy and rationale; item selection; reliability and validity measures; administration procedures; suggestions for use for formative and summative evaluation; interpretation guidelines; and recommendations for use at Auburn University.

The TEC bases its recommendations on information obtained from committee meetings and discussions, the campus-wide faculty survey, interviews with faculty, students and administrators, review of relevant literature, careful consideration of instrument and procedural options, feedback from the senate, and the open forum.

Appendix C: References

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