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University Council

January 14, 2022

UNIVERSITY CURRICULUM COMMITTEE – 2021-2022
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Veterinary Medicine – Shannon Hostetter
Graduate School – Wendy Ruona
Ex-Officio – Provost S. Jack Hu
Undergraduate Student Representative – Matthew Jue
Graduate Student Representative – Sarah Burns

Dear Colleagues:

The attached proposal for a new Academic Affairs Policy Statement No. 23, Improvement and Documentation of Teaching Effectiveness, will be an agenda item for the January 21, 2022, Full University Curriculum Committee meeting. This agenda item was approved at the April 23, 2021, Full University Curriculum Committee meeting, but returned from the University Council at their September 29, 2021, meeting for additional revisions.

Sincerely,

Susan Sanchez, Chair
University Curriculum Committee

cc: Provost S. Jack Hu
        Dr. Rahul Shrivastav

DRAFT

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Academic Affairs Policy Statement No. 23,
Improvement and Documentation of Teaching Effectiveness

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1. References

    a. Board of Regents Policy Manual, Board of Regents, University System of Georgia, Policy 8.3.5.1, Faculty

    b. University of Georgia Academic Affairs Policy 4.07-16, End-of-Term Course Evaluations, adopted by the University Council Curriculum Committee, February 10, 2010

    c. University of Georgia Academic Affairs Policy 1.06, Evaluation

    d. Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges, Principles of Accreditation 2018 Edition, Principle 6.3, Faculty Evaluation

    e. Adopted by the University Council [date].

2. Objectives

Evaluation of teaching in higher education emphasizes the use of three voices that provide distinct types of evidence: students, trained peers, and self. The systematic collection of evidence from these three voices helps improve teaching over time and ensures that teaching evaluation is systematic and equitable. This policy avoids prescribing a single, perfect or model approach while establishing guidelines on teaching evaluation processes that improve the balance and representativeness of information about teaching effectiveness and, thus, reduce the potential for bias that can occur when only one source of evidence is used. This policy provides guidance for departments to establish their own approaches for teaching evaluation to improve teaching over time and ensure fair and equitable evaluation of teaching effectiveness.

3. Policy

In order to support teaching improvement over time and ensure fair and equitable evaluation of teaching effectiveness, three sources of evidence will be used: a) student voice in the form of student end-of-course ~~evaluations~~ experience surveys, b) peer voice in the form of trained peer observations and feedback on teaching and teaching materials, and c) instructor voice in the form of self-evaluations.

A.   **Student Voice: Student ~~end-of-course evaluation~~ experience survey.** Students will complete a common, campus-wide, end-of-course ~~evaluation~~ experience survey, which is centralized, standardized, automated, and recorded, for all courses, including those taught by adjunct faculty and graduate assistants. For multiple-instructor courses, a separate survey will be provided for each instructor who is instructor of record for more than 10% of the course. The instructor(s) should not be present while the survey is being completed. Instructors will have access to student comments associated with their course after grades have been submitted and may download them for personal use. Access beyond the instructor teaching the course will be determined by the College and will be granted only to those having a supervisory relationship to the instructor and their designees (e.g., deans, department chairs, college and department evaluation administrators).

    i.   **Required end-of-course ~~evaluation~~ experience survey questions**: The end-of-course ~~evaluation~~ experience survey will include the following 8 common course questions with a response scale of

Strongly Agree, Agree, Neither Agree nor Disagree, Disagree, Strongly Disagree, unless otherwise indicated. Units ~~can~~ <mark>may</mark> add their own questions to the survey if desired.

1. The instructor clearly defined and explained the course objectives and expectations.
2. The instructor effectively engaged students in class.
3. I have a deeper understanding of the subject matter as a result of this course.
4. The instructor was responsive to student inquiries in a timely manner.
5. What grade do you expect that you will earn in this course? *A, B, C, D, F*
6. What were the main strengths of the course? *(open-ended and optional)*
7. What suggestions do you have for improving the course? *(open-ended and optional)*
8. Do you have any additional comments? *(open-ended and optional)*

ii. **Required end-of-course ~~evaluation~~ <mark>experience survey</mark> statement**. To make students aware of implicit biases in student ~~evaluations~~ <mark>experience surveys</mark>, the following statement will be included on all end-of-term course ~~evaluations~~ <mark>experience surveys</mark>:

‘'As you fill out ~~the course evaluation~~ <mark>this survey</mark>, please focus on the **quality of the instruction** and the **content of the course** (e.g., assignments, textbook, in-class material) and *not* unrelated matters (e.g., instructor characteristics such as age, race/ethnicity, or gender).”

iii. **Exceptions.** The following courses are excluded from this requirement in order to protect student confidentiality and ensure fair and equitable evaluation of teaching:

- Courses involving individual instruction, such as independent study, internships, practicums, and thesis and dissertation supervision.
- Class sections for which the number of possible respondents to the instrument is so small as to make it possible to identify individual students, thus compromising their confidentiality and possibly biasing their responses, or render results of limited statistical usefulness, such as any course where the number enrolled is less than or equal to five.
- Professional ~~degree programs (J.D., Pharm.D., D.V.M.)~~ <mark>schools (i.e., Law, Pharmacy, Veterinary Medicine)</mark> are excluded from this policy if they have student end-of-course ~~evaluation~~ <mark>survey</mark> questions and processes in place that are consistent with their accreditation procedures.

B. **Peer Voice: Trained ~~peer observations and feedback~~ <mark>feedback on teaching and teaching materials</mark>.** Units will establish a peer evaluation process for full-time faculty in order to support teaching improvement over time and document teaching effectiveness fairly and equitably. Peer evaluators can be selected from within or outside the unit and are expected to complete training on how to conduct and give feedback on peer evaluations of instruction fairly and equitably. <mark>If faculty have teaching responsibilities in units other than where they are appointed or are jointly appointed, either unit may establish and carry out the process for peer evaluation.</mark> Peer evaluation processes should include:
   - Multiple sources of evidence, including syllabi, instructional and assessment materials, and<mark>/or</mark> observations of instruction to maximize the trustworthiness of the evaluation and reduce potential for bias;

- ~~When~~ Any observations of instruction ~~are used, they should include~~ should be preceded by a brief pre-observation meeting with the instructor to discuss goals for the observation and followed by a brief post-observation meeting with the instructor to discuss findings, answer questions, and discuss possible approaches for teaching development.
- A brief written summary of the findings to be shared confidentially with the faculty member.
- A method, to be determined by the Unit, for using formative feedback from peers in summative teaching evaluations, such as promotion dossiers.

~~Units may establish their own timelines for peer evaluation, while ensuring that peer evaluations are conducted at least twice prior to promotion (e.g., Assistant to Associate, Associate to Full, Lecturer to Senior Lecturer) and during continuing review periods in order to allow for teaching improvement over time and enable identification and documentation of changes in teaching effectiveness.~~

Units may establish their own timelines for peer evaluation for promotion (e.g., Assistant to Associate, Associate to Full, Lecturer to Senior Lecturer) and during continuing review periods, while ensuring that peer evaluation is conducted in a way that allows for teaching improvement over time and enables identification and documentation of changes in teaching effectiveness (i.e., at least two peer evaluations). Exceptions to the two peer evaluation requirement can be made with justification for faculty who are being considered for promotion before 2025, who are being considered for early promotion, and/or who were hired with credit toward promotion and thus will not have sufficient time for two peer evaluations.

C. **Instructor Voice: Self-evaluations.** All faculty members are strongly encouraged to reflect in writing annually on their teaching efforts, with the goal of improving teaching effectiveness over time. Self-evaluations provide a venue for the instructor to explain their thinking about their teaching as well as how they are making teaching decisions over time based on evidence gathered from student end-of-~~course evaluations~~ experience surveys, peer evaluations, ~~and~~ or other sources of knowledge about teaching effectiveness such as those described in the University Appointment, Promotion, and Tenure Guidelines on Contributions to Teaching. Self-evaluations can be included in annual progress reports and in summative teaching evaluations, such as promotion dossiers, as a complement to and context for student and peer evaluations. Units may establish their own ~~format~~processes and formats for documenting and using written self-evaluations. ~~Guidelines for format are provided in [insert Implementation Document Name].~~

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D.   Student Voice: Student experience survey. Students will complete a common, campus-wide, end-of-course experience survey, which is centralized, standardized, automated, and recorded, for all courses, including those taught by adjunct faculty and graduate assistants. For multiple-instructor courses, a separate survey will be provided for each instructor who is instructor of record for more than 10% of the course. The instructor(s) should not be present while the survey is being completed. Instructors will have access to student comments associated with their course after grades have been submitted and may download them for personal use. Access beyond the instructor teaching the course will be determined by the College and will be granted only to those having a supervisory relationship to the instructor and their designees (e.g., deans, department chairs, college and department evaluation administrators).

j.   **Required end-of-course experience survey questions**: The end-of-course experience survey will include the following 8 common course questions with a response scale of *Strongly Agree, Agree,*

Neither Agree nor Disagree, Disagree, Strongly Disagree, unless otherwise indicated. Units may add their own questions to the survey if desired.

5. The instructor clearly defined and explained the course objectives and expectations.
6. The instructor effectively engaged students in class.
7. I have a deeper understanding of the subject matter as a result of this course.
8. The instructor was responsive to student inquiries in a timely manner.
5. What grade do you expect that you will earn in this course? *A, B, C, D, F*
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