

North Dakota State University

Policy Manual

SECTION 332

ASSESSMENT OF TEACHING

SOURCE: NDSU Faculty Senate Policy

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. The purpose of this policy is to provide direction for instructors in their ongoing efforts to improve the quality of instruction and student learning at North Dakota State University. Four guiding principles are emphasized in this policy concerning the purpose of assessment of teaching effectiveness: (1) to clarify and reflect what is meant by teaching effectiveness, including the demonstration of teaching effectiveness; (2) to emphasize the improvement of teaching and learning; (3) to utilize a holistic approach that triangulates the measurement of teaching effectiveness; and (4) to minimize possible forms of bias such as student motivation and student or instructor demographics.

1.2. Definition of Instructors

1.2.1. For the purpose of this policy, instructors include all individuals, regardless of faculty status (e.g., probationary, tenured/tenure-track, and non-tenure-track faculty, instructors, and graduate teaching assistants) who serve in any teaching capacity as defined below.

1.3. Definition of Teaching

1.3.1. The assessment process reflected in this policy includes all forms of teaching (e.g., classrooms, labs, online environments, and other instructional supervision activities) at all levels (e.g., undergraduate and graduate). Particular approaches to teaching vary widely, and instructors may demonstrate pedagogical skills in a variety of creative and innovative ways, all of which should be given due consideration.

1.4. Sources of Evidence

1.4.1. The triangulation approach to measuring teaching effectiveness should include data collected from the instructor (see section 2), students (see section 3), and peers (see section 4).

1.4.2. The faculty or instructional staff for each academic unit will decide what specific sources of evidence are appropriate for the unit.

2. INSTRUCTOR-PROVIDED MATERIALS

2.1. Individual academic units should develop a flexible approach to assessment of teaching effectiveness that includes collection of evidence submitted directly by the instructor. This evidence may be submitted in the form of a teaching portfolio according to criteria and frequency of review established by the academic unit.

2.2. In addition to the materials submitted for comprehensive peer review (see section 4), the instructor-provided materials may include, but are not limited to, reflective statements

concerning the instructor's philosophy of teaching, teaching effectiveness, and course or curricular changes made as a response to teaching assessments; teaching materials developed by the instructor; video recordings of instructional activities; evidence of scholarly activity related to teaching and learning; evidence of student learning; data from knowledgeable peers; evidence of quality advising; and additional feedback from students.

- 2.3. Additionally, the instructor will assess instruction by soliciting information from students, peers, or both, for the primary purpose of improving instruction. Assistance in selecting appropriate assessment techniques is available from the NDSU Office of Accreditation, Assessment, and Academic Advising. Completion of formative assessments will be noted in annual reports.
- 2.4. Any materials identified by the instructor as relevant to his or her instructional responsibilities should be considered in the teaching evaluation process.

3. STUDENT INPUT

- 3.1. In accordance with NDUS policy 605.1.6, which states that "evaluations of all teaching faculty must include significant student input," all instructors must be assessed regularly by students in a manner appropriate to the instructional role.

3.2. University-Wide Course Rating Forms

- 3.2.1. Every section of every class offered at North Dakota State University will be assessed each term by the students using, as a minimum, the university-wide set of rating items. This set of ratings should consist of items that students are qualified to judge, such as student perception of instructor fairness within the course, perception of overall course quality, student understanding of the subject matter upon course completion, and the instructor's ability to communicate effectively. In addition, each instructor, unit, or college is encouraged to develop additional items to include as a part of the course assessment form as appropriate to the academic discipline.
- 3.2.2. Departments may utilize an electronic course assessment process as an alternative to paper assessments. Departments using the electronic course assessment process should make arrangements to have the university-wide rating form set up electronically. Data on only the university-wide items, aggregated by course level (lower division, upper division, graduate) without reference to specific courses, will be used by the university for institutional research purposes.
- 3.2.3. The university-wide course assessment will occur during the final quarter of the term, but not concurrent with examination periods. Someone other than the instructor, Graduate Teaching Assistants, or other individuals under the direct supervision of the instructor will administer the instrument. If administered in paper format during a class session, the aforementioned individual shall collect the assessments and forward them directly to the appropriate department/unit office for analysis. The instructor will not be present while the student rating is being completed. All instructors will receive a copy of the analysis for their courses after final grades are submitted. The departmental/unit office and the dean's office will retain a copy of the analysis.
- 3.2.4. The assessment form should indicate that student responses to the university-wide rating form may be used for evaluative purposes concerning personnel decisions including tenure, promotion, and salary decisions.

3.2.5. Items on the university-wide rating form are subject to approval by the NDSU Faculty Senate and should be examined and controlled for student motivation and other possible forms of bias.

3.2.6. All courses ending in 90-series numbers will be exempt from this policy concerning the university-wide rating form.

3.3. Additional Student Input

3.3.1. At the discretion of the instructor, other student input may be used for teaching assessment purposes to supplement the university-wide ratings. Such supplemental evidence may include, but is not limited to, student feedback in the form of exit interviews or other information voluntarily provided by students.

4. PEER REVIEW OF TEACHING

4.1. In addition to assessment data provided by students, each academic unit should conduct a critical peer review of the instructor's range of teaching activities. The faculty or instructional staff for each academic unit will decide how this peer review should be conducted, including determining requirements for appropriate reviewers and frequency of review.

4.2. For all instructors, this peer review process should include the instructor's knowledge of the subject matter, contributions to the unit's teaching efforts, and any other teaching contributions such as curricular improvements. Materials for peer review may include, but are not limited to: statement of teaching philosophy; observation of classroom performance; course syllabi, including course objectives; sample instructional materials, assignments, and examinations; development of new or innovative course materials; cumulative list of courses taught by the instructor; student research supervised by the instructor, including theses and dissertations; receipt of teaching awards; and materials advancing the scholarship of teaching and learning in the instructor's academic discipline.

4.3. This peer-review process should be conducted in a manner appropriate to the academic discipline and may include consideration of instructional activities occurring both within and outside the formal classroom such as traditional instruction, supervision of student research, laboratory instruction, advising, mentoring, and other activities related to student learning.

HISTORY:

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