

“SET+” Task Force Recommendations

Preamble

This document provides various methods for evaluating teaching beyond the Student Evaluation of Teaching (SET) form and any accompanying discursive evaluations by students. Departments are not expected to implement all the following suggestions. They should, instead, draw upon them to identify those methods that will be most useful to their faculty considering the kinds of courses offered and the modalities in which they are taught.

Whatever the department/program chooses to deploy should be explained to faculty when they first join UConn so that they can begin to think about their teaching in terms of continuous improvement and development.

One general recommendation is to shift from the “SET+” terminology (which implicitly foregrounds and prioritizes the SETs) to the more general, descriptive terminology of “Assessment of Teaching Effectiveness.” We would also suggest that, though they remain a requirement, the acronym SET be redefined as “Student *Experience* of Teaching” to underscore the subjective nature of those forms (and their vulnerability to biases of various sorts).

Assessment of Teaching Effectiveness (ATE) should include three primary inputs, the relative value of each to be determined by departmental agreement:

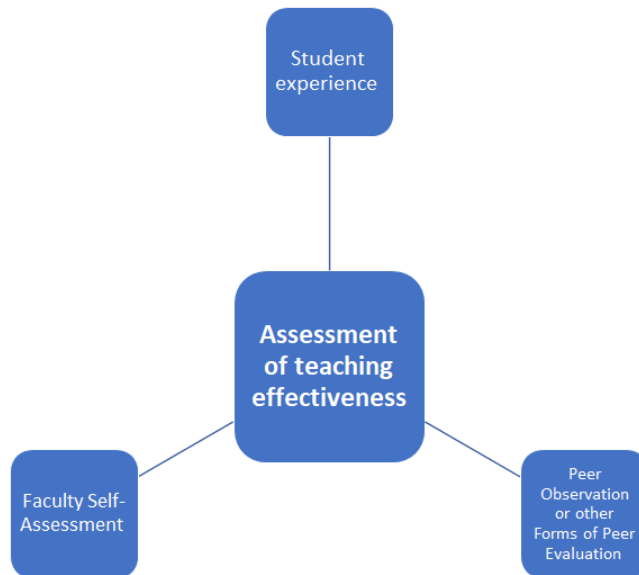
- I. Student experience
 - a. Any formative assessments done during the semester, especially as far as they have contributed to changes and improvements in the course and its pedagogy
 - b. Achievement of Learning Outcomes
 - c. Examples of student work
 - d. SETs
 - i. Minimize focus on a single class or even a single semester and consider them, instead, as reflective of a trajectory
 - ii. To the extent that comparisons are made, make sure that they are meaningful and relevant
 - e. Other forms of student evaluations in the case of clinical observations, etc.
 - f. Discursive student evaluations
 - i. Provide guidance to students on how to offer constructive feedback
 - ii. Such guidance could be offered early in students’ careers at UConn and reinforced and/or amplified by materials circulated at the time links to the SETs are sent out to the students at the end of each semester
 - iii. This guidance would include examples of constructive feedback, a brief video, and examples of how helpful feedback can result in course improvements
 - g. Letters from students
- II. Faculty Self-Assessment
 - a. Course materials, including syllabi, sample assignments, examples of student work, and other materials that may provide evidence of teaching approach
 - b. Summary of pedagogical goals for course
 - i. How are the instructor’s goals related to departmental/programmatic goals

- ii. How are they calibrated to student needs
 - c. List activities and assignments that have been used to help students reach these goals
 - d. How the instructor motivates students and encourages inclusion, accounting for the diversity of the students in the course
 - i. Communication strategies
 - ii. Community-building
 - iii. Incorporation of student feedback through formative assessments
 - iv. Adoption of Universal Design (UDL) principles in support of different learning needs
 - v. One helpful example is CU Boulder's "[Teaching Quality Framework Rubric—Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Belonging Focus](#)," though departments and programs are encouraged to develop their own rubrics based on internal discussions.
 - e. Does the student work within the class meet expectations and course learning objectives? How do you know?
 - i. Which assignments are most effective in illustrating student learning?
 - ii. Are there any inequities in student performance? Have you taken steps to address them?
 - f. Has the course or its constitutive components changed over time, either within a single semester or from one semester to the next?
 - i. What prompted any changes?
 - ii. How has student feedback or evidence of student learning informed any such revisions?
 - iii. Are there new changes being planned? Any action plan and strategy for evaluating the plan's impact?
 - g. What has the instructor done with respect to professional development?
 - i. UConn-sponsored workshops or other teaching seminars?
 - 1. Evidenced by certificates and/or badges that can be included in the personnel file
 - 2. Require a certain number or sequence of these workshops
 - ii. Non-UConn workshops and professional development opportunities focused on pedagogy
 - iii. Participation in any faculty learning communities on teaching and learning
 - iv. Participation in pedagogical activities within professional associations
 - v. For all these examples, faculty should include, in their teaching statements, comments about how their participation in these enrichment opportunities has helped them to evolve in their approaches to teaching
- III. Peer Observation or other Forms of Peer Evaluation
- a. Define "peers" as senior colleagues within faculty member's department/program who have no conflict of interest (I.e., do not serve as PTR/PR review committee, etc.)
 - i. Identified by Department Head or Program Director, with approval of faculty member
 - ii. Peer-reviewers should be provided training by CETL (including a simulation)

- iii. At least two such observations of evaluations by at least two different faculty members
- b. For online and hybrid courses, make use of CETL's [Quality Matters](#) tools and rubrics
- c. We recommend using Civil and Environmental Engineering's approach to these peer reviews, as delineated in their *Procedure For Peer Observation Of Teaching* document.
- d. Peer observation should be preceded by a meeting between faculty member and peer reviewer, following the recommendations in the *Pre-Observation Conference Guiding Questions* document.
- e. Observation should be summarized with the help of the *Classroom Observation Comment Form* document.
- f. Peer observation should be followed by a post-observation meeting between faculty member and peer reviewer, as described in the *Post-Observation Meeting* document.

Implementation Recommendations

- I. Departmental questionnaire to determine participants in process, frequency of evaluation
- II. Departments and programs should designate a senior faculty member as leader or point-person to manage/coordinate these efforts internally
- III. Baseline recommendation for pre-tenure TT faculty, Associate Professors preparing for promotion to Full, and In-Residence Faculty in 1-year appointments:
 - a. 1 undergrad course and (where relevant) 1 grad course; in cases where faculty are responsible for pre-professional and professional clinical instruction, these activities should also be part of the evaluation
 - b. Any year prior to a midpoint review, review for promotion and/or tenure, reappointment for multi-year contract (in case of CIRE faculty)
 - c. At least two different peer-reviewers
- IV. Every 5-7 years for senior faculty (associate and full professors)
- V. Evaluations, especially when they include challenges, should always be accompanied by recommended resources for improvement



Student experience
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1.Any formative assessments done during the semester 2.Achievement of Learning Outcomes 3.Examples of student work 4.SETs 5.Other forms of student evaluations in the case of clinical observations, etc. 6.Discursive student evaluations 7.Letters from students

Faculty Self-Assessment
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1.Course materials, including syllabi, sample assignments, examples of student work, and other materials that may provide evidence of teaching approach 2.Summary of pedagogical goals for course 3.Activities and assignments have been used to help students reach these goals 4.Actions made by the instructor to motivate students and encourage inclusion, accounting for the diversity of the students in the course 5.Demonstration of the student work within the class that meet expectations and course learning objectives 6.Evidences that show the course or its constitutive components has changed over time, either within a single semester or from one semester to the next

Peer Observation or other Forms of Peer Evaluation
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1.Important to define “peers” as senior colleagues within faculty member’s department/program who have no conflict of interest (i.e., do not serve as PTR/PR review committee, etc.) 2.For online and hybrid courses, make use of CETL’s Quality Matters tools and rubrics 3.We recommend using Civil and Environmental Engineering’s approach to these peer reviews, as delineated in this document. 4.Peer observation should be preceded by a meeting between faculty member and peer reviewer, following the recommendations in this document. 5.Observation should be summarized with the help of this document. 6.Peer observation should be followed by a post-observation meeting between faculty member and peer reviewer, as described in this document.