

Report of Teaching Evaluation Survey Faculty Assembly, Fall 2021

This report includes a summary of a campus-wide survey administered during November 2021 to guide faculty assembly in issues around teaching merit and RPT evaluations as well as recommendations based on the survey findings and faculty discussion. Respondents included 40.34% IRC, 26.90% tenure track, and 32.76% tenured faculty. There were 117 IRC faculty, 78 tenure track, and 95 tenured faculty who responded for a total of 290 faculty in these categories. A team of faculty reviewed the report from the survey with the goal of identifying issues around merit and RPT evaluation of teaching. Note that the data here was not separatable by college.

Summary:

- A clear majority want to go to academic year annual merits reviews, preferably in fall 2023. (Note that the current review period is Jan 2021-June 2022, which is a year and a half, with merit reviews being performed in fall 2022.)
- Most faculty believe their unit has formal, written merit review criteria.
- Not all faculty believe their unit limits the use of FCQs to 1/3 of the annual merit teaching rating, but about the same proportion of T/TTF think their RPT do limit the weighting of FCQs to 1/3.
- Peer review for annual merit is 1) not believed to be in place in all units; and 2) not always trusted to work well.
- Most faculty think their teaching is evaluated fairly in both merit review and RPT, but a large minority thinks their unit could do a better job of evaluating teaching in both processes.
- More than half of the tenure track and IRC faculty seem to be unclear if there is a clearly defined peer review process for annual merit that includes others besides their dean and department chair or program director.
- Faculty believe they understand their RPT criteria and satisfaction with the process in their unit is high.
- Less than half of tenure track faculty report that they understand what the other measures of teaching are in their unit beyond FCQs.

Recommendations:

- UCCS should conduct annual merit reviews for nine-month faculty based on academic year, starting with the 2022-23 academic year. The first evaluations under the new timeline would occur in fall 2023. No evaluations should take place in spring 2023, meaning the fall 2023 evaluation would cover the period from January 1, 2022 through June 30, 2023.

The Teaching Evaluation Task Force strongly recommends that faculty in primary units and schools and colleges implement the following:

- Every primary unit should have clear written annual merit review criteria. These criteria should:
 - Include at least three measures for teaching evaluation. It should be clear that FCQs will not count for more than 1/3 of the teaching evaluation
 - Be as clear as possible how the multiple measures of teaching are used to reach a single rating for teaching
 - Be as clear as possible how the ratings for teaching, research and service are combined to reach an overall rating for merit
 - Be clear to faculty how the merit ratings affect annual base-building salary increases in the college
 - Include expectations and guidance for how any self-rating is to be constructed with respect to development of merit rating numbers
 - Include expectations and guidance for how the chair or program director will arrive at a rating
- Every school or college should have a process for peer evaluation that does not include the department chair, program director or dean. A full description of the process should be available to all rostered faculty and include:
 - How members of any peer review body are chosen
 - Whether T/TTF will be evaluating IRC faculty (or vice versa)
 - When the peer review takes place (before or after the chair/program director rating)
 - The relationship between the peer rating, the chair/director rating and the dean rating
- The expectations for how each step in the process (peer, chair/director, dean) will be conducted
- There should be a clear, readily accessible appeal process for annual merit scores available to all faculty

The Teaching Evaluation Task Force recommends the following for consideration by the faculty in primary units and schools and colleges:

- Department chairs or team leads should clarify for all (T/TTF and IRC) faculty the process of merit reviews annually
- There needs to be a clear process for translating the ratings for each area of evaluation (teaching, research and service) into the overall rating for annual merit (outstanding, exceeding expectations, meeting expectations, below expectations, and fails to meet expectations)
- One additional teaching evaluation measure is peer review of teaching. The faculty assembly recommends the use of the forms available on the FRC webpages
- In departments or units where it is feasible, faculty should receive written feedback (preferably accompanied by a conversation) from department chairs or program directors

- To the extent possible, T/TTF should serve as peer reviewers for T/TTF and IRC faculty should serve as peer reviewers for IRC faculty
- Project CREST has developed a set of recommendations based on national best practices as they apply to annual merit review that faculty should also take into consideration
- RPT criteria for teaching should also include multiple measures of effectiveness and it should be clear to the faculty what measures are appropriate; how FCQs fit into those measures; and to what degree they are used in committee recommendations and conclusions.

Section 1: Merit review question responses of faculty:

- 1. Does your academic unit (where you are evaluated) have formal written criteria for annual merit review that define how teaching is to be evaluated?**

IRC faculty: 56% definitely yes, or might be, and 14.55% responded definitely not.

Tenure Track faculty: 45.31% responded definitely yes or might be, and 14.06% responded definitely not

- 2. I am familiar with what the annual merit review criteria in my unit say about how we are supposed to evaluate teaching.**

IRC faculty: 90.91% responded definitely yes, and 1.82% responded definitely no.

Tenure Track faculty: 84.85% reported definitely yes and 15.15% responded not really sure

Faculty Course Questionnaires (FCQs) are the student evaluations of teaching administered near the end of each course at UCCS. Please indicate your agreement or disagreement with the following statements about your unit's **annual merit criteria as written**

- 3. The criteria specify that FCQs will not count for more than 1/3 of the teaching evaluation**

IRC faculty: 61% agreed or strongly agreed, and 21.43% somewhat disagreed or strongly disagreed
Tenure track faculty: 60% agreed or strongly agreed and 12.00% somewhat disagreed

- 4. The criteria are clear about what other measures of teaching are to be considered**

IRC: 71% agreed or strongly agreed, and 21.43% somewhat disagreed or strongly disagreed

Tenure track faculty: 84% somewhat or strongly agreed and 8.00% somewhat disagreed

5. The criteria make it clear how other measures of teaching effectiveness are to be counted towards the merit score for teaching

IRC: 71.43% strongly agreed or somewhat agreed, and 19.05% somewhat disagreed or strongly disagreed

Tenure Track faculty: 68.00% somewhat agreed or strongly agreed and 12.00% somewhat disagreed

6. There is a clearly defined peer review process for annual merit that includes others besides my dean and department chair or program director

IRC: 43.9% Somewhat agreed or strongly agreed, and 39.02% somewhat or strongly disagreed

TT: 64% Somewhat agreed or strongly agreed, and 20.00 % somewhat or strongly disagreed

7. FCQs get counted for *more than 1/3* of the merit score for teaching in my unit

IRC: 40.66% somewhat agree or strongly agree and 35.17% somewhat disagree or strongly disagree.

TT : 45.1 % somewhat agree or strongly agree and 23.53% somewhat disagree or strongly disagree.

8. I understand what the other measures of teaching are in my unit

IRC: 59.34% somewhat or strongly agree, and 31.87% somewhat or strongly disagree

TT: 47.98% somewhat or strongly agree, and 40.38 % somewhat or strongly disagree

9. I understand how the other measures of teaching are used in determining my merit score for teaching

IRC: 56.04% of faculty strongly or somewhat agree, and 32.97% strongly or somewhat disagree

TT: 48.08% somewhat or strongly agree, and 40.38 % somewhat or strongly disagree

10. I have been (or am confident I will be) treated fairly in annual merit review of my teaching

IRC: 74.72% strongly or somewhat agree, and 14.29% strongly or somewhat disagree

TT: 75.00% strongly or somewhat agree, and 13.47 % strongly or somewhat disagree

11. My unit needs to do a better job of evaluating teaching for annual merit review

IRC: 38.46% strongly or somewhat agree and 36.16% strongly or somewhat disagree

TT: 38.46% strongly or somewhat agree, and 16.92 % strongly or somewhat disagree

12. The peer review process for annual merit review in my unit works well

IRC: 42.86% strongly or somewhat agree and 17.58% strongly or somewhat disagree

TT: 30.77% strongly or somewhat agree and 28.85% strongly or somewhat disagree

13. Are there any changes you would like to see made in how teaching is evaluated for annual merit review in your unit?

IRC faculty selected comments:

- Yes, the standards are vague and there are no metrics to evaluate the "quality" of teaching. We've worked over the last year to measure the "quantity" of teaching, but that's about it. We have no peer evaluation in place AT ALL and the department chair doesn't visit our classes at any time.
- The course taught should be considered, those courses students dread or are forced to take should not count the same as those that the student chooses to take or are excited about taking. Challenging subject matter impacts FCQ scores.
- we need a rubric to normalize how we define effective teaching; we should have language that directs peer reviewers how to weight the teaching packet by no more than a 1/3 of FCQ information.
- Get rid of FCQs (a common recommendation)

- In person peer evaluation. Consistent use of current tools across courses. End of course evaluation of clinical instructor with suggestions for any changes needed. Increases accuracy of courses being taught in the university data base.
- It shouldn't all depend on the chair
- Clearly defined criteria, written feedback from chairs and dean's review committee

Tenure track comments:

- My department ONLY uses FCQs to determine teaching evaluation. Further - it is a subjective decision by our Dean (who has never taught a class). This is highly problematic.
- more ways to account for large classes, ways to normalize very small classes where each student has a large impact on scores, ways to count all the tiny things we do for teaching, we need more than just how students perceive us, I want feedback from the evaluating committee! I don't know what to do differently if no one gives me feedback
- Both RPT criteria and evaluation process favors mostly research funding, not teaching. People who get funding are acknowledged publicly yet teaching and service always take a backseat.
- let's ensure that this new system of evaluation doesn't make "outstanding" impossible to achieve
- FCQs are granted too much weight. I teach a required major course which is difficult, and most students do not like taking. I think these factors contribute to FCQ scores and comments.
- I do not think FCQs should be used at all considering the overwhelming evidence that they discriminatory and not scientifically valid

15. The regents have permanently shifted the start of all annual merit increases from July to January, starting this year. Previously, all annual merit reviews were based on the activities from a calendar year (January-December). We could now potentially shift to evaluating all the activities from a given academic year (July-June). If we do so, annual merit materials from faculty members, which are currently due in early February, would need to be completed by early September instead. Please indicate your agreement or disagreement: *UCCS should conduct annual merit reviews based on academic year, starting with the 2022-23 academic year.*

IRC: 64.13% strongly or somewhat agree and 10.86% strongly or somewhat disagree

TT: 57.41% strongly or somewhat agree and 12.97% strongly or somewhat disagree

16. UCCS should conduct annual merit reviews based on academic year, but make implementation effective for the 2021-22 academic year.

IRC: 46.16 %strongly or somewhat agree and 20.88% strongly or somewhat disagree

TT: 40.74% strongly or somewhat agree and 20.37% strongly or somewhat disagree.
Note around 38% were neutral

Section 2: RPT related questions

1. Each academic unit has its own Reappointment, Promotion and Tenure (RPT) criteria. Are you familiar with what your unit's RPT criteria say about the evaluation of teaching?

TT 90.91% said definitely yes, and 9.09% said not really sure

2. Please indicate your agreement or disagreement with the following statements about your unit's RPT criteria as written: The criteria specify that FCQs will not count for more than 1/3 of the teaching evaluation

TT: 65.39% strongly or somewhat agree and 17.31% strongly or somewhat disagree

3. Please indicate your agreement or disagreement with the following statements about your unit's RPT criteria as written: The criteria are clear about what other measures of teaching are to be considered

TT: 76.92% strongly or somewhat agree and 5.77% strongly or somewhat disagree

4. Please indicate your agreement or disagreement with the following statements about your unit's RPT criteria as written: The criteria make it clear how other measures of teaching effectiveness are to be counted towards the merit score for teaching

TT: 75% strongly or somewhat agree and 15.39% strongly or somewhat disagree

5. FCQs get counted for more than 1/3 of RPT evaluations of teaching in my unit

TT: 54% strongly or somewhat agree and 24% strongly or somewhat disagree

6. I understand what the other measures of teaching are in my unit

TT: 80% strongly or somewhat agree and 8.0% strongly or somewhat disagree

7. I understand how the other measures of teaching are used in determining ratings in RPT evaluation of teaching

TT: 68 % strongly or somewhat agree and 18 % strongly or somewhat disagree

8. I have been (or have confidence I will be) treated fairly in RPT evaluations of my teaching

TT: 64 % strongly or somewhat agree and 10 % strongly or somewhat disagree

Women: 70.34% strongly or somewhat agree and 11.11 % strongly or somewhat disagree

9. My unit needs to do a better job of evaluating teaching for RPT reviews

TT: 40 % strongly or somewhat agree and 36% strongly or somewhat disagree

10. The RPT review processes in my unit work well

TT: 62 % strongly or somewhat agree and 8 % strongly or somewhat disagree

11. Are there any changes you would like to see in how teaching is evaluated for Reappointment, Promotion and Tenure review in your unit? (selected comments)

- Clarity about how measures are being used in determining ratings would be helpful!
- My department recently revised our criteria and now they are quite vague, I don't like the new system but the old one is obsolete (relies on FCQ questions and scale that are no longer used), I want more ways to be evaluated like teaching publications and conferences and workshops, my department is very research focused and most associate profs or higher snub teaching accomplishments and do not seem to value teaching
- Diversity of workloads are allowed yet the RPT criteria seems to be too rigid, favoring research funding as far as I understand the RPT criteria.to the point that good teachers are discouraged to apply for full professorship because

minimal required amounts of research funding does not allow that in our RPT or it is highly likely. Clearcut path is there for those who get funding.

12. Are there other things you want to share with us about the evaluation of teaching at UCCS more generally?

- tenured/tenure track faculty should have a lower teaching load (current teaching load in my college is 2x3; I think a 2x2 or a 2x1 is more appropriate in order for faculty to maintain a substantive and comprehensive research agenda).
- Colleagues, let's be clear, please. FCQs do not measure the quality of faculty instruction. FCQs measure students' satisfaction with the course/faculty. FCQs may include students' impressions of faculty teaching, but also may reflect students' opinions on how easy/rigorous the course is, how much work the course is, grade inflation, whether the faculty member holds students accountable to course/grading standards, etc.
- We need more clear guidelines for IRC faculty assessment and promotion
- I am fortunate that my FCQ scores are high as they are the only measure of evaluation used for teaching in our College.
- There is no evaluation of lecturers in any way beyond FCQs in many cases

Committee: Thomas Aicher (BUS), David Anderson (LAS), Andrea Bingham (COEd), David Moon (SPA, Faculty Assembly President 2021-2022), Peter Gorder (EAS), Wendy Haggren (IRC faculty LAS), Jessica Kirby (Beth-EI), Karin Larkin (LAS, FA Women's Committee), David J. Weiss, (LAS, Past President Faculty Assembly 2021-2022)