**CLA RTP Policy (proposed revisions for student evaluations)**

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**2.1 Instruction and Instructionally-Related Activities**

Effective instruction and instructionally-related activities within the College of Liberal Arts encompass a wide range of tasks and responsibilities. *As per university-wide policy (revised 2023), “colleges and departments should employ multiple modes of evidence when assessing teaching effectiveness and must not rely significantly on student-perceptions-of-teaching forms as evidence.”* This section specifies criteria for the evaluation of a faculty member’s instruction and instructionally-related activities. Further, this section delineates the type and amount of documentation regarding a candidate’s instructional effectiveness.

**2.1.1. Instruction and Instructionally-Related Activities File**

Candidates **must** submit:

a. Narrative written on the fillable form

b. Student course evaluation summaries for each course for which formal student evaluations were required during the period of review.

c. For each course taught during the period of review:

1. One (1) representative course syllabus

2. One (1) sample of an appropriate assessment of student learning outcomes

3. One (1) sample of representative instructional materials not to exceed four (4) pages

d. Academic Advisor Report, if applicable.

**2.1.2. Narrative of Instructional Philosophy and Practice**

The candidate's narrative of instructional philosophy and practice provides the context necessary for understanding and interpreting the candidate's instructional goals, materials, and accomplishments.

This narrative, as further evidenced by submitted materials, shall address the following:

a. The overarching goals of the candidate's instructional practices

b. Relationship between RSCA and/or service activities to instruction

c. Teaching methodologies and their links to student assessment and learning outcomes

d. Student course evaluations relative to level

e. Grade distributions relative to level

f. Reflection on course evolution in response to feedback, professional development opportunities, and/or experimentation with instructional methodologies or assessments.

Furthermore, the narrative shall address the following *as appropriate:*

g*. Explanation of student course evaluation data that differ (in a statistically significant way, e.g., p < .05) from department and/or college norms relative to level or are otherwise anomalous. Candidates and evaluators should keep in mind that while SPOT Summary forms provide the mean averages (M) for the candidate, department, and college, other measures of central tendency (i.e., median = Mdn, or mode = Mo) may provide more appropriate averages with small sample sizes or skewed distributions and should be considered accordingly. If mean averages (M) are used, standard deviations (SD) must also be considered, and candidates should provide explanations for large standard deviations (e.g., SD > 1), or those that cluster around a mean that the candidate believes is anomalous or inaccurate.*

h. *Grade distributions that are statistically significantly different (e.g., p < .05) from department norms, again considering the various measures of central tendency mentioned above.*

**2.1.3 Instruction and Instructionally-Related Materials**

For each course taught during the period under review, candidates will include only:

a. One (1) representative syllabus

b. One (1) assessment tool for student learning

c. One (1) sample of representative instructional materials not to exceed four (4) pages.

**2.1.3.1 Syllabi**

A representative syllabus for each course instructed during the period of review must be submitted. For courses taught more than once in the period of review (e.g., GEOG444), only one (1) representative syllabus shall be submitted. Candidates may include an additional syllabus for no more than two (2) selected courses to demonstrate course revisions and/or experimentation. Evaluation will consider syllabi content relative to course level and catalog description. Syllabi must reflect currency in the discipline and be consistent with current Academic Senate syllabus policies.

**2.1.3.2 Assessment of Student Learning Outcomes**

For each course taught during the period of review, candidates must submit one assessment tool of student learning (e.g., comprehensive final assignment, exam, lab, paper assignment, or project assignment). Evaluation will consider appropriateness relative to course content, student learning goals and objectives, course level, and number of enrolled students.

**2.1.3.3 Instructional Materials**

For each course taught during the period of review, candidates must submit one (1) sample of representative instructional materials not to exceed four (4) pages. Instructional materials include, but are not limited to, class handouts, lecture notes, web page printouts, and PowerPoint slides. Media containing instructional materials can be discussed in the narrative but may not be submitted.

**2.1.4 Peer Observation of Instruction**

As part of the department RTP evaluation, the department committee may choose to perform a *class observation* or a candidate may choose to request such an observation. If performed, the evaluation must adhere to the CBA and comply with a consistent departmental rubric or procedure, including compliance with the requirement that notice be given at least five (5) days

before a *class visit*. The subsequent evaluation may be incorporated into the department RTP evaluation and/or submitted as a separate document during the open period.

**2.1.5 Grade Distributions**

Differentiation among levels of student learning is an important responsibility of any teacher. Grade distributions provide a measure of grade leniency and severity. Further, they provide a useful measure for contextualizing assessment of student learning and student course evaluations. As *grade distributions* necessarily differ from one group of students to another, evaluation will consider overall trends in grade distributions *relative to the contextual factors listed in 2.1.7.1.*

**2.1.6 Academic Advisor Report**

Candidates who have received assigned time to provide formal student academic advising shall report on their activities per a consistent procedure approved by the Dean or designee. For RTP purposes, the report serves to document instructionally-related activities for which assigned time is granted.

**2.1.7 Evaluation of Student Response to Instruction**

Student course evaluations complement the information obtained in the criteria stated above. *University RTP policy states, “...student course evaluations shall be used to evaluate student response to instruction.” However, utilization of the university standard evaluation SPOT form is only one method of presenting student responses to learning and teaching effectiveness. Importantly, any single item on the SPOT form or the SPOT summaries—or the entire form, by itself and in isolation from other information—does not provide sufficient evidence of teaching effectiveness. Additional forms of evaluation may include, but are not limited to: class observations, examples of completed student work, and informal mid-semester evaluations administered directly by the faculty member. Therefore, SPOT data shall only be considered as one part of the candidate’s portfolio, not the sole or primary source of evidence to evaluate teaching effectiveness.*

*Extensive research has demonstrated that student evaluations are inherently flawed instruments that by their nature, do not accurately represent instructional effectiveness. Student evaluations demonstrate both environmental bias (bias based on course conditions, including but not limited to course difficulty, course modality, course meeting time, student interest level, and modality) and equity bias (bias towards the instructor because of aspect/s or perceived aspect/s of their identity, including but not limited to race/ethnicity, gender, ability, national origin, sexual orientation, and appearance).*

*Candidates who believe that their student evaluations have been impacted by any of these factors may choose to use their narratives to address their student evaluation scores. Candidates should also be aware that Provision 11.2 of the Collective Bargaining Agreement states that instructors may submit written rebuttals to student course evaluations when they believe that additional information is needed “or in the case of student bias.” If such a rebuttal is submitted, it is incumbent upon the evaluating committee to review it.*

**2.1.7.1. Evaluation Relative to Context**

Committees, chairs, and the dean shall evaluate student response to instruction relative to context, including:

a. Class characteristics

1. Course level

2. *Course type (e.g., required, elective, writing intensive, online/asynchronous, for majors only or GE, etc.)*

3. Number of enrolled students *(v. number of SPOT responses)*

4. Whether this was a new course preparation

5. *Course meeting time*

b. Candidate's teaching assignment  
 1. Number of new course preparations during the semester of evaluation

2. Total number of different course preparations  
 *3. Alignment of Standard Course Outline (SCO) with the candidate’s area of expertise/training*

c. Candidate's experimentation with methodologies in attempting to improve teaching effectiveness  
 d. Trends over time, *keeping in mind that it is impossible to remove or account for all bias in student evaluations*

**2.1.7.2 Course Evaluation Summaries**

Course evaluation summaries provide one measure of instruction that should be supplemented with other instructionally-related materials. Course evaluation summaries must be included for each section of a course for which student course evaluations are required during the period of review.

**2.1.7.3 Written Remarks on Student Course Evaluations**

The inclusion of written remarks from student course evaluations is optional. Candidates may include written remarks for a course if such remarks help clarify or explain an ambiguity on the course evaluation summaries. In such cases, all original student evaluations for the selected course, including those evaluations without student comments, must be included.

*Note to readers*

- our proposed policy revisions are based on the crowdsourcing work done by the CLASP team in the 21-22 a.y., extensive secondary research prepared by our team members, the Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA), and the proposed new RTP policy for the university  
- as much as possible, new and/or changed language is marked in *green italics*