

**65th Session of the North Carolina State University  
Faculty Senate  
Academic Policy Committee (APC)  
Meeting Minutes  
October 2, 2018**

**Present:** RaJade Berry-James (co-chair), Richard Kotek (co-chair), Natalie Cooke, Deniz Eseryel, Beth Fath, Robert Hayes, Helmut Hergeth, Kerry Havner, Min Liu, Doug Pearce

**Absent:** Jeremiah Feducia

**Guests:** Anna Howard, Paul Williams, co-chairs of the Evaluation of Teaching Committee, Kenneth Royal

**Summary of Discussion:** The Evaluation of Teaching Committee advises the Provost on matters of teaching evaluation including evaluating current techniques of faculty teaching, reviewing best practices and suggesting policy improvements. Last year the committee recommended changes in the Evaluation of Teaching Regulation 05.20.10 and to the Reappointment, Promotion, and Tenure Dossier Format Requirements 05.20.20. This year the committee is focused on how to address bias in and misuse of Student Evaluations of Teaching (*ClassEval*) The Chair Anna Howard and Member Paul Williams attended the Academic Policy Committee on October 2nd to answer any concerns the committee had about the evaluation of teaching at NC State."

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The low response rate in the current student evaluation seems to be a problem now making the results from the data unusable or meaningless. Online evaluations generally lead to lower response rates which may have negative consequences for faculty. ClassEval Concerns and Suggestions

<https://ofd.ncsu.edu/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2016/04/ClassEvalFAQ.pdf> lists among other methods a mid-semester evaluation as the number technique to improve ClassEval response rates.

Our guest Ken Royal of College of Veterinary Medicine was kind to summarize (see text below) his approach to accomplish 80% response rates. His presentation is sent out to all of you with the minutes. Ken summarizes his presentation as follows:

"In summary, we took on a 3-phased approach as part of our overhaul.

Phase 1 - Instrumentation

Phase 2 - Process

Phase 3 - Interpretation and Use

For instrumentation, we reviewed existing instruments (both in the literature and at various colleges/universities) and settled upon a set of standard questions that could apply to every course and every instructor. We carefully delineated two forms, one for courses and one for instructors, so that students wouldn't confuse the two when providing responses. For the course evaluation forms, we pull all the listed course outcomes from course syllabi and include those as the first set of items on each course evaluation. These outcomes typically range between 3-7 and are specific for each course. From a program assessment perspective, these items are

critically important as they tell us the extent to which a course really hit its mark with respect to its intended learning goals for students.

For the process, we moved from paper to electronic. Modern students do almost everything digitally so we saw no reason to continue with paper forms. Because we have multiple instructors teaching each course we had to carefully revise our policy about who gets evaluated and how often. This required special permission from the Associate Provost for Faculty Affairs. We opted to put our faculty evaluations on the same schedule as faculty peer evaluations in which the frequency with which faculty are evaluated is determined by their rank (assistant professors are evaluated more frequently, full professors less frequently). This greatly reduced survey fatigue for our students, which was the primary culprit for a lousy response rate (about 15-25% on average). These simple changes resulted in 75-80% response rates on average for us. It's much more manageable for students. One thing that is really important in this process is meeting with students to discuss the evaluations, who will see them, how they are used, etc. This same sort of thing could be implemented at the end of any class period provided the person being evaluated isn't the person making the remarks and asking for feedback (that could introduce bias and affect how people respond). Clarifying this information to students was critical in their giving us feedback that would be useful for course and instructor improvements.

The last phase involves interpretation and use. Here, we've stressed what the literature says about how high-stakes decisions require greater validity evidence. So, we require multiple sources of information (self-evaluations, peer evaluations, former students' perspectives, longitudinal look-backs on our annual program assessments for each class, etc.). We have made it a culture not to rely on any single indicator, but rather weigh the collective evidence and then make a careful, discerning judgment. I also serve as the Executive Director for our Academy of Educators in our college. The AOE is a program that basically provides faculty development opportunities on all aspects of education. One of the projects we are including in this effort is to help faculty create a teaching portfolio that documents their professional development efforts, reflections on teaching, reflections on lessons learned/new information, how new information might foster improved teaching, etc. We envision this portfolio approach will essentially supplement the teaching evaluation process so that faculty will be readily able to put together a "teaching dossier" of their efforts. Naturally, this should help make the RPT process smoother and hopefully fairer for all."

The Academic Policy Committee recommends to further evaluate Dr. Royal's approach as useful practice for evaluation of faculty teaching.

Respectfully Submitted,

Richard Kotek  
Co-Chair APC

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