The following Motions and Documents were considered by the GFC Committee on the Learning Environment at its Wednesday, January 26, 2022 meeting:

Agenda Title: **Approval of the Teaching, Learning and Evaluation Policy Suite and Rescission of GFC Policy Manual Section 111: Teaching and Learning and Teaching Evaluation**

CARRIED MOTION:
THAT the GFC Committee on the Learning Environment recommend that the Board of Governors approve the proposed UAPPOL Teaching, Learning and Evaluation Policy Suite, as set forth in Attachments 1 (as amended), 2 and 3, to take effect July 1, 2022.

CARRIED MOTION:
THAT the GFC Committee on the Learning Environment recommend that General Faculties Council rescind GFC Policy 111 pending final approval of the UAPPOL Teaching, Learning and Evaluation Policy suite, to take effect July 1, 2022.

FINAL Item 6

Governance Executive Summary
Action Item

Agenda Title	Approval of the Teaching, Learning and Evaluation Policy Suite and Rescission of GFC Policy Manual Section 111: Teaching and Learning and Teaching Evaluation

Motion I

THAT the GFC Committee on the Learning Environment recommend that the Board of Governors approve the proposed UAPPOL Teaching, Learning and Evaluation Policy Suite, as set forth in Attachments 1 (as amended), 2 and 3, to take effect July 1, 2022.

Motion II

THAT the GFC Committee on the Learning Environment recommend that General Faculties Council rescind GFC Policy 111 pending final approval of the UAPPOL Teaching, Learning and Evaluation Policy suite, to take effect July 1, 2022.

Item

Action Requested	☐Approval ☒ Recommendation
Proposed by	Wendy Rodgers (Deputy Provost) and John Nychka (Vice-Provost (Learning Initiatives) and Chair, GFC CLE)
Presenter(s)	Wendy Rodgers (Deputy Provost) and John Nychka (Vice-Provost (Learning Initiatives) and Chair, GFC CLE)

Details

Office of Administrative Responsibility	Office of the Provost and Vice-President (Academic)
The Purpose of the Proposal is (*please be specific*)	The proposal is before the committee to seek approval of the Teaching, Learning, and Evaluation Policy Suite and concurrent rescission of GFC Policy 111.
Executive Summary (*outline the specific item – and remember your audience*)	The establishment of the new Teaching, Learning, and Evaluation Policy Suite in UAPPOL and the concurrent rescission of Section 111 of the GFC Policy Manual is intended to update the institutional approach towards teaching and learning at the University of Alberta in alignment with *For the Public Good* and other strategic initiatives; incorporate the principles of the Effective Teaching Framework and communication of expectations into one central policy suite; house clear processes related to student input on the evaluation and/or experience of teaching within the Policy's procedures; include revised student input questions; and allow for the future provision of guidelines on multi-faceted evaluation.

Initial consultation with key stakeholders began in Winter 2021. Consultation continued April through June, including town-hall style meetings with various campus student groups as well as a consultation meeting with instructors in June 2021. In July 2021, a Working Group composed of various faculty members and representation from the Students' Union and Graduate Students' Association was tasked with developing new student input (USRI) questions reflecting best practices. The AASUA has also recently provided Administration with helpful commentary. |

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Some of the key considerations raised through consultation to date includes:

- the initiative has value to all vested parties with overall beneficial outcomes for the institution: positive teaching informs a positive student learning experience which can lead to positive recognition for instructors for their teaching expertise;
- there is need for revised student input questions and refining the way that students written comments are collected; feedback should be timely, specific, and actionable;
- the fact that student completion of USRIs is not mandatory may result in courses not receiving a statistically significant sample of results, which has been a longstanding problem, particularly with the adoption of the on-line survey format. The CLE Taskforce on Student Experience of Teaching and Learning (SETL) has looked at the mandatory aspect; including discussion as to whether written comments are necessary;
- address the contextual nature of the learning experience and the feedback instrument; ensure the instrument is at a level that allows for the ability to address different teaching contexts; relevance is a key component to the survey;
- there are important EDI considerations, including addressing the bias that exists within USRI evaluation; educate students completing the evaluations beforehand and provide feedback on how the data is used from their evaluations (including annual instructor evaluations, course improvement, etc.); and,
- students have a desire to understand how the data collected is/will be used.

The attached Policy and Procedure incorporate the feedback raised through the initial rounds of consultation conducted earlier this year, and builds upon GFC 111 as well as existing work-to-date (Effective Framework for Teaching). The drafters have also taken into consideration feedback that was gathered through earlier efforts to modify the USRI process.

Changes proposed in the Procedure since the initial round of consultation include, but are not limited to, the following:
- change of working title of the survey to Student Perspectives of Teaching (SPOT);
- moving from the concept of student evaluation to student perspectives and experiences;
- focused commentary for each question;
- inclusion of the ability to create an instructor optional midterm feedback survey and other surveys (already available through TSQS);
- updating and emphasis of the possibility of biases;
- encouragement to allow class time for completion;
- surveys open for 2 weeks instead of one (inclusive of the withdrawal date);
- ability to isolate the results of surveys of withdrawn students;
- table to better illustrate who receives what parts of the report when;
- hot links to existing information on the University website.

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	The attached Appendix A reflects the current USRI questions modeled onto a new template demonstrating the preamble and the shift to individual comment fields for each question. Following piloting and validation, the new SPOT questions will eventually replace the USRI questions detailed here.
Supplementary Notes and context	*<This section is for use by University Governance only to outline governance process.>*

Engagement and Routing (Include meeting dates)

Consultation and Stakeholder Participation (parties who have seen the proposal and in what capacity) <For information on the protocol see the <u>Governance Resources section Student Participation Protocol</u>>	*Those who are actively **participating** and who have been **consulted**:* • GFC CLE (December 2, 2020) • Statutory Deans' Council (March 3, 2021) • GFC CLE (March 3, 2021) • GFC EXEC (March 8, 2021) • AASUA (March 10, 2021; initial consultation meeting) • Chairs' Council (March 16, 2021) • GFC COSA (March 18, 2021) • GFC (March 22, 2021) • Students' Union (April 14, 2021) • Graduate Students' Association (April 16, 2021) • Centre for Teaching and Learning (CTL) (April 28, 2021) • GFC CLE (April 28, 2021) • Deans Only Deans' Council (May 19, 2021) • Student Groups Town Hall (May 19, 2021) • Instructor Town Hall (June 2, 2021) • GFC COSA (September 9, 2021) • GFC EXEC (September 13, 2021) • Deans Only Deans' Council (September 15, 2021) • Vice-Provosts' Council (September 20, 2021) • GFC (September 20, 2021) • BHRCC (September 28, 2021) • GFC CLE (September 29, 2021) • BLRSEC (October 1, 2021) • Student Town Hall (October 18, 2021) • Student Town Hall (October 19, 2021) • Chairs' Council (October 19, 2021) • GFC CLE (October 27, 2021) • Instructor Town Hall (October 27, 2021) • Instructor Town Hall (November 4, 2021) • GFC EXEC (November 15, 2021) • GFC CLE (December 1, 2021) • GFC (~~November 29, 2021~~) (December 6, 2021) • GFC COSA (January 13, 2022)

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Approval Route (Governance) (including meeting dates)	1. GFC CLE | Action: For Recommendation (January 26, 2022) 2. GFC EXEC | Placement on the GFC Agenda (February 14, 2022) 3. GFC | Action: For Recommendation (February 28, 2022) 4. BHRCC | Action: For Recommendation l (March 8, 2022) 5. BLRSEC | Action: For Recommendation (March 11, 2022) 6. BoG | Action: For Approval (March 25, 2022)

Strategic Alignment

Alignment with *For the Public Good*	MISSION: Within a vibrant and supportive learning environment, the University of Alberta discovers, disseminates, and applies new knowledge for the benefit of society through teaching and learning, research and creative activity, community involvement, and partnerships. VALUES: We value excellence in teaching, research, and creative activity that enriches learning experiences, advances knowledge, inspires engaged citizenship, and promotes the public good. For the Public Good EXCEL as individuals, and together, sustain a culture that fosters and champions distinction and distinctiveness in teaching, learning, research, and service.	
Alignment with Core Risk Area	Please note below the specific institutional risk(s) this proposal is addressing.	
	☐Enrolment Management ☑ Faculty and Staff ☐Funding and Resource Management ☐IT Services, Software and Hardware ☑ Leadership and Change ☐Physical Infrastructure	☐Relationship with Stakeholders ☑ Reputation ☐Research Enterprise ☐Safety ☑ Student Success
Legislative Compliance and jurisdiction	*Post-Secondary Learning Act*, Section 26(1)o GFC CLE Terms of Reference GFC Policy 111 BLRSEC Terms of Reference BHRCC Terms of Reference	

Attachments:

1. Attachment 1 - UAPPOL Teaching, Learning and Evaluation Policy (Final Jan 2022)
2. Attachment 2 - UAPPOL Student Input to the Evaluation of Teaching and Learning Procedure (Final Jan 2022)
3. Attachment 3 - UAPPOL Appendix A_ Current USRI Questions (GFC Policy Manual Section 111.3.E) (Dec 2021)
4. Attachment 4 - GFC Policy Manual Section 111. Teaching and Learning and Teaching Evaluation _ University Governance
5. Attachment 5 - REFERENCES _ Advancing a Teaching, Learning and Evaluation Policy September 2021

Prepared by: John Nychka, Donna Herman, Tyler Kuhnert, Carley Roth

January, 2022 FINAL VERSION - as of January 26, 2022

Original Approval Date: **Effective Date: July 1, 2022**

Teaching, Learning and Evaluation Policy

Office of Accountability:	Provost and Vice-President (Academic)
Office of Administrative Responsibility:	Provost and Vice-President (Academic)
Approver:	General Faculties Council and Board of Governors
Scope:	Compliance with this University policy extends to all Academic Staff and Colleagues and Support Staff as outlined and defined in Recruitment Policy (Appendix A and Appendix B: Definitions and Categories) in addition to visiting speakers, professor emeriti, and undergraduate and graduate students.

Overview

A university has at its heart two goals: the creation of knowledge and the dissemination and preservation of knowledge. **Researchers** who create knowledge through exploration and discovery represent, in its broadest sense, the learning component of university life. The dissemination, and preservation of that knowledge is the teaching component. Within a university, what is taught and how it is taught depends upon researchers, and the impact of their research depends upon its communication by **instructors**. This interdependence and integration of research and teaching is what distinguishes a university from other educational institutions. Although the balance between these activities may vary, all members of the university, whether researchers or **students**, are learners who extend the range of their knowledge through exploration and discovery.

As a research-intensive institution, the University of Alberta emphasizes the seamless relationship of research and teaching. More than simply recognizing that what we teach flows from the work of researchers, we are convinced that undergraduate and graduate curriculum development and delivery are best accomplished by dedicated instructors engaged in both teaching and research. We are committed to providing the best and most appropriate environments for student-instructor and student-student interactions.

Within this context, graduate students serve a multifaceted role during their studies: as students, instructors, researchers, mentors, and grant or scholarship holders. The need to strike an appropriate balance among their responsibilities gives graduate students a unique perspective in the university community, especially with respect to teaching.

At the University of Alberta, a wide range of disciplines is professed, various research models followed, and numerous types of teaching are required across its campuses. There is no one teaching model and no one answer to serve all disciplines. Development of new teaching models should emphasize appropriate use, should be derived from within the discipline concerned, and the final arbiter should always be academic excellence.

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to set out the overarching principles that will apply to teaching and learning and to the evaluation of teaching and learning at the University.

POLICY

A. Framework for Effective Teaching

1. Expertise, Content and Outcomes - what students are expected to learn as well as the expertise that instructors require to facilitate this learning:

   a. the rigour, breadth and depth of content, knowledge, skills, and attitudes that students are expected to learn during a **course** or learning situation; and,

   b. the breadth and depth of an instructor's discipline and/or field of knowledge as well as pedagogical knowledge relevant to the subject matter.

2. Course Design - constructive organization of course objectives, resources, assignments, and assessments:

   a. coherent design of instruction demonstrated through course objectives, syllabus, appropriate pace, and organization;

   b. constructive assessment strategies demonstrated through the alignment of assessments with course objectives; and,

   c. meaningful learning resources and materials that support learning relevant to course goals and are as cost-effective as possible.

3. Instructional Practices - teaching preparation, methods, and approaches to facilitate learning:

   a. facilitation of course delivery demonstrated through instructor preparation, communication of expectations, and provision of feedback;

   b. student-centered instruction and learning activities through the facilitation of instructor-student and student-student interactions;

   c. feedback, mentorship, and supervision practices demonstrated through the suitability and timeliness of feedback, helpful mentorship practices, and constructive student interactions; and,

   d. approaches to facilitating a productive and supportive climate for learning through the use of intentional strategies to create a respectful, equitable, diverse, and inclusive learning environment.

4. Learning Environment - physical and virtual support systems:

   a. suitability of physical and virtual environments and use of education technology;

   b. availability of teaching assistants, accessibility accommodations, and other supports; and,

   c. scheduling of course meeting times and/or online module availability.

5. Reflection, Growth and Leadership:

   a. the extent to which instructors reflect on and improve their own teaching;

   b. seeking of opportunities for development; and,

      c.   contributing to the growth of the broader teaching community.

B. Students' Contributions and Expected Outcomes

1. To fully participate in and benefit from the teaching programs at the University, entering students are expected to arrive with a set of attitudes and skills that prepares them for academic study. These will expand and grow through participation in the University community. These attributes/skills include:

    a. motivation to participate in an active learning community that challenges and stimulates intellectual, scholarly, personal, and interpersonal growth;
    b. a willingness to take a major responsibility for one's own learning;
    c. curiosity about the discipline of specialization and the integration of specialized knowledge with other disciplines and in society;
    d. tolerance and appreciation for diversity and multiple viewpoints;
    e. a sense of responsibility and respect for self and other members of the University community;
    f. oral and written competency in English or French, mathematical and reasoning skills, competent use of appropriate information, and communication technologies; and,
    g. respect and adherence to the ethical standards of scholarship including abhorrence of plagiarism, false representation, and cheating.

2. The generic outcomes that should be expected from a program of study at the University are:

    a. critical thinking skills;
    b. communication skills including oral, written, and group work skills;
    c. the ability to learn independently;
    d. an appreciation of potential biases and an understanding of stereotypes about particular identities and groups of people;
    e. the motivation and ability to use personal, creative, and entrepreneurial talents; and,
    f. an informed understanding of, and a desire to participate in, the intellectual, cultural, social, and political life of local, national, and global communities.

3. Specialized outcomes that should be expected from a program of study at the University include:

    a. the ability to synthesize the core content in a disciplinary or professional field of study;
    b. knowledge of some of the "big questions" in the field;
    c. the skills to effectively find, synthesize and apply information in the relevant literature;
    d. knowledge of and the ability to use the investigative and observational methods of the field;
    e. interest in and an excitement for some aspect of the specialized field of study; and,
    f. understanding of the relevance and application of the specialized field of study to everyday life.

C.   Principles and Purpose for the Evaluation of Teaching

1. The evaluation of teaching at the University will:

    a. reflect institutional priorities around teaching and learning;
    b. be multifaceted and diverse;
    c. be flexible enough to apply to diverse teaching contexts;

d. be fair, equitable, and transparent in the collection, use, and interpretation of data;
e. allow for both summative and formative feedback on teaching; and,
f. provide meaningful data across disciplines to instructors, students, and administrators.

2. At the University, evaluation of teaching may serve several purposes:

   a. to provide formative data used by instructors to identify teaching strengths and weaknesses and, in doing so, giving guidance for the improvement or refinement of teaching skills, expertise, and scholarship, and to improve the students' learning experience;
   b. to provide summative evaluation as a review and overview of an instructor's teaching that is an essential element in merit, promotion, and tenure decisions;
   c. to provide information on courses and teaching to students; and,
   d. to provide information for review of programs and curricula.

D.   Multifaceted Evaluation of Teaching and Learning

1. Evidence to support a multifaceted approach to the evaluation of teaching will include feedback from students about their perspectives on their experience of teaching through surveys and commentary;

2. The evaluation of teaching will take into account factors such as:

   a. size, scheduling and delivery mode of the class;
   b. the Faculty and program in which the course is developed;
   c. whether the course is within a program with accreditation requirements;
   d. whether the course is required versus optional in relation to the student's program;
   e. whether the course is academically demanding; i.e. difficult and/or heavy content;
   f. whether the course includes laboratory, practicum and/or clinical contexts; and
   g. student GPA and grade expectations.

3. Factors, which are outside of an instructor's control and will not be considered in the evaluation of teaching include, but are not limited to:

   a. age of both students and instructors; and,
   b. perceived race, gender, religion, ability, sexual orientation, and/or ethnicity of the instructor.

4. Further evidence to support a multi-faceted approach to the evaluation of teaching and learning may include, but is not limited to:

   a. instructor self assessment, captured in a teaching dossier or portfolio;
   b. the use of available survey tools including, but not limited to, instructors assessing students, instructors assessing peers, instructors assessing themselves, and/or students assessing themselves;
   c. instructor development through courses/conferences, and scholarly and service activities;
   d. trained peer or expert assessment; and,
   e. teaching awards and honours.

DEFINITIONS

Any definitions listed in the following table apply to this document only with no implied or intended institution-wide use. **[▲Top]**

Researchers	Includes all members of the University who are involved, directly or indirectly, to any extent whatsoever, in research and other scholarly and creative activities.
Students	All learners including undergraduate and graduate students in full-time and part-time degree programs; students in open studies, fresh start program, transition year; international visiting and exchange and study abroad students; postgraduate medical/dental education students; and PDF trainees.
Instructors	Includes Academic Faculty, Faculty Service Officers, Librarians, Academic Teaching Staff and Excluded Academic Administrators. When their responsibilities include teaching, also includes Academic Colleagues, Postdoctoral Fellows and Graduate Students.
Course	Includes undergraduate and graduate courses, laboratory courses, non-degree courses, seminars, clinical supervision courses, and reading or directed study courses.

RELATED LINKS

Should a link fail, please contact uappol@ualberta.ca. **[▲Top]**

FGSR Adjunct Academic Appointment and Graduate Student Supervision Policy

PUBLISHED PROCEDURES OF THIS POLICY

Student Input to the Evaluation of Teaching and Learning Procedure

Appendix A - Student Perspectives of Teaching (SPOT) Questions

January, 2022 FINAL VERSION - as of January 10, 2022

Original Approval Date: **Effective Date: July 1, 2022**

Parent Policy: **Teaching, Learning and Evaluation Policy**

Student Input to the Evaluation of Teaching and Learning Procedure

Office of Administrative Responsibility:	Provost and Vice-President (Academic)
Approver:	Provost and Vice-President (Academic) and GFC Committee on the Learning Environment (CLE)
Scope:	Compliance with this University policy extends to all Academic Staff and Colleagues and Support Staff as outlined and defined in Recruitment Policy (Appendix A and Appendix B: Definitions and Categories) in addition to visiting speakers, professor emeriti, and undergraduate and graduate students.

Overview

Evaluation of teaching and learning at the University of Alberta will be multifaceted. Evidence to support a multifaceted approach to the evaluation of teaching and learning will include input from students on **courses, instructors,** and the **learning environment** through surveys and commentary.

Student input will be received through a standardized University survey approved by General Faculties Council that will be designed to obtain the students' perspectives on their experiences of teaching. Additional input may be received through customized surveys designed by the University, individual instructors, Departments,and/ or Faculties.

Purpose

The following establishes the procedures for the collection and appropriate dissemination of student input to the multifaceted evaluation of teaching and learning at the University.

PROCEDURE

1. Student contributions to the evaluation of teaching and learning at the University will be obtained through the following systems administered electronically by the University's Test Scoring & Questionnaire Services unit (TSQS):

    a. The University course survey system, known as the Student Perspectives of Teaching (SPOT), that will be comprised of:

        i. A set of standard questions as determined by the Committee on the Learning Environment and published in the Teaching and Learning Evaluation Policy (Appendix A) SPOT Questions; and,

        ii. For each standard question, a text field to allow students to provide focused, written comments to explain their selection.

b. Within the SPOT system, there will be a set of standard questions as determined by the Committee on the Learning Environment to obtain input from those students who have withdrawn from the course.

c. Within the SPOT system, Instructors, Departments and/or Faculties are strongly encouraged to supplement these standard questions with customized questions of their own choosing.

d. Utilizing the systems administered by TSQS, Instructors, Departments and/or Faculties may supplement the SPOT survey with additional surveys using questions designed or chosen from available TSQS option:

    i. [Midterm Course and Instruction Feedback Survey](#) (midterm survey) that allows for customized forms seeking midterm course and instructional feedback from students; and/or,

    ii. Additional customized surveys as appropriate.

2. The SPOT survey will use the following 5 response categories:

    a. *I strongly disagree (SD);*
    b. *I disagree (D);*
    c. *I neither agree nor disagree (N);*
    d. *I agree (A); and*
    e. *I strongly agree (SA).*

3. The SPOT survey will be used each time that a course is offered, but will be modified in the following circumstances:

    a. When there are multiple instructors;
    b. When there are fewer than 10 registered students; or,
    c. When there is an individual/independent nature such as independent study courses, special research projects, the culminating exercise for a program, music studios, etc.

4. Courses with multiple instructors will use a modified set of SPOT survey questions that will include:

    a. One set of questions related to course design and instructional practice for the entire course; and,
    b. One set of questions related to each instructor who has taught the equivalent of 20% or more of the course. If no instructor is responsible for at least 20% of the course, only entire course-related questions will be used on the survey.

5. Methods of obtaining student input for courses with fewer than 10 registered students may include, but are not limited to:

    a. The use of surveys with non-scored questions, such as:
        i. *Which aspects of the course do you like the best?*
        ii. *Which aspects of the course do you like the least?*
        iii. *How can I (the instructor) improve the teaching of this course?*
    b. Combinations of several courses with fewer than 10 registered students taught by the same instructor and/or courses in one classroom but with multiple section numbers taught by the same instructor;
    c. Interviews of students by the Chair or delegate; and,
    d. Interviews of the instructor by the Chair or a delegate.

6. Subject to section 8 below, the anonymity of student responses in the SPOT survey is of fundamental importance in maintaining student confidentiality and encouraging the free expression of views in accordance with the University's [Statement on Freedom of Expression](#).

7. In order to maintain anonymity, TSQS ensures that:

    a. Students cannot be identified through the survey methods unless they self-identify;
    b. ID/usernames are not included on the survey results; and,
    c. Students must log in for verification that they have taken, partially taken or not taken some or all of the survey, and answers are completely separate from this verification.

8. Under normal circumstances, the anonymity of students will be protected. The SPOT and optional midterm and other surveys offer avenues of feedback, including that which may be critical of instructors. A potential feature of criticism may be comments that could be perceived as offensive and/or unjustified. Such comments would not justify a departure from the normal rules pertaining to confidentiality and anonymity.

   However, the University has a parallel duty to protect the safety (physical or mental) of members of the University community. If a Department Chair, or Associate Dean, has concerns for the safety of instructors, staff or students, arising from statements that are part of SPOT or the optional survey responses, they will consult with the Dean of the Faculty. If the Dean believes that there is a valid concern for safety, they may recommend to the Provost and Vice-President (Academic) that the identity of the author of the statements be sought out and disclosed to the appropriate University officials. At any time during this process, the Chair or Dean may invoke:

   - Procedures within the Code of Student Behaviour (the Code) and/or,
   - The Protocol for Urgent Cases of Disruptive, Threatening or Violent Conduct.(the Protocol)

   On receiving such a request from a Dean, the Provost will follow the terms of the Code and/or the Protocol in determining whether there is: i.) reasonable cause to believe that the safety or security (including significant psychological harm) of persons may be threatened and ii.) that under existing University policies, the statements are grounds for disciplinary action and hence whether the confidentiality of SPOT or the optional survey responses should be breached and the provisions of the Code and/or the Protocol invoked.

   If the identity of the author is disclosed, the Provost will notify the author of the statements. The Provost will also notify any individuals mentioned in the statements. Timelines will be determined following the assessment of the nature of the statements and the potential threat, immediate or otherwise, to the individuals involved.

9. Communications to inform and encourage completion of the SPOT, withdrawn students, and optional surveys will include statements as illustrated below:

   1. *YOUR VOICE MATTERS - For this survey to be as comprehensive as possible, the University of Alberta would appreciate receiving your input. The results are used as one component of a multi-faceted approach to the evaluation of teaching and learning, therefore, they contribute to your instructor's self-reflection and evaluation. They also help initiate change in curriculum and instruction.*

   2. *CIVILITY AND RESPECT - These are shared norms in our work and learning environment and we encourage a healthy exchange of ideas and perspectives. Feedback should be provided in a manner that reflects our commitment to collegiality and inclusivity, while acknowledging that we all have unique and particular needs within this environment.*

   3. *BIAS AWARENESS - Please be aware of biases that you may hold and make an effort to resist stereotypes about particular identities and groups of people (related to perceived race, gender, age, religion, ability, sexual orientation, and/or ethnicity of the instructor).*

   4. *WHAT WE WANT TO HEAR - Please provide specific feedback on your experience in the comment section as appropriate for each question. The most helpful feedback is actionable, thoughtful, and concrete. Focus on your experiences with assignments, textbooks, and other instructional materials and not on personal characteristics such as the course instructor's appearance or speaking style.*

   5. *ANONYMITY - The survey will be accessible only by CCID and students' anonymity will be protected. Summary results will be made available to instructors only after grades are finalized. If you are concerned about the anonymity of any typwritten comments, those may be provided directly to the Chair, Director or Dean noting the course number, section and name of the instructor. Please be aware, however, that the University may be required to intervene based upon assessment of potentially threatening or harmful comments.*

6. *ABOUT THE RESULTS - The numerical SPOT Report for the standard questions listed below will be available to you as well as the Students' Union and the Graduate Students' Association for the sole purpose of providing information for future course selections.*

7. *QUESTIONS - Should be addressed to students@ualberta.ca.*

10. Access to the SPOT survey and the withdrawn students survey, along with any supplemental instructor and/or Department/Faculty questions will normally be available beginning two weeks prior to the last day of classes until the last day of classes.

11. The instructor will provide class time for completion of the SPOT survey during the 2-week period.

12. Methods to increase the response rates of the SPOT survey may include, but are not limited to, the following:

    a. Internal communications from Deans and Chairs to Instructors and Students in addition to the University communications;
    b. Instructors may Include the completion of the SPOT survey as a course activity or objective;
    c. Instructors may inform students of the formative nature of their perspectives on teaching by:
        i. Discussing the importance of student input; and by
        ii. Providing examples to students of how they have responded to previous student input.

13. SPOT survey results are compiled using Tukey's box-and-whisker plot analysis (John W. Tukey, Exploratory Data Analysis, Addison-Wesley Publishing Company, Inc. 1977) and statistical treatments are chosen to achieve two main objectives:

    a. To summarize skewed distributions of data; and,
    b. To identify outliers from the general population, if they exist.

14. The SPOT Survey Report consists of one page generated for each course from which students' surveys have been collected and contains:

    a. The text of each question;
    b. For each question, the number of student responses in each of the 5 categories, presented in a table and graphical format;
    c. The median of the responses to one decimal point for the question; and,
    d. Numerical values (reference data) from Tukey's box-and-whisker statistics to describe the distribution of scores in the Faculty/Department, including the:
        i. lower cut-off for outlier scores;
        ii. lower hinge (25th percentile);
        iii. median; and,
        iv. upper hinge (75th percentile).

15. Distribution of the SPOT Survey Results:

Who Receives[1] ⇒ What/When Received ⇓	Dean & Director or Chair (and delegates)	Instructor [2]	Students Registered in the Course Students' Union [3] Graduate Students' Association [2]	Faculty Evaluation Committee, Academic Teaching Staff Evaluation Committee & GFC Secretary
SPOT Survey Report and Withdrawn Students Survey Report	yes	yes	yes	yes
	Within 20 working days of course completion	Within 20 working days of course completion, once the Dean, Director or Chair has	At least 10 days after the date that the instructor has received	In accordance with Faculty FEC timelines and upon request by GFC Secretary

		signed the grade sheet		
SPOT Survey Comments	yes	yes	no	yes
Supplemental Department/Faculty Questions & Comments	yes	yes	no	no
Supplemental Instructor Questions & Comments	no, unless provided by instructor	yes	no	no, unless provided by instructor
Midterm Instructor Questions & Comments	no, unless provided by instructor	yes	no	no, unless provided by instructor

(1) Survey Results are included for all courses taught by the Instructor, whether the course was taught within the home Faculty or in another Faculty or Department.

(2) Instructors may check the response rate during the 2-week SPOT survey period, by logging into the SPOT system and their homepage will provide a status overview and the current response rates for their courses.

(3) Access to online SPOT survey data is provided to the SU and the GSA only for the purpose of assisting with the selection of courses. Neither the SU or the GSA will undertake analysis of SPOT data available to members of those organizations.

17. The SPOT survey results will include the following statement:

Student surveys are an important part of providing feedback about their perspectives of teaching, but cannot be taken in isolation as a complete evaluation of a course or instructor. Factors outside of an instructor's control may influence the results. These factors include, but are not limited to:

a. *completion rate of the survey;*
b. *class size, class level, the Faculty and program in which the course is developed, timing of the class, delivery mode, required versus optional course, accredited program requirements, practicum or clinical contexts, grade expectations, student GPA, age of both students and instructors; and,*
c. *perceived race, gender, age, religion, ability, sexual orientation, and/or ethnicity of the instructor.*

Small differences in results should not be considered meaningful. Results will be interpreted using the defined scale: 1=Strongly Disagree (SD); 2=Disagree (D); 3=Neither Agree nor Disagree (N); 4=Agree (A); and, 5=Strongly Agree (SA).

DEFINITIONS

Definitions should be listed in the sequence they occur in the document (i.e. not alphabetical).

Any definitions listed in the following table apply to this document only with no implied or intended institution-wide use. [▲Top]	
Instructors	Includes Academic Faculty, Faculty Service Officers, Academic Teaching Staff and Excluded Academic Administrators. When their responsibilities include teaching, also includes Academic Colleagues, Postdoctoral Fellows and Graduate Students.

Course	Includes undergraduate and graduate courses, laboratory courses, non-degree courses, seminars, clinical supervision courses, and reading or directed study courses.
Learning Environment	Physical and virtual support systems: a. suitability of physical and virtual environments and use of education technology; b. availability of teaching assistants, accessibility accommodations and other supports; and, c. scheduling of course meeting times and/or online module availability.

FORMS

Should a link fail, please contact uappol@ualberta.ca. [▲ Top]

No Forms for this Procedure.

If this section is used, list hyperlinks to all forms for this procedure in alphabetical order.

RELATED LINKS

Should a link fail, please contact uappol@ualberta.ca. [▲ Top]

List any related links in alphabetical order. Try to link to lead sites that will remain current (eg: the Government of Alberta's Queen's Printer main page).

Related Links for this Procedure are within the document.

January, 2022 FINAL VERSION - as of January 20, 2022

Original Approval Date: Effective Date: **July 1, 2022**

Teaching, Learning and Evaluation Policy
Appendix A: Student Perspectives of Teaching (SPOT) Survey

Office of Accountability:	Provost and Vice-President (Academic)
Office of Administrative Responsibility:	Provost and Vice-President (Academic)
Approver:	GFC Committee on the Learning Environment

NOTE: THIS IS A TRANSITORY VERSION UTILIZING THE APPROVED AND IN USE GFC POLICY MANUAL SECTION 111.3, USRI QUESTIONS WITH UPDATED RESPONSES AND COMMENT SECTIONS. THESE WILL BE REPLACED BY A VALIDATED SURVEY INSTRUMENT LATER IN THE 2022 CALENDAR YEAR.

YOUR VOICE MATTERS - For this survey to be as comprehensive as possible, the University of Alberta would appreciate receiving your input. The results are used as one component of a multi-faceted approach to the evaluation of teaching and learning, therefore, they contribute to your instructor's self-reflection and evaluation. They also help initiate change in curriculum and instruction.

CIVILITY AND RESPECT - These are shared norms in our work and learning environment and we encourage a healthy exchange of ideas and perspectives. Feedback should be provided in a manner that reflects our commitment to collegiality and inclusivity, while acknowledging that we all have unique and particular needs within this environment.

BIAS AWARENESS - Please be aware of biases that you may hold and make an effort to resist stereotypes about particular identities and groups of people (related to perceived race, gender, age, religion, ability, sexual orientation, and/or ethnicity of the instructor).
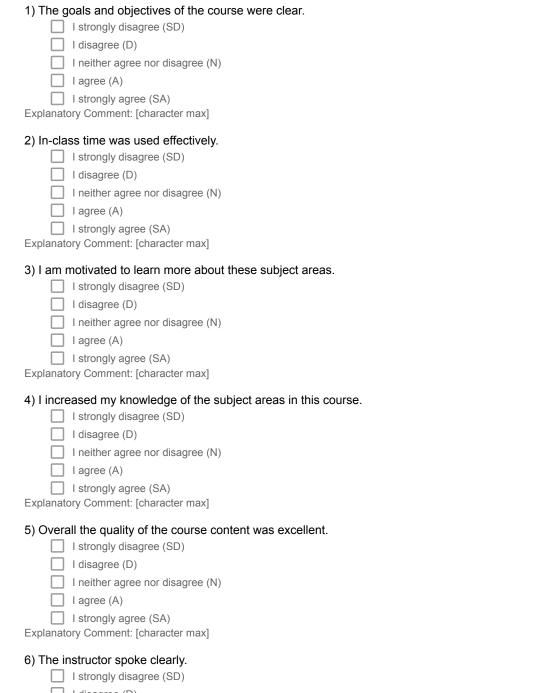
WHAT WE WANT TO HEAR - Please provide specific feedback on your experience in the comment section as appropriate for each question. The most helpful feedback is actionable, thoughtful, and concrete. Focus on your experiences with term work, course resources, and other instructional materials and not on personal characteristics such as the course instructor's appearance or speaking style.

ANONYMITY - The survey will be accessible only by CCID and students' anonymity will be protected. Summary results will be made available to instructors only after grades are finalized. If you are concerned about the anonymity of any typwritten comments, those may be provided directly to the Chair, Director or Dean noting the course number, section and name of the instructor. Please be aware, however, that the University may be required to intervene based upon assessment of potentially threatening or harmful comments.

ABOUT THE RESULTS - The numerical SPOT Report for the standard questions listed below will be available to you as well as the Students' Union and the Graduate Students' Association for the sole purpose of providing information for future course selections.

QUESTIONS - Should be addressed to students@ualberta.ca.

1) The goals and objectives of the course were clear.
- ☐ I strongly disagree (SD)
- ☐ I disagree (D)
- ☐ I neither agree nor disagree (N)
- ☐ I agree (A)
- ☐ I strongly agree (SA)

Explanatory Comment: [character max]

2) In-class time was used effectively.
- ☐ I strongly disagree (SD)
- ☐ I disagree (D)
- ☐ I neither agree nor disagree (N)
- ☐ I agree (A)
- ☐ I strongly agree (SA)

Explanatory Comment: [character max]

3) I am motivated to learn more about these subject areas.
- ☐ I strongly disagree (SD)
- ☐ I disagree (D)
- ☐ I neither agree nor disagree (N)
- ☐ I agree (A)
- ☐ I strongly agree (SA)

Explanatory Comment: [character max]

4) I increased my knowledge of the subject areas in this course.
- ☐ I strongly disagree (SD)
- ☐ I disagree (D)
- ☐ I neither agree nor disagree (N)
- ☐ I agree (A)
- ☐ I strongly agree (SA)

Explanatory Comment: [character max]

5) Overall the quality of the course content was excellent.
- ☐ I strongly disagree (SD)
- ☐ I disagree (D)
- ☐ I neither agree nor disagree (N)
- ☐ I agree (A)
- ☐ I strongly agree (SA)

Explanatory Comment: [character max]

6) The instructor spoke clearly.
- ☐ I strongly disagree (SD)
- ☐ I disagree (D)
- ☐ I neither agree nor disagree (N)
- ☐ I agree (A)
- ☐ I strongly agree (SA)

Explanatory Comment: [character max]

7) The instructor was well prepared.

☐ I strongly disagree (SD)

☐ I disagree (D)

☐ I neither agree nor disagree (N)

☐ I agree (A)

☐ I strongly agree (SA)

Explanatory Comment: [character max]

8) The instructor treated the students with respect.

☐ I strongly disagree (SD)

☐ I disagree (D)

☐ I neither agree nor disagree (N)

☐ I agree (A)

☐ I strongly agree (SA)

Explanatory Comment: [character max]

9) The instructor provided constructive feedback throughout this course.

☐ I strongly disagree (SD)

☐ I disagree (D)

☐ I neither agree nor disagree (N)

☐ I agree (A)

☐ I strongly agree (SA)

Explanatory Comment: [character max]

10) Overall, this instructor was excellent.

☐ I strongly disagree (SD)

☐ I disagree (D)

☐ I neither agree nor disagree (N)

☐ I agree (A)

☐ I strongly agree (SA)

Explanatory Comment: [character max]

DEFINITIONS

Any definitions listed in the following table apply to this document only with no implied or intended institution-wide use. **[▲Top]**	
Students	All learners including undergraduate and graduate students in full-time and part-time degree programs; students in open studies, fresh start program, transition year; international visiting and exchange and study abroad students; postgraduate medical/dental education students; and PDF trainees.
Instructors	Includes Academic Faculty, Faculty Service Officers, Librarians, Academic Teaching Staff and Excluded Academic Administrators. When their responsibilities include teaching, also includes Academic Colleagues, Postdoctoral Fellows and Graduate Students.

Course	Includes undergraduate and graduate courses, laboratory courses, non-degree courses, seminars, clinical supervision courses, and reading or directed study courses.

RELATED LINKS

Should a link fail, please contact uappol@ualberta.ca. **[▲Top]**

111. Teaching and Learning and Teaching Evaluation

Note from the University Secretariat: The Post-Secondary Learning Act gives General Faculties Council (GFC) responsibility, subject to the authority of the Board of Governors, over "academic affairs" (section 26(1)). GFC has thus established a Teaching and Learning and Teaching Evaluation policy as set out below

The complete wording of the section(s) of the Post-Secondary Learning Act, as referred to above, and any other related sections, should be checked in any instance where formal jurisdiction or delegation needs to be determined.

111.1 Teaching and Learning

Preamble

A university has at its heart two goals: the creation of knowledge, and the dissemination and preservation of knowledge. Research -- the creation of knowledge through exploration and discovery -- represents in its broadest sense the learning component of university life. The dissemination and preservation of that knowledge is the teaching component. Within a university, what is taught and how it is taught depends upon research, and the impact of research depends upon its communication. This interdependence and integration of research and teaching is what distinguishes a university from other educational institutions. Although the balance between these activities may vary, all members of the university, whether scholars or students, are learners who extend the range of their knowledge through exploration and discovery, and they are teachers who communicate that knowledge to others. (EXEC 01 MAY 2000) (GFC 29 MAY 2000)

The context of teaching and learning at the University of Alberta

The University of Alberta is a large research-intensive university. Research and teaching, and the important bond between them, are central to our mission, and they are carried out in a multitude of disciplines. This context has significant implications for any discussion of support for teaching and learning.(EXEC 01 MAY 2000) (GFC 29 MAY 2000)

As a research-intensive institution, the University of Alberta emphasizes the seamless relationship of scholarly activities. More than simply recognizing that what we teach flows from the work of scholars, we are convinced that post-secondary and graduate curriculum development and delivery are best accomplished by dedicated researcher-teachers and scholar-teachers. We are committed to providing the best and most appropriate environments for student-instructor and student-student interaction.(EXEC 01 MAY 2000) (GFC 29 MAY 2000)

Within this context, graduate students serve a multifaceted role during their studies: as students, teachers, researchers, mentors and grant or scholarship holders. The need to strike an appropriate balance among their responsibilities gives graduate students a unique perspective in the university community, especially with respect to teaching. (EXEC 14 JAN 2002) (GFC 28 JAN 2002)

The University of Alberta is committed to developing the teaching expertise of graduate students. The involvement of graduate students in the educational process is a vital and important resource for education and they make a significant contribution to the University?s mandate. The University recognizes the importance of the teaching of its graduate students, in terms of participation in curriculum design and course development, didactic teaching, laboratory instruction, class discussions, the provision of ongoing feedback, the preparation and assessment of assignments and examinations and the evaluation of courses and instruction. (EXEC 14 JAN 2002)
(GFC 28 JAN 2002)

The University of Alberta is a multiversity. A wide range of disciplines is professed, various research models followed, and numerous types of teaching are required within its walls. There is no one teaching model, no one answer to serve all disciplines. Development of new teaching models should emphasize appropriate use, should be derived from within the discipline concerned and the final arbiter should always be academic excellence. (EXEC 01 MAY 2000) (GFC 29 MAY 2000)

The principles of good teaching/learning

Our primary teaching roles are to educate students to the baccalaureate level, and to educate and mentor graduate students and post-doctoral scholars. The University of Alberta is also an intellectual resource for the general and professional community, and we make our faculty and courses available to that community.(EXEC 01 MAY 2000) (GFC 29 MAY 2000)

Most major University of Alberta documents of recent years discuss teaching from two points of view: strong affirmation of the University?s commitment to the importance and centrality of good teaching, and varying approaches to quality assurance in teaching. These two themes are consistent throughout the corpus of the staff agreement, strategic planning documents, reports of student and faculty surveys, and official documents of various faculties. Interestingly enough, between these two poles of, on the one hand, asserting the importance of excellent teaching in the University and, on the other, explicating a range of questions, opinions and policies about how to ensure teaching excellence, there is a large and evident gap which only becomes clearly visible when the documents are scanned as a group: nowhere, in any document, is there a clear and complete statement of what constitutes excellent teaching. It is taken for granted that we all know.(EXEC 01 MAY 2000) (GFC 29 MAY 2000)

The principles of good teaching that underlie all successful learning are applicable to all fields of study whether the arts or the sciences, whether pure or applied. They apply equally for all modes of instruction whether didactic or self directed approaches are used and whether a blackboard and chalk, hands-on demonstration or the most sophisticated technologies support instruction. They apply for all students whether undergraduate or graduate, whether on-campus or at a distance. Four such principles are intrinsic to effective teaching and learning.(EXEC 01 MAY 2000) (GFC 29 MAY 2000)

I. The teacher is a scholar who has, and can share with the student, a rich knowledge of the discipline and its place in the larger intellectual community. In his 1990 book Scholarship Reconsidered, Ernest Boyer characterizes four sorts of scholarship: teaching, integration, application and discovery. The scholarship of teaching means a professor is widely read, intellectually engaged, and has the ability to transmit, transform and extend knowledge. The scholarship of integration means that a professor can interpret and draw together insights within and between disciplines and fit those insights into larger intellectual patterns. The scholarship of

application enriches teaching and intellectual understanding through the very act of application. The scholarship of discovery, which includes creative work in the visual, literary and performing arts, may engage the professor and student together in increasing the stock of human knowledge and adding to the intellectual climate of the institution. The sort of intellectual engagement implied by these scholarships is essential to good university teaching. It leads the student well beyond the acquisition of a body of knowledge and into the domain of active learning, curiosity, and insight.(EXEC 01 MAY 2000) (GFC 29 MAY 2000)

Moreover, teachers actively reflect upon, measure and innovate in their teaching practice. Teaching is both an art and a science. As an art, it progresses through critical review, study of masters, public documentation and celebration and continuous innovation. Like other sciences, teaching advances through development of theory, careful measurement and research design, continuing reflection and peer review and replication of findings. (EXEC 01 MAY 2000) (GFC 29 MAY 2000)

II. The teacher engages the mind of the student. This is perhaps the most difficult of the principles of teaching/learning to characterize. What is it that engages the student?s mind with the topic, the instructor, and the process of learning? Is it the passion of the instructor for the field of study, and his/her evident enjoyment in sharing it with the student? Is it the stimulus of curiosity cleverly awakened? Is it the glimpse through the mind of the scholar/teacher of the importance of the topic of study to that wider intellectual community? Is it the sense of accomplishment -- of the self empowered --gained by responding successfully to and beyond a teacher?s expectations? However it happens, it is rooted in the relationship between the teacher and the student, and it is essential to effective learning. (EXEC 01 MAY 2000) (GFC 29 MAY 2000)

III. The teacher respects the student and the student respects the teacher. We expect students will respect their teachers; it is surely a given. As teachers, we try to earn that respect by the way we conduct ourselves. But it is just as important, and perhaps not as much of a given, that teachers should respect their students. We must respect the state of their knowledge when they come to us. We must respect their goals for their study with us, even as we try to widen them. We must respect the circumstances of their lives -- work, other courses, family responsibilities. We must respect the fact they learn in different ways, at different rates, and eventually, to different levels. We must respect their ideas, their aspirations, their beliefs. We must make it evident we respect and value them as individuals if we are to be successful in engaging their minds.(EXEC 01 MAY 2000) (GFC 29 MAY 2000)

IV. The teacher ensures a good climate for learning. A good climate for learning starts with the institutional provision for the basic physical comfort of good lighting, heating, and ventilation, and the assurance all students can hear and see what they need to hear and see. It extends to such other organizational matters as having learning materials available on time, as needed, and without frustration; schedules announced and kept; appropriate assessment, and efficient and effective feedback. But above and beyond these matters, a good climate for learning is a climate in which the student is at ease with the teacher and with others in the class, and can risk questions and ideas safe in the knowledge that they will be welcomed, respected, and answered. In such a climate, the student can feel like a contributor rather than a consumer. In such a climate, engagement of the mind and intellectual growth can occur. (EXEC 01 MAY 2000) (GFC 29 MAY 2000)

What must students bring to the University teaching and learning environment?

To fully participate in and benefit from the teaching and learning programs at the University of Alberta, entering students are expected to arrive with a set of attitudes and skills that prepares them for academic study. These

will be expanded and grow through participation in University community.(EXEC 01 MAY 2000) (GFC 29 MAY 2000)

These attributes/skills include:

- motivation to participate in an active learning community that challenges and stimulates intellectual, scholarly, personal and interpersonal growth
- a willingness to take a major responsibility for one's own learning
- curiosity about the discipline of specialization and the integration of specialized knowledge with other disciplines and in society
- tolerance and appreciation for diversity and multiple viewpoints
- a sense of responsibility and respect for self and other members of the university community
- oral and written competency in English or French, mathematical and reasoning skills, competent use of appropriate information and communication technologies
- respect and adherence to the ethical standards of scholarship including abhorrence of plagiarism, false representation and cheating (EXEC 01 MAY 2000) (GFC 29 MAY 2000)
- What outcomes should be expected from a program of undergraduate study at the University of Alberta?

Generic outcomes include:

- critical thinking skills
- communication skills including oral, written and group work skills
- the ability to learn independently
- the motivation and ability to use personal, creative and entrepreneurial talents
- an informed understanding of and a desire to participate in the intellectual, cultural, social and political life of local, national and global communities

Specialized outcomes include:

- the ability to synthesize the core content in a disciplinary or professional field of study
- knowledge of some of the "big questions" in the field
- the skills to effectively find, synthesize and apply information in the relevant literature
- knowledge of and the ability to use the investigative and observational methods of the field
- interest in and an excitement for some aspect of the specialized field of study
- understanding of the relevance and application of the specialized field of study to every day life. (EXEC 01 MAY 2000) (GFC 29 MAY 2000)

If we are successful in helping students develop these attributes and skills we will have both disseminated and preserved the products of our scholarship and prepared them to apply the knowledge of their field in employment or to extend that knowledge through professional programs, graduate studies or continuing education. (EXEC 01 MAY 2000) (GFC 29 MAY 2000)

111.2 Teaching Evaluation

1. Evaluation of teaching at the University of Alberta serves two purposes:

a. Summative - Evaluation provides a review and overview of an instructor's teaching that is an essential element in promotion and tenure decisions. In its summative form, teaching evaluation forms a basis for rewarding excellence, as well as the basis for withholding reward. (GFC 24 NOV 1997)

b. Formative - Evaluation provides helpful feedback to teachers by identifying teaching strengths and weaknesses and, in so doing, giving guidance for the improvement or refinement of teaching skills. (GFC 24 NOV 1997)

2. Evaluation of teaching shall be multifaceted. Multifaceted evaluation shall include the Universal Student Ratings of Instruction set out in Section 111.3 and other methods of assessing teaching designed within the individual Faculties to respond to the particular conditions of that Faculty. Such assessments shall include one or more of the following: input from administrators, peers, self, undergraduate and graduate students, and alumni. (GFC 09 JUN 1995) (GFC 24 NOV 1997)

3. Recognizing that the evaluation of teaching at the University shall be multifaceted, Faculty Evaluation Committee (FEC) decisions concerning tenure, promotion or unsatisfactory teaching performance must be based on more than one indicator of the adequacy of teaching. (GFC 24 NOV 1997)

4. Assessment of teaching involving input from administrators, peers, self, alumni, or undergraduate and graduate students in addition to the Universal Student Ratings of Instruction should occur annually prior to tenure. For continuing faculty (ie, Categories A1.1, A1.5 and A1.6), such assessment will occur at least triennially. (GFC 24 NOV 1997)

5. The University shall continue to support University Teaching Services in its education programming which is focused on the development and improvement of teaching and learning and its efforts to enhance research in university teaching. (GFC 28 APR 1980) (GFC 26 SEP 1988) (GFC 12 OCT 1993) (GFC 24 NOV 1997)

111.3 Universal Student Ratings of Instruction

In recognition of the University's commitment to teaching, the General Faculties Council endorses a system of Universal Student Ratings of Instruction. This system, however, is only one part of the multi-faceted approach described in Section 111.2. (GFC 09 JUN 1995) (GFC 24 NOV 1997) (EXEC 29 MAR 1999)

The Universal Student Ratings of Instruction are administered electronically via a system known as the eUSRI system. (GFC 22 SEP 2014)

The Universal Student Ratings of Instruction are designed to provide a minimal university-wide base of information on student ratings to the parties listed in this Section. With this purpose in mind, the General Faculties Council adopts the following policies: (GFC 24 NOV 1997)

A. All Faculties will ensure that evaluation of all instructors and courses will take place each time a course is offered. The term 'instructors' is meant to include tenured professors, tenure-track professors, sessional instructors, clinical instructors, field supervisors and graduate teaching assistants with responsibilities for courses. The term 'course' is meant to include undergraduate and graduate courses, laboratory courses, non-degree courses, seminars, clinical supervision courses, and reading or directed study courses. With the exceptions noted in Section 111.3.B, the assessment will include the Universal Student Ratings of Instruction as set out below.

B. The Universal Student Ratings of Instruction will be modified in the following circumstances:

i. courses with between four and nine registered students will use a department or Faculty developed questionnaire, which may be administered via the eUSRI system, with non-scored questions, such as:

a) comments on the quality of this course;
b) suggestions for improving this course;
c) comments on the quality of instruction in this course;
d) suggestions for improving the instruction in this course. (EXEC 29 MAR 1999) (GFC 22 SEP 2014)

ii. courses with multiple instructors will use a modified Universal Student Ratings of Instruction questionnaire that will include one set of course-related questions for the entire course and one set of instructor-related questions for each instructor who has taught the equivalent of twenty percent or more of the course. If no instructor is responsible for at least twenty percent of the course, only course-related questions should be used on the questionnaire. (EXEC 29 MAR 1999)

iii. in courses with fewer than four registered students or courses such as alternate delivery style courses, the Chair, Director or Dean will arrange for an alternate method of obtaining student feedback. Such methods could include student course or program exit interviews with the Chair, Director or Dean; or a department or Faculty developed questionnaire, which may be administered via the eUSRI system, with non-scored questions as described in point i. above. (EXEC 29 MAR 1999) (GFC 22 SEP 2014)

C. The Universal Student Ratings of Instruction will take the form of a questionnaire. The following statement of purpose will be included at the beginning of the questionnaire:

The University of Alberta would appreciate your careful completion of this questionnaire. The results help instructors and departments or faculties to initiate constructive change in curriculum and instruction. In addition, the results are one important factor in decisions affecting the career of your instructor. The numerical summaries for the ten questions listed below are available through the Students' Union and the Graduate Students' Association.

The eUSRI system will be accessible only by CCID and students' anonymity will be protected. Students who are concerned about the anonymity of their responses should submit their typewritten comments within the period for which eUSRI is available to the Chair, Director or Dean , making sure to note the course number, section and name of the instructor. (GFC 24 NOV 1997) (GFC 22 SEP 2014)

Questions about this questionnaire should be addressed to your Chair, Director or Dean.

D. The anonymity of student responses to the Universal Student Ratings of Instruction is of fundamental importance in maintaining student confidentiality and encouraging the free expression of views. Under normal circumstances, the anonymity of students will be protected. Universal Student Ratings of Instruction offer an avenue of feedback, including feedback critical of instructors. It is understood that it is a normal feature of criticism that it may be regarded as offensive and/or unjustified, and that such characteristics would not justify a departure from the normal rules pertaining to confidentiality and anonymity. (GFC 28 FEB 2000)

However, the University has a parallel duty to protect the safety (physical or mental) of members of the University community. If a Department Chair has concerns for the safety of faculty, staff or students, arising

from statements that are part of a Universal Student Rating of Instruction, the Chair will consult with the Dean of the Faculty. If the Dean believes that there is a valid concern for safety, he or she may recommend to the Provost and Vice-President (Academic) that the identity of the author of the statements be sought out and disclosed to the appropriate University officials. At any time during this process, the Chair or Dean may invoke the Protocol for Urgent Cases of Disruptive, Threatening or Violent Conduct (Section 91.3, GFC Policy Manual). (GFC 28 FEB 2000)

On receiving such a request from a Dean, the Provost and Vice-President (Academic) will follow the terms of the Protocol for Urgent Cases of Disruptive, Threatening or violent conduct in determining whether there is

i. reasonable cause to believe that the safety or security (including significant psychological harm) of persons may be threatened and

ii. that under existing University policies, the statements are grounds for disciplinary action and hence whether confidentiality of USRI should be breached and the provisions in Section 91.3.2 and/or 91.3.3 of the Protocol invoked. (GFC 28 FEB 2000)

If the identity of the author is disclosed, the Provost and Vice-President (Academic) will notify the author of the statements. The Provost and Vice-President (Academic) will also notify any individuals mentioned in the statements. (GFC 28 FEB 2000)

E. The Universal Student Ratings of Instruction questionnaire will use the rating scale

Strongly Disagree, Disagree, Neutral, Agree, Strongly Agree (EXEC 29 MAR 1999)

to gather responses to the following questions:

1. The goals and objectives of the course were clear.
2. In-class time was used effectively.
3. I am motivated to learn more about these subject areas.
4. I increased my knowledge of the subject areas in this course.
5. Overall the quality of the course content was excellent.
6. The instructor spoke clearly.
7. The instructor was well prepared.
8. The instructor treated the students with respect.
9. The instructor provided constructive feedback throughout this course.
10. Overall, this instructor was excellent. (EXEC 29 MAR 1999)

These constitute the ten required Universal Student Ratings of Instruction questions. Instructors, departments, and faculties are encouraged to supplement the set of universal questions.

The questionnaire will include an opportunity to provide comments. (GFC 22 SEP 2014)

F. Certain policies are necessary in order to ensure that the Universal Student Ratings of Instruction Questionnaire is administered in as consistent a fashion as possible. These are:

i. Access to the electronic Universal Student Ratings of Instruction will normally be available from the day after the withdrawal deadline until the last day of classes. Note that an instructor may choose to allow class time for

completion of the questionnaires. In these cases, the instructor will not be present in the room during the time allotted for completion of the questionnaire. Departments or Faculties will create policies to ensure that other individuals (e.g. other instructors, students within the class, teaching assistants) are available to be present in the room during the time allotted for completion of the questionnaire. Also in these cases, online access for completion of the questionnaires will still be available for the period described above. (GFC 22 SEP 2014)

ii. The Chair or delegate will be responsible for transmission of results and comments to the instructor under the conditions set out in Section G. (GFC 22 SEP 2014)

G. The numerical summaries for the ten Universal Student Ratings of Instruction questions will be reported to the instructor, the Chair, Director or Dean and students.

i. the number of students responding in each category;
ii. the median score to one decimal point for the question; and
iii. numerical values from Tukey's boxplot statistics will be provided to describe the distribution of scores in the Faculty/Department:

a. lower cut-off for outlier scores
b. lower hinge (25th percentile)
c. median
d. upper hinge (75th percentile)
e. it is expected that the upper cut-off will always be 5.0 and, therefore, unnecessary to report. (EXEC 29 MAR 1999)

Note: Statistics from Tukey's box-and-whisker plot analysis (John W. Tukey, Exploratory Data Analysis, Addison-Wesley Publishing Company, Inc. 1977) have been selected to describe the distribution of USRI data. These statistics are chosen to achieve two main objectives: (i) summarizing skewed data and (ii) identifying outliers from the general population if they exist.

The median (middle of a ranked set of numbers) is generally preferred rather than the mean in defining the centre of a skewed data set.

The 25th and 75th percentiles provide information about the spread of individual scores around the median. By definition, half of the scores in a distribution are below the median and 25 percent of the scores are below the 25th percentile. Since this occurs "by definition", these values should not be used to determine whether a particular score is "good" or "bad".

The lower whisker or cut-off, which is 1.5 box lengths below the 25th percentile (box length is the distance from the 25th to the 75th percentile), defines a reasonable limit beyond which any score can be considered an outlier. Outliers are scores that identify ratings of instruction falling outside the usual distribution of the scores for the population being tabulated.

Given the nature of the USRI data, the upper whisker or cut-off (1.5 box lengths above the 75th percentile) will usually be above 5.0, and so need not be reported.

H.

i. Access to USRI Data: Parties having access to numerical summaries of the ten Universal Student Ratings of Instruction questions and student comments will be the instructor the Chair, Director or Dean of the unit offering the course; members of Tenure Committees; and members of Faculty Evaluation Committees, including the secretary to the FEC. (EXEC 07 NOV 2011) (GFC 22 SEP 2014)

For questions selected by an instructor, only the instructor will receive the results. For questions initiated or mandated by a department or Faculty, the results will be reported to the instructor and the Chair, Director or Dean.

Normally, instructors will receive the results from the student ratings of instruction within twenty working days after the course is complete and the grade sheet has been signed by the Chair, Director or Dean. (EXEC 29 MAR 1999) (EXEC 07 NOV 2011)

ii. Access to Online USRI Data: Online access to the numerical summaries for the ten Universal Student Ratings of Instruction questions scores for all courses will be provided to undergraduate and graduate students. Instructors will have online access to USRI scores for their own courses. Chairs will have online access to USRI scores for instructors in their departments and Deans will have online access to USRI scores for instructors in their Faculties. Deans and Chairs may also request access for a designated assistant. (EXEC 07 NOV 2011)

The results will not be released online for at least ten days following the provision of the results to the instructor. (EXEC 07 NOV 2011)

Access to online USRI data is provided to students only for the purpose of assisting with the selection of courses. Neither the Students' Union nor the Graduate Students' Association will undertake analysis of USRI data available to members of those organizations. (EXEC 07 NOV 2011)

I. All results given out to students, Chairs, Directors and Deans will have the following cautionary preface:

Student questionnaires form an important part of evaluating teaching effectiveness but cannot be taken alone as a complete assessment of an instructor or course. Factors other than an instructor's teaching ability may influence ratings. These factors include class size, class level, Faculty, time of class, required versus optional course, grade expectations, student GPA, gender, race, ethnicity, age of both students and instructors.

Small differences in evaluation should not be considered meaningful. Scores will be interpreted using the rating scale defined in 111.3 (E): 1=Strongly Disagree; 2=Disagree; 3=Neutral; 4=Agree; 5=Strongly Agree. By definition, a score of 4.0 means that students agree that "Overall, the instructor was excellent." (GFC 22 SEP 2014)

J. Nothing in this section will prevent instructors from seeking other means of feedback from students during the term.

K. The central administration of the University will undertake the financing and operation of the eUSRI system in support of the University's commitment to teaching. (GFC 22 SEP 2014)

111.4 Graduate Student Teaching Awards

At its meeting of May 3, 2010, the GFC Executive Committee approved, under delegated authority from General Faculties Council (GFC), proposed revisions to the Awards for Teaching Excellence Policy (in UAPPOL); the proposed (new) Graduate Student Teaching Award Procedure (in UAPPOL); and the concurrent rescission of Section 111.4 (Graduate Student Teaching Awards) of the GFC Policy Manual, all to take effect upon final approval.

Graduate Student Teaching Award Procedure

Jump To...

- [111.1 Teaching and Learning](#)
- [111.2 Teaching Evaluation](#)
- [111.3 Universal Student Ratings of Instruction](#)
- [111.4 Graduate Student Teaching Awards](#)

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