

# GUIDELINES FOR ASSESSING TEACHING EFFECTIVENESS

*The following criteria should be considered by committees and individuals to assess the teaching effectiveness of faculty. Course evaluation scores (qualitative and quantitative) should not be the sole measure of teaching effectiveness. For suggestions on assessing teaching effectiveness, please see [Suggestions for Reviewing Teaching Effectiveness Criteria](#).*

## **Course Modality (face-to-face, hybrid, online)**

Online courses might yield lower faculty evaluations than face-to-face courses due to possible difficulties raised by the use of technology (e.g. connection problems).

## **Course Types (seminar/lecture/lab/studio)**

Seminars, labs, and studios have a tendency to be evaluated more highly than lecture-based courses because of their relatively small class size and the interactive nature of the course type.

## **Course Levels (lower division/upper division/MA, MS/ PhD)**

Students' motivation may be greater in upper-division (more specific) than lower-division (more general) classes, which may affect the students' evaluation of the instructor.

## **Class Function (prerequisite/major/elective)**

Students' motivation may be greater in elective/major than prerequisite classes, which may affect the students' evaluation of the instructor.

## **Class Size (e.g., 7/35/150/300/800)**

The larger the class size, the more difficult it is to engage students in the course. Engagement inevitably influences the instructor evaluation. Furthermore, small sample size is highly variable and more extreme.

## **Academic Discipline**

Disciplines engage students differently and therefore comparisons across disciplines should be avoided.

## **Team Taught vs. Single Instructor**

Team taught courses may create challenges for coherence and consistency, as well as confusion about evaluation. For example, if three instructors collaborate on the teaching of a course, it may be difficult to sort out which student comments and assessments correspond with which instructor. In addition, if an instructor is in charge of a large class that includes laboratory sections, teaching assistants may be supervising those labs. A distinction should be made in terms of evaluation of the instructor and evaluation of the teaching assistants.

## **Student Experience with Evaluation Process**

Lower-division students and new transfer students have less experience with courses than more experienced students and this may affect evaluations of the instructor.

## **Student Response Rate to Questions**

Low response is not necessarily an indicator of bad teaching; it simply does not allow reliable, generalizing results for the whole class.

## **Difficult Issues or Challenging Topics**

Faculty who teach courses focused on cultural diversity and related subjects often receive low evaluations, as do faculty of color who teach predominately Euro American classes.

*These guidelines are based on the recommendations in the University Senate Task Force on Faculty Evaluations Final Report, January 9, 2015. They are designed to standardize some aspects of faculty evaluations across the campus and to provide more detailed guidelines for interpreting course evaluation scores to reflect variations among courses being evaluated.*