

**Evaluation of Teaching for Promotion and Tenure at Rutgers University**  
**Evaluation of Teaching Working Group**  
**Guidelines for the Evaluation of Effective Teaching**  
**2022-23**

Effective teaching is fundamental to the University's mission. Faculty members for whom teaching is part of their responsibilities must demonstrate effective teaching to earn reappointment, promotion, or tenure.

As a research university, Rutgers strives to align its evaluation of teaching with evidence regarding what constitutes effective teaching and how teaching can be evaluated. These guidelines support the tenure and promotion process by informing candidates, departments, and other academic units of the kinds of evidence for effective teaching identified in pedagogical research.

**Note:** These guidelines are applicable to a broad range of faculty (instructors), teaching formats (e.g., traditional classroom, laboratory, clinical, public facing), and student participants. Terms such as "course" and "student" as used in these guidelines are not meant to be limiting.

### **1. Effective Teaching: Definition**

**Research<sup>1</sup> has identified seven primary areas of competence that characterize effective teaching<sup>2</sup>.** These facets of teaching excellence are listed below, with examples of what would constitute high levels of expertise in each area. In some disciplines and for some faculty, all of these may be applicable; in others, only a subset may apply. For example, in some disciplines, effective teaching is largely evident in mentoring in clinical settings or laboratories (#7, below) while in others, lecturing to large classes might be important. Even within disciplines, effective teachers may have different profiles of skills.

1. Instructional modality goals, content, and alignment:
  - a. Course or educational experience goals are well-articulated, high quality, up-to-date, and appropriate
  - b. Materials and content are aligned with goals and seem likely to lead to the achievement of goals
2. Preparation for teaching:
  - a. Deep knowledge of both the subject areas and evidence-based pedagogical practices (general and related to the subject area) is demonstrated

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<sup>1</sup> Selected references:

Bernstein, D. J., Addison, W., Altman, C., Hollister, D., Komarraju, M., Prieto, L., Rocheleau, C. A., & Shore, C. (2010). Toward a scientist-educator model of teaching psychology. In D. F. Halpern (Ed.), *Undergraduate education in psychology: A blueprint for the future of the discipline* (pp. 29-45). Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.

Dennin, M., Feig, A., Finkelstein, N., Greenhoot, A. F., Hildreth, M., Leibovich, A., Martin, J., Miller, E., Moldwin, M., O'Dowd, D., Posey, L., Schultz, Z., & Smith, T. L. (2017, August). *Aligning Practices to Policies: Changing the Culture to Recognize and Reward Teaching at Research Universities*. CBE Life Sciences, 16.

White, K., Beach, A., Finkelstein, N., Henderson, C., Simkins, S., Slakey, L., Stains, M., Weaver, G., & Whitehead, L. (Eds.). (2020). *Transforming Institutions: Accelerating Systemic Change in Higher Education*. Pressbooks. <http://openbooks.library.umass.edu/ascti2020/>

<sup>2</sup> Adapted from: Teaching Quality Framework Initiative, Resources. Teaching Quality Framework Rubric – Oct 2020. University of Colorado Boulder. <https://www.colorado.edu/teaching-quality-framework/content/tqf-one-pager>

- b. Educational experience is well-planned and integrated, with attention to assisting students or program participants with overcoming common challenges
- 3. Methods and teaching practices:
  - a. Teaching practices are evidence-based and provide regular opportunities for practice and feedback on important concepts
  - b. Methods are appropriate for the student population in each learning experience and course goals
  - c. Teaching methods promote active learning and participant engagement
- 4. Presentation and student interaction:
  - a. Classroom climate or learning environment is respectful, cooperative, and encourages motivation and engagement
  - b. Students or program participants perceive instructor as accessible and interactive
  - c. Student or program participant feedback informs teaching
- 5. Student outcomes:
  - a. Student learning outcomes are strong (courses are appropriately challenging, with efforts to support learning in all students)
  - b. Courses or educational experiences have a positive impact on student understanding and learning (for example, evidence that students are prepared well for future learning)
- 6. Reflection, development, teaching service/scholarship. Instructor:
  - a. Seeks out information and feedback (such as mid-course student surveys) related to teaching and adjusts teaching based on information obtained
  - b. Documents involvement in areas such as teaching-related research, presentations, workshops, professional courses or credentialing in effective teaching, and institutional teaching-related committees
  - c. Develops course or instruction and curricula; efforts support teaching in the department, school, or discipline
- 7. Mentoring:
  - a. Efforts that support students, other mentors, and peers are sustained and substantial
  - b. Encourages and supports excellence in students from different backgrounds and levels of preparation
  - c. Supports student excellence in outcomes, as measured by things such as conference presentations, publications, and placement in other programs and/or jobs
  - d. Supports students in their timely completion of the program
  - e. Provides personalized, high-quality advice regarding academic and career success
  - f. Seeks out information and feedback related to mentoring, and adjusts mentoring based on information obtained

There are a number of sources and types of evidence that may be used to document each facet of excellent teaching, mentoring, and clinical instruction. **Evidence may be from the candidate** (e.g., teaching statement, sample assignment), **a peer faculty member** (e.g., observation report), **and/or students** (e.g., feedback, work submitted). Evidence may be quantitative (e.g., SIRS) or qualitative (e.g., comments from a report about a peer observation), formative or summative. See examples in Table 1.

**Best practices support the use of multiple types of evidence in the evaluation of teaching, mentoring, and clinical instruction.** This is because evaluating teaching effectiveness is complex and dependence on any single indicator is not sufficient to evaluate the full range of instructional activity. Candidates and evaluators are encouraged to consider what sources of information are most appropriate for evaluating different aspects of effective teaching. For example, students may be

uniquely positioned to report whether the instructor created a comfortable learning environment or if the instructor began and ended class sessions on time, while peers may be better positioned to evaluate the instructor's depth of knowledge of the subject area and involvement in teaching-related research.

## 2. Department Evaluation of Teaching:

**Departments/schools are required to establish modes of evaluation of teaching.** These teaching evaluation plans should include protocols for evaluating and providing feedback on teaching effectiveness, including peer review of teaching, student feedback, and evidence presented by the candidate. Departments/schools are encouraged to develop and implement plans for the evaluation of teaching that allow for the use of multiple sources of evidence for evaluation of the areas of teaching effectiveness (listed in #1, above) that are relevant to the discipline.

In these teaching evaluation plans, each department or school should be clear about: (1) what aspects of teaching should be considered important for evaluation, and (2) what information candidates are expected to include in their files. That is, these plans should say *what* aspects of teaching should be evaluated and *how* those aspects of teaching should be evaluated. Additional information regarding department plans can be found at CTAAR's [Improving the Evaluation of Teaching](#) Canvas page.<sup>3</sup>

The process for **peer review of teaching** is best developed by departments as a component of their teaching evaluation plans. These reviews should provide opportunities for both formative and summative evaluations. Elements of peer review may include direct classroom (or learning experience) observations, evaluation of instructional materials, an assessment of whether students are satisfactorily meeting learning outcomes, discussions with students or other assessment of student feedback, and a review of student and peer mentoring activities. Some examples of course materials evaluated as part of peer review include teaching or course portfolios, syllabi, lecture outlines, problem sets, reading lists, audio/visual materials/technology used, handouts, project plans, presentations, student portfolios, or recorded lectures. For clarity, departments plans must include who will conduct the review and how reviewers will be trained, when within a promotion cycle these reviews are scheduled and how often, the required components of the review structure, and a process that monitors the review plan for any needed adjustments.

## 3. Teaching Portfolios:

**Candidates are required to include evidence of effective teaching and mentoring in applications for tenure and/or promotion.** Quantitative data from the Student Instructional Ratings Survey (SIRS) are considered an essential component of this evidence but are not sufficient to satisfy this requirement. One or more additional pieces of evidence of effective teaching must be provided. Examples include, but are not limited to: peer review, mentoring, scholarship of learning, statement of teaching philosophy, and/or a **teaching portfolio**. When including a teaching portfolio, candidates are encouraged to present evidence of excellence in a relevant subset of the areas of teaching effectiveness (listed in #1, above).

An abbreviated portfolio (up to 8 to 10 pages in length) is recommended for evaluation purposes. Specific requirements for the type of content to include are set by the school or department and listed in the school or department plan and may include a statement of teaching philosophy and a

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<sup>3</sup> Must log into Canvas to view.

summary of evidence such as peer evaluations, SIRS, student comments, evidence of student success, documentation of teaching awards, teaching-related pedagogy, student assignments, or other types of evidence of effective teaching. This abbreviated portfolio may be structured as a single document that summarizes and integrates the available evidence. Typically, it has three parts with an additional, optional, appendix for supporting materials:

1. **Teaching responsibilities (the “what”)**: teaching experiences, modalities, course content, methods, advising, mentoring, community-based educational programs
2. **Teaching philosophy (the “why”)**: values, strategies, objectives in teaching; connect these to examples provided in part 1, as well as evidence described in part 3 and to evidence documents in the portfolio appendix
3. **Annotate the evidence**: document success in implementing this philosophy, preferably using multiple methods (including from self, others, and student outcomes; consider discussing evidence such as peer evaluations, SIRS, student comments, evidence of student success, etc.)
4. **Optional portfolio appendix** includes supporting documents from the candidate (syllabi, course assignments, exams, etc.), from others (peer review of teaching letters, student feedback, teaching awards, faculty development training, etc.), and student work products (evidence of student success, projects, drafts of essays with marginal comments, etc.). The Portfolio Appendix is included with supplementary materials (Appendix H or Appendix I [RBHS only]) in the promotion packet and is not counted toward the 8 to 10 page portfolio length.

**Table 1.** Sources of evidence to document excellence in teaching.<sup>i</sup>

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**Evidence from Self:** reflect upon and evaluate current teaching practice and philosophy

- Teaching portfolio<sup>1</sup>
- Course portfolio<sup>2</sup>
- Reflections/statement of teaching philosophy, strategies, objectives, or goals
- Self-evaluation of teaching
- Diversity statement
- Examples of class or presentation materials (such as syllabi, lecture outlines, problem sets, reading lists, audio/visual materials/technology used, handouts, presentations, etc.)
- Recorded lectures
- Description of new courses, curricular revisions, teaching innovations
- Pre/post measures of learning
- Scholarship of teaching and learning (for example, peer reviewed publications, published textbooks/workbooks, lab manuals, other curricular materials)
- Invitations to present papers or presentations on teaching at professional meetings or workshops
- Attending teaching educational development opportunities
- Service on teaching committees

**Evidence from Peers:** collaborative, formative or summative assessments by peers

- Peer observation of classroom/lecture/session/clinical setting/program
- Peer review of course or program materials (including syllabi, exams, assignments, handouts and supporting documentation, etc.)
- Peer review of the teaching or course portfolio
- Peer letters of support
- Performance review as advisor, mentor, or instructor
- Honors or awards for teaching, advising, or mentoring
- Aid to peers on matters of teaching
- Department measures of learning outcomes

**Evidence from Students or Program Participants and Stakeholders:** student perspective and recognition of instructional context

- End-of-term surveys (for example, Student Instructional Rating Survey (SIRS)) (numeric data and student comments)
- Mid-course surveys (numeric data and student comments)
- Student/stakeholder follow-up surveys, interviews, focus groups
- Informal student/alumni/stakeholder feedback (unsolicited emails, letters, letters of appreciation, or testimonials)
- Senior surveys/program exit surveys

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<sup>1</sup> A teaching portfolio represents documented evidence of an individual's totality of teaching, which includes but is not limited to a statement of teaching responsibilities, philosophy, peer evaluations, SIRS, student comments, evidence of student success, documentation of teaching awards, teaching-related pedagogy, and student assignments. Teaching portfolios may be used for record keeping purposes (a "career" portfolio) or evaluative purposes (an "abbreviated" portfolio).

<sup>2</sup> A course portfolio documents the scope and quality of a single course, with particular emphasis on student learning and outcomes.

**Table 1** (continued).

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- Student work (by permission) (drafts of papers, case notes, graded student essays, with instructor comments)
- Final student papers of publishable quality
- Evidence of learning outcomes: content specific exam scores, assignment grades, and exam distributions
- Pre-and post-tests showing student improvement
- Review of mentee achievement

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<sup>i</sup> Selected teaching portfolio references:

Devanas, M. 2017. "The Teaching Portfolio: A Guide to Documenting Teaching Effectiveness." Center for Teaching Advancement and Assessment Research, Rutgers University

Kaplan, M. 2008. The Teaching Portfolio. CRLT Occasional Papers, the Center for Research on Learning and Teaching, The University of Michigan. No. 11

Kenny, N., Aparicio-Ting, F., Beattie, T., Berenson, C., Grant, K., Jeffs, C., Lindstrom, G., Nowell, L., & Usman, F. 2021. Teaching Philosophies and Teaching Dossiers Guide: Including Leadership, Mentorship, Supervision, and EDI. Calgary, AB. Taylor Institute for Teaching and Learning Guide Series.

Seldin, P. 1991. The Teaching Portfolio. Essays on Teaching Excellence Toward the Best in the Academy. The Professional & Organizational Development Network in Higher Education ([www.podnetwork.org](http://www.podnetwork.org)). 3(2). Accessed from: <https://podnetwork.org/publications-backup/1991-1992-essays/>

Vanderbilt University Center for Teaching, Teaching Portfolios. Accessed from: <https://cft.vanderbilt.edu/guides-sub-pages/teaching-portfolios/>