Teaching Assessment Options

Compiled by
Enoch Hale, Ph.D., Director, Center for Teaching & Learning Excellence (CTLE); e Hale2@vcu.edu; 827-2002; 1000 Floyd Ave, Ste. 4100, Room 4102b.

The purpose of this resource is to inform school leaders, department chairs, and faculty of the various approaches and methods for assessing and evaluating instruction. In light of the recent policy change (linked below), the CTLE can act as a resource to help departments contextualize, implement and assess approaches to augmenting end of the course student evaluations.

How to Use This Resource

This document provides direct links to best and evidence-based practices for teaching assessment and evaluation in higher ed. Resources are organized according to focus: Course Level Assessment; Teaching Observation & Feedback; Curriculum Analysis & Assessment; Pedagogy; Summative Evaluation & Teaching Portfolios; Other Online Tools. Each section has a brief description. Teaching is a multifaceted endeavor. The What, Why & How of instruction and learning are interlinked and often difficult to tease apart. However, if we value high quality teaching and learning, then it deserves concentrated, systematic and scholarly attention. Two of the most important lessons we have learned from studies on evaluating teaching in higher education are that “teaching must be judged using a learning perspective” and that “excellent teachers develop their abilities through constant self-evaluation, reflection, and the willingness to change” (Bain, pp. 167, 172). It is in this spirit that we have constructed this document. Please contact Enoch Hale, Ph.D. (ehale2@vcu.edu) at the CTLE to explore how this work can be contextualized, implemented and assessed within your department.

Policy Change

Annual Assessment of Faculty Performance

Course Level Assessment

This section canvasses different approaches for soliciting feedback from students during the course (mid-term or otherwise) regarding course level perceptions of learning, support, content organization and/or instructional practice.

- Student course evaluations and feedback
- Small Group Instructional Diagnosis (SGID)
- Mid-semester student feedback
  - Approach from the University of Oregon
  - Guide from the University of Texas at Austin
  - Resources from Michigan State University AAN
Teaching Observation & Feedback

Observing a colleague teach can be a significant part of one’s formative assessment efforts for both the observed and the observer. This section highlights various methods for organizing peer observation protocol and procedures that faculty can use as part of a teaching evaluation narrative and/or portfolio.

- Peer Observation & Review
  - **Teaching Triangles**: VCU: First implemented within the Teaching In Medical Education Program, Teaching Triangles is a strong model for observing instructor identified dimensions of classroom teaching. Its strength is in part due to the low time commitments required of faculty and administrators.
    - Paper
  - **Peer Review of Teaching Guide**: Vanderbilt University
  - **Peer Review of Teaching**: Cornell University
  - **Classroom Observation**: Cornell University
  - **COPUS**: Classroom Observation Protocol for Undergraduate STEM

- Peer Review Guide for the Active Learning Classroom
  - **Observation Guide**

- Peer Review Strategies that Keep the Focus on Better Teaching
  - **Faculty Focus article**

Curriculum Analysis & Assessment

- Assignments for Authentic Learning Program at CLTE
- **TILT** (Transparency in Learning and Teaching Project)
  - Description
  - Examples and Resources

Pedagogy

Formative Assessment

- Exam Wrappers ([description](#))
- **Minute Papers**
  - The Minute Paper assesses the extent to which students are gaining knowledge. The instructor ends class by asking students to write a brief response to the following questions: “What was the most important thing you learned during this class?” and “What important question remains unanswered?”
- **Critical Incident Questionnaires**
  - Example form
- **Muddiest Point**
- **Field Notes Assignment** (Teaching Engagement Program at the University of Oregon)
Summative Evaluation & Teaching Portfolios

- Teaching Portfolio: Cornell University
- Teaching Evaluation Handbook: Cornell University
- Teaching Portfolio Guide: Vanderbilt University
- Teaching Statement: Vanderbilt University
- Best Practices for Administrative Evaluation of Online Faculty

Other Online Tools

- Student Assessment of Learning Gains
- Teaching Perspectives Inventory
  - Useful to help foster reflection on one’s teaching orientation and possible philosophy.
- Teaching Goals Inventory
  - Useful to help prompt reflection and assignment planning.

Further Reading


Documenting Teaching: Cornell University

Documenting Teaching Effectiveness: UC Berkeley


Cited Centers for Teaching and Universities

- CTE at Cornell University
- UNLV
- TEP at University of Oregon
- CFT at Vanderbilt University
- UC Berkeley