

The UOITFA Teaching Evaluation Report Submitted at the Joint Committee Meeting April 7, 2014

Introduction

Under the Memorandum of Agreement (Use of Course Evaluations), the UOIT Faculty Association (UOITFA) and UOIT would establish a Working Group on the use of course evaluations (See Appendix A for full text of the Memorandum). The task of this working group was to prepare a report that would provide recommendations on how the existing course evaluation instrument is used in Performance Review (Article 16), Third Year Review (Article 18), Tenure (Article 19), Promotion (Article 20) and any new applications for which course evaluations are used as a measure of performance. While the Working Group would report within 12 months of being struck, clearly this has not occurred. For UOITFA, the representatives of the Working Group are Dr. Ruth Milman, Dr. Jeremy Bradbury, Dr. Bill Goodman, Dr. Ann LeSage and Dr. Wesley Critchlow; UOIT representatives were Dr. Brian Campbell ...;

The report of the Working Group shall be presented to the Parties. The Parties shall consider the recommendations in the report. The recommendations may be discussed at the Joint Committee.

The Working Group met April 3, 2012, May 9, 2012, January 23, 2013 and February 27, 2013. At the last meeting (February 27, 2013), the UOITFA representatives were informed that the Administration would “get back to us” with recommendations. Since this has not occurred, the UOIT Faculty Association is presenting this report which presents the findings of the Faculty Association survey and recommendations with the goal of improving both the Teaching Evaluation instrument and the procedures for its use.

Background

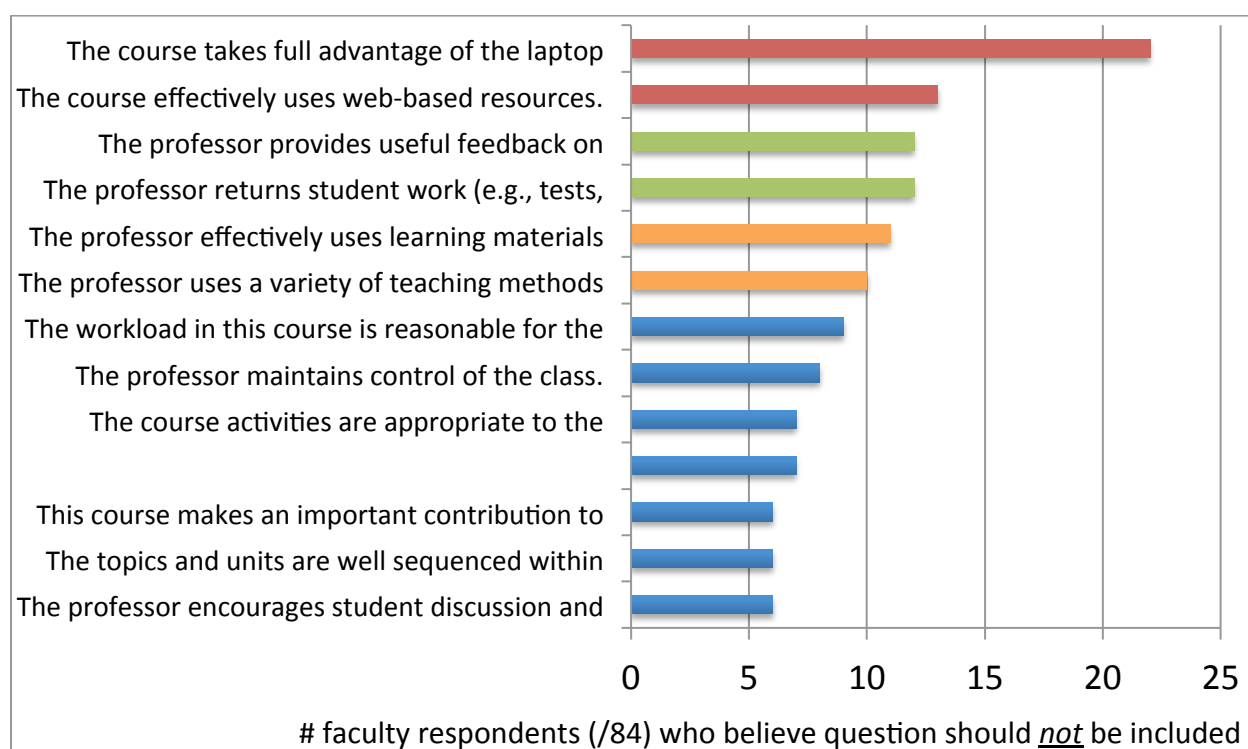
To understand the views of Faculty Members, the FA Working Group surveyed the membership to understand how the Teaching Evaluations are used in the various review processes (evaluation of performance during annual review and other occasions; 3rd Year Review; 3rd Year Continuing Appointment; Tenure; and Promotion). Membership return included 64/135 tenured/tenure track faculty and 20/35 teaching faculty with an overall return rate of 49%. The data was analyzed using the Statistical Program for Social Science (SPSS).

Findings

In the Faculty Association survey, Faculty Members provided their views and experiences on the current teaching evaluation instrument and the process. Some Faculty Member responses speak to the overall process of students completing the form: *“The system is fundamentally flawed, students who never attend a single lecture can still fill out course evaluations. This needs to be rectified to ensure that only students who attend at least the course evaluation lecture get to fill them out.”* *“I think someone should look at how they [teaching evaluation instrument] became part of the review process, when first introduced I recall that it was clear they would only be used for feedback, not evaluating performance. They are too flawed to continue to be used in that way and the whole thing should be revamp[ed].”*

Faculty Members use the results of these to make changes in courses but some find the results not as helpful and *“often do my own informal in-class evaluations in order to get info on the stuff that I can actually use, e.g. students' opinions on the texts/readings/guest lecturers/etc., and *this* has been significantly more useful to me.”* Figure 1 (below) indicates responses of Faculty Members who have serious concerns about individual items on the Teaching Evaluation instrument that are problematic.

Figure 1: Instrument Statements Questions that Present Concerns



The statement regarding the use of technology in the classroom is problematic. Faculty Members ask *“what course takes “full advantage” of an entire computer?!”* The statement assumes that *“laptops are useful for all courses. In some courses we need to use other equipment...and this is not considered by the narrow wording of the question.”* A further concern relates to student in online programs who are not required to purchase the same computer as in-class students, and therefore, cannot answer this question. Further, *“there are not always web based resources available”*.

Differentiation between the Teaching Assistant and Faculty Member responsibilities exist. As one Faculty Member observes *“marking ... assignments is often a TA's job rather than the professor's (especially in the larger classes). Also, depending upon the size of the class and the nature of the assignment, there is only so much feedback that can be provided.”* Where a Teaching Assistant evaluates students' work assigning an evaluation credited to the Faculty Member is inappropriate. Many Faculty Members have no control over who is assigned as the Teaching Assistant. Where there is another person working with the class, a separate evaluation for each teaching member is required.

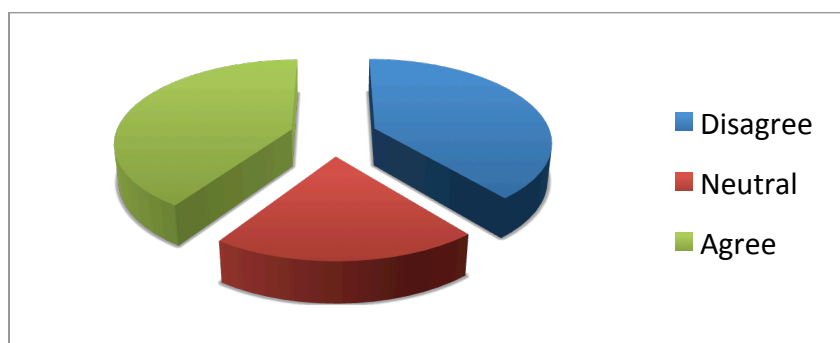
The item on effective use of learning materials *“assumes print materials and should be reworded or removed for courses that have no textbook. In my experience students are likely to answer strongly disagree instead of not applicable if a textbook is not used in a course.”*

Currently teaching evaluations are used for all forms and *“variety of teaching venues (i.e. face-to-face to totally online) used.”* They must be generic to fit the various formats used for teaching including laboratory courses.

In some situations, students are not competent to evaluate what occurs in the course. They may know what they like (or not) in the course but where a course is mandatory and the material difficult to learn, they

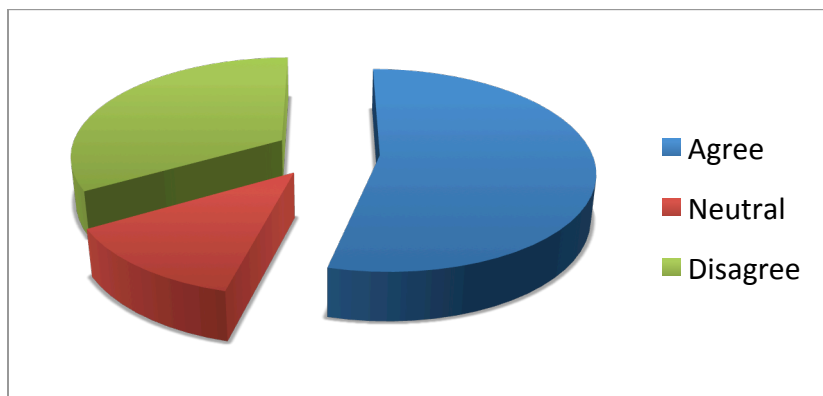
The following charts present how Faculty Members believe how course evaluations are used.

During my performance review, my Dean has instructed me clearly on how my course evaluations will be used to assess my teaching abilities.



41% of our survey respondents agreed with this statement. Deans have a responsibility to inform Faculty Members how they will use the evaluations when they assessing one's teaching. If Deans are serious about knowing how the Faculty Members are teaching and that they want to provide appropriate feedback on the Faculty Members' teaching, they need to observe Faculty Members teaching, speak with students and teaching assistants (if appropriate), observe the Faculty Member-student interactions, review the teaching materials that are used by the Faculty Members, review the assessment and evaluation strategies that are used by the Faculty Members in assessing student work, Deans need to understand the context in which the Faculty Member teaches, the background of the students and preparation that the students have to undertake the course work, the size of the class, and the list continues.

*My performance review for my teaching seemed to be **based primarily** on the scores of my teaching evaluations.*



54% of the survey respondents agreed with this statement. Article 16.02 c) of the Collective Agreement outlines the what constitutes teaching but does not limit Teaching to these: delivering and coordinating courses; conducting seminars; guiding tutorials, and laboratories; supervising fieldwork and individual study projects; developing and revising courses and programs; preparing and revising teaching materials; assessing and evaluating assignments, tests and examinations and other course work; training and supervising the work of teaching assistants; supervising, advising, assessing and evaluating students' individual work, such as theses, projects and papers; supporting and consulting with students outside of class or laboratory time; participating in the development of teaching methods, programs or course content; writing textbooks, it being understood that such textbooks are primarily considered a component of a Faculty Member's scholarship; counseling students on their academic progress; supervising the academic work of graduate students; and mentoring students. Yet it appears that only 46% of Faculty Members believe that these listed above are included as part of their performance review.

*My course evaluations were the **only** instrument used to assess my teaching.*



49% of survey respondents agree with this statement. See above commentary.

Please explain how you feel your teaching evaluations were used in your performance review.



The next question was directed to those who served on either the 3rd Year Review Committee and/or Tenure and Promotion Committee.

As a member of TPR Committee, what instructions (if any) were given to you regarding the use of course evaluations in the assessment of a candidate's teaching?

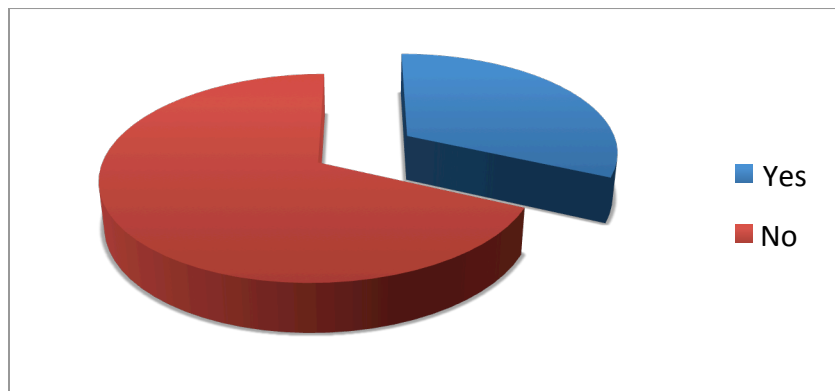


What is at stake is the future of the Faculty Member as a member of UOIT. Their work is considered not important if those sit in judgment are given no direction on the use of course evaluations in assessing the Faculty Member's file. Since the majority of Faculty Members responding to this question stated "none" or no instruction, it is clear that there is a need to

educate the members of the Faculty Review Committee, the Tenure and Promotion Committee, the Tenure and Promotion Appeal Committee, the Continuing Appointment Committee (and now the Master Lecturer Review Committee) on the use of these documents. Further, some reports of the Deans and Faculty Review Committees in assessing a Faculty Member's Tenure file (as an example) often 'cherry pick' the negative comments from student evaluation reports without presenting a balanced report.

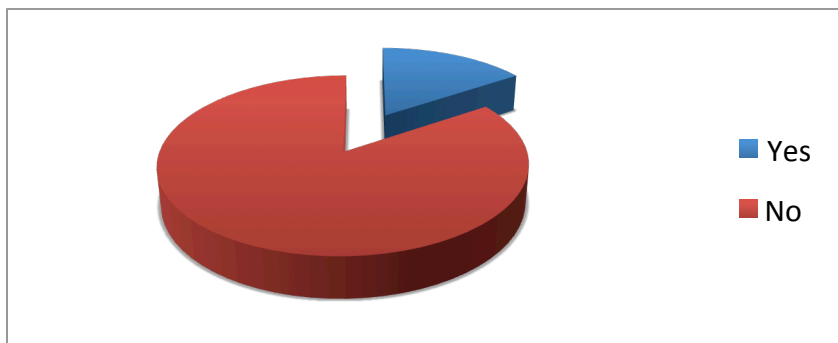
Faculty view on teaching evaluation scores vs. grades

I have been told by colleagues to give higher grades or risk poor evaluations.



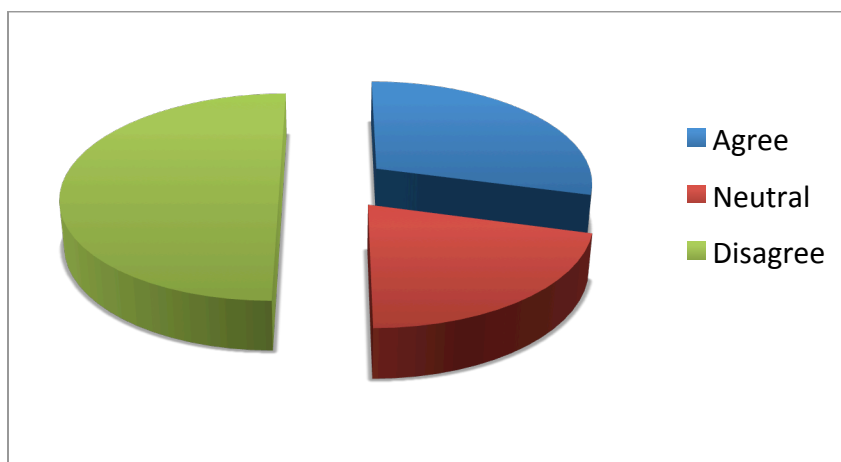
31% of our survey respondents agreed with this statement.

Students have told me if I do not give them a higher mark they will give me a poor evaluation.



15% of survey respondents agreed with this statement.

Overall I am satisfied with the current course evaluation questions.



50% of survey respondents disagreed with this statement.

Our Recommendations are categorized into four areas

1. Using the Teaching Evaluation Instrument

1. Develop a standard usage policy to describe how the Teaching Evaluation reviews apply to performance reviews and ensure that that follows the Collective Agreement. The Dean shall recognize that in Performance Review, Teaching Evaluation is only one of fifteen criteria outlined in Article 17.02 (Annual Review);
2. Provide clear instructions to the Third Year Review Committee, the Faculty Review Committee, all Tenure and Promotion Review committees and any other individual who require access to the Teaching Evaluation reviews with examples consistent with the Collective Agreement;
3. Clearly explain how UOIT's administration (other than Deans) use the Teaching Evaluation reviews;
4. Applicable to all stakeholders;
5. Revise current Policy 8.05 from the UOIT Administrative Code to align with Academic and Professional Workload (Article 16) specifically 16.01 b) Rights and Responsibilities of Faculty Members, and 16.03 c) which defines Teaching; and
6. Develop standard instructions for Teaching Referees on the use of Teaching Evaluation reviews as required by the Collective Agreement Article 16.03 which mandates that a balance in all aspects of Teaching occur.

2. Improving the TE Instrument

1. Create a committee of Faculty Members and Administration to review and update the Teaching Evaluation instrument;
2. Develop a standard set of core questions and optional questions for different disciplines, teaching methods, and class sizes;
3. Review how evaluation is conducted (e.g., timing, online vs. paper);

4. Separate the Professor Evaluation / Course Evaluation from the written comments such that the multiple choice responses and written comments are provided separately with written comments provided only to the professor;
5. Ensure that Teaching Evaluation instrument is approved by Academic Council prior to its use;
6. Use of specific questions;
7. Development and review of the TE shall be available to all continuing stakeholders; their feedback and comments needs to be brought to AC.

3. Educating Faculty

1. Improved communication with Faculty Members regarding:
 - how to effectively conduct the Teaching Evaluation process; and
 - how to effectively use evaluations in combination with other evidence of teaching

4. Student Training on Use of Teaching Evaluations

1. Remove current incentives and rewards for students completing the Teaching Evaluation instrument;
2. Impress upon students the value and importance of completing the Teaching Evaluation process; and
3. Explain to students the purpose of the Teaching Evaluation process.

Additional notes:

In the first meeting we looked at the tool of the teaching evaluation instrument;

New evals for online grad courses intending on revamping these;

2 tracks to look at t eval; FA requested info on how being used;

Documents are

Used heuristically; no instructions on how they are being used; want flexibility; could not info we wanted but there is no written policy on how they are used; “look at CA”

Complaints from FMs on how inappropriate and inconsistent use; how used in committees; inaccuracy of what goes into reports (# of students) perceptions of how they were used led to the survey.

environment where FM are at the bottom of list
FM attrition
Sessional

Appendix A

Memorandum of Agreement – Use of Course Evaluations

The Parties shall establish a working group on the use of course evaluations. The working group shall prepare a report containing recommendations on how the existing course evaluation instrument is used in Performance Review (Article 16), Third Year Review (Article 18), Tenure (Article 19), Promotion (Article 20) and any new applications for which course evaluations are used as a measure of performance. The working group shall be struck at ratification of the Collective Agreement. The working group shall report to the Parties within 12 months of being struck. Each Party will appoint up to four (4) members to the working group.

The report of the working group shall be presented to the Parties. The Parties shall consider the recommendations in the report. The recommendations may be discussed at the Joint Committee.

Signed this day of April 19, 2011

For the University:

For the Faculty Association: