

APPENDIX B: DRAFT TEACHING EVALUATION POLICY

Introduction

1. Definitions:
 - a. *Teaching Evaluation*: The formal assessment of teaching, normally relying on a variety of evidence, including, but not limited to, student course experience surveys (aka course evaluations), teaching dossiers, peer observation and feedback, and testimonial letters;
 - b. *Student Course Experience Survey*: The feedback provided by students in a course, through an online or paper-based survey, which focuses on each student's experience in the course. Formally referred to as course evaluations (or teaching evaluations) in the academic literature;
2. Student course experience surveys (aka course evaluations) serve as one component of a multifaceted approach to teaching evaluation. Student course experience surveys are valuable as they provide a direct, confidential, systematic, and formalized means by which each student in a course can provide feedback on his or her experience in the course. However, the academic literature also highlights the potential for bias in student course experience surveys (course evaluations) on the basis of gender, race, class size, and other factors. Therefore, in evaluating teaching effectiveness, it is important to consider a variety of evidence, including student course experience surveys, teaching dossiers, peer observation and feedback, testimonial letters, and other evidence of teaching effectiveness;
3. With reference to the *Collective Agreement between Brock University and the Brock University Faculty Association, 2017 - 2020* (hereafter referred to as the Brock/BUFA Collective Agreement):
 - a. student course evaluations (aka teaching evaluations) shall be conducted for all Brock courses with five or more students (Article 12.04.v);
 - b. “student course evaluations are not public documents and are the property of the instructor” (Article 12.07.d)
 - c. “the results of student course evaluations shall be made available by [faculty members] to their Deans during the Annual Review process and other processes as provided for in this Agreement as a source of information about teaching quality and effectiveness” (Article 12.07.d)
 - d. Departments, Centres, and Program Committees “shall establish procedures for the format, content, and collection of student evaluations” of courses in the academic unit (Articles 16.03.g, 16.04, and 16A.03.h)

Student Course Experience Survey System

4. With reference to the Brock/BUFA Collective Agreement, to aid academic units in establishing “procedures for the format, content, and collection of student course experiences,” the University shall maintain a centralized online course experience system (hereafter referred to as the System) which departments, centres, and programs can choose to opt into. The System shall:
 - a. be called the “Student Course Experience Survey System”;
 - b. be managed by the Centre for Pedagogical Innovation;
 - c. require an academic unit to opt into the System in its entirety;
 - d. also allow individual academic units a mechanism to opt specific courses out of the System (e.g., due to low enrolment or their specialized nature);
 - e. support variable Likert-type rating scales (i.e., 1-Strongly Disagree, 2-Disagree, 3-Undecided, 4-Agree, 5-Strongly Agree) in addition to open-ended response questions;
 - f. include the following levels of questions:
 - i. university level: the following university-wide global questions:
 1. I found the course engaging. (Likert rating)
 2. The course deepened my understanding of the subject matter. (Likert rating)
 3. The instructor fostered a respectful learning environment. (Likert rating)
 4. I had a positive experience in this course. (Likert rating)
 5. What aspects of the course did you find most engaging? (open-ended)
 6. What would enhance your learning experience in this course? (open-ended)
 - ii. program level: one set of questions per academic unit, per academic code, to which a course belongs (as provided by the academic unit);
 - iii. instructor level: questions which are specific to a course (as optionally provided by the instructor);
 - g. support multiple instructors per course (each receiving confidential feedback);
 - h. where applicable, ask respondents to identify and provide feedback related to their teaching assistant and/or lab demonstrator;

- i. follow consistent practices related to the delivery and communication of survey tasks to instructors and students via email, the learning management system, and other applicable methods of communication;
- j. automatically generate and communicate summary reports to instructors;
- k. collate and visually present summary results in a meaningful way, while maintaining student confidentiality;
- l. feature robust standards to ensure that the privacy, confidentiality, and security of collected data is maintained;
- m. include a process for the removal of comments deemed discriminatory, harmful, or contrary to Brock University's *Respectful Work and Learning Environment Policy*, in consultation with, at minimum, the course instructor;
- n. include a process for the de-anonymization of data in extreme situations which include threats of violence or self-harm;
- o. include provisions for soliciting user feedback in order to improve the System on an ongoing basis.

Paper-based Course Evaluations

- 5. For offline paper-based course evaluations, it is recommended that academic units include the following provisions in their Rules:
 - a. the instructor should not be present when course evaluations are completed by students;
 - b. a student in a course should administer, seal in an envelope, and deliver, to the academic unit office to which the course belongs, the completed course evaluations, along with any unused evaluation forms;
 - c. the course evaluations for faculty members should remain sealed while in the custody of the program administration office;
 - d. the teaching evaluations for CUPE personnel should be processed according to the Rules as established by the academic unit;
 - e. teaching evaluations should not be reviewed by faculty members or CUPE personnel until the final grades for the course have been submitted;
 - f. there should be provisions for teaching assistants and lab demonstrators to receive course evaluation feedback from students.

Miscellaneous

- 6. In order to improve the response rate, it is recommended that instructors provide sufficient time during the last or second last class in a face-to-face

course for students to complete the online student course experience survey or paper-based course evaluation;

7. Academic units and instructors are encouraged to consult with the Centre for Pedagogical Innovation in choosing the questions to include in student course experience surveys;
8. Students are advised of their right to consult with the Ombudsperson or Chair/Director of the program a course belongs to should they wish to provide in-person feedback about a course;
9. Students are encouraged to nominate exemplary instructors for teaching awards as listed at Brock University's Centre for Pedagogical Innovation website.

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