Joint Senate-AFT Student Evaluations Taskforce
Recommendations & Implementation Strategy
April 30, 2012

Charge

- Evaluate the online instrument and suggest improvements
- Evaluate the technological system and suggest improvements (EIS, IERP, IR)
- Enter into discussions with the AFT regarding how teacher performance is assessed for T&R processes (per the MOA) and suggest improvements

Recommendations

1. Replace the current online instrument with the proposed online instrument (see Appendix A)
   a. Berk, writing in *Thirteen Strategies to Measure College Teaching* (2006) cites the first edition of Davis’s (1993) *Tools for Teaching* to define domains for teaching effectiveness. Davis synthesized the results of over 30 studies on good teaching and identified 4 clusters of instructional skills, strategies, and attitudes (dispositions) that seem to capture the essence of effective teaching. In revising the current instrument, we mapped the domains to the questions, looking for gaps, overlaps, and questions that did not fall into the domain areas.
   b. In the 2nd edition (2009), Davis cautions the use of such instruments (student evaluations alone have not proven to be effective in improving teaching) but recommends Berk as the latest and still the best book on the topic. After thorough review we found that the current instrument does not apply best practices in assessment as outlined by either Berk or Davis.
   c. Separating the supplemental questions from the core instrument increases the uniformity of data and thus the effectiveness of the survey.

2. Incrementally move to the proposed common online instrument for personnel considerations, i.e., T&R, Promotion, A-328 review, and adjunct review per the MoA.
   a. Several factors have instigated this review of current practices:
      i. The University T&R committee has had difficulties in interpreting the data from an excessive number of instruments, many of which are poorly constructed.
      ii. Our research of competitors and aspirants suggests common instruments are the norm.
      iii. Our research in assessment confirms the notion of a single instrument for comparison purposes.
      iv. Using multiple instruments has created problems in efficient use of human and financial resources at the departmental and college levels. Having a single instrument, administered online, will decrease the work associated with student evaluations.

3. Transfer oversight of the online instrument (to include periodic review, vetting, and validating) from Dr. Manley to the Faculty Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning.
a. Currently one faculty member volunteers to oversee the entire online system without formalized checks and balances. This places an undue burden of responsibility on a single individual.

b. The Faculty Center, which reports to the Associate Provost for Academic Affairs and is governed by its Advisory Board, is situated to fill the need for institutional oversight of and support for the maintenance, administration, collection, and reporting processes associated with the online system.

4. Return primary responsibility for the administration of teaching evaluations to the departments.
   a. Department chairs, relevant departmental committee members, and secretaries are directly connected to the faculty and should be the first line of support for all faculty requiring or seeking student evaluations of teaching effectiveness.
   b. The University should draw from the success of the paper and pencil model by having department members administer the survey, including having a brief discussion with students about the use of the survey and the importance of their full participation.

5. Maintain statistically valid response rates through increased accessibility and awareness.
   a. Because the survey delivery system, which will not change, is accessible from most cell phones and all laptops and tablets, surveys ideally should be administered during class, but can be taken anywhere.
   b. Extend an opportunity to professors to engage their classes in service learning through creating and sustaining campaigns to increase awareness, promote the value of such surveys in the teaching and learning cycle, and secure statistically valid response rates.

6. Propose to AFT that they change the MoA to reflect current practices in teaching and assessment.
   a. Update the MoA definition/characteristics of effective teaching to those proposed (see Appendix B).
   b. Require a common instrument for student evaluation of teaching effectiveness for all personnel decisions.

7. Aspire to university-wide data collection of teaching effectiveness evaluations. All departments would be required to oversee the collection of such data for every course; however, they would have full discretion as to how it would be used beyond the aggregate. Further, the collected data would not impinge upon a professor’s right to choose which data are presented for tenure and recontracting.
   a. We would establish a culture of assessment that signals to students and teachers that teaching is important and valued and, as such, needs to be evaluated.
   b. University-wide data collection will allow for data-driven decision making, which will in turn assist in accreditation and program improvement.
   c. When evaluations become mandatory for all sections, questions about who is required to have them (and how many) will be ameliorated.
   d. When evaluations become mandatory for all sections, student participation rates should increase.
## Implementation Strategy

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>When</th>
<th>What</th>
<th>Who</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Summer 2012</strong></td>
<td>Meeting to discuss the Taskforce report</td>
<td>• Interim Provost James Newell</td>
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<td>• Taskforce co-chairs Deb Martin and Jill Perry</td>
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<td>• AFT President Karen Siefring</td>
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<td>• Senate President Eric Milou</td>
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<td>• Others named at the discretion of the Provost</td>
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<td>Transfer oversight of the online survey of teaching effectiveness to the Faculty Center</td>
<td>• Director of the Faculty Center Deb Martin</td>
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<td>• Marilyn Manley</td>
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<td>• Elaine Mann</td>
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<td>Create a process of systematic review and validation, including focus group and Advisory Board input</td>
<td>• Director of the Faculty Center Deb Martin</td>
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<td>• Faculty Center Advisory Board</td>
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<td>• Marilyn Manley</td>
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<td>• Provost’s Fellow Jill Perry</td>
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<td>Upload pilot instrument to Banner for Fall implementation</td>
<td>• Director of the Faculty Center Deb Martin</td>
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<td>• Anne Pinder</td>
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<td>Small pilot and student focus groups</td>
<td>• Director of the Faculty Center Deb Martin</td>
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<td>• Olga Vilceanu</td>
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<td>• Faculty volunteers (at least 5)</td>
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<td>Revise pilot instrument based on data from pilot and focus groups</td>
<td>• Director of the Faculty Center Deb Martin</td>
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<td>• Olga Vilceanu</td>
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<td>• Advisory Board</td>
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<td>• AFT Rep</td>
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<td><strong>Fall 2012</strong></td>
<td>Upload revisions to Banner for Spring implementation</td>
<td>• Director of the Faculty Center Deb Martin</td>
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<td>• Anne Pinder</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Begin meetings with AFT to discuss proposed changes to the MoA</td>
<td>• Director of the Faculty Center Deb Martin</td>
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<td>• Provost’s Fellow Jill Perry</td>
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<td>Identify professors, courses, and organizations for which launching an awareness campaign this in Fall 2013 would be a reasonable service learning project (or internship) – to begin planning during Spring 2013</td>
<td>• Director of the Faculty Center Deb Martin</td>
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<td>• Assistant Director Office of Service Learning, Volunteerism, and Community Engagement Andrew Perrone</td>
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<td>Deans will identify key college and departmental personnel for implementation</td>
<td>• Deans</td>
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<td>• Director of the Faculty Center Deb Martin</td>
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<td>Time</td>
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<td>Spring 2013</td>
<td>Information sessions (effective teaching; student role in evaluation; departmental role; timelines)</td>
<td>Director of the Faculty Center Deb Martin, Chairs, All faculty, AFT Rep</td>
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<td>IT workshops (managing technology; options for additional surveys)</td>
<td>Lead Technical Trainer Sue O’Rourke, Key departmental personnel, AFT Rep</td>
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<td>Large-scale pilot of instrument</td>
<td>Director of the Faculty Center Deb Martin, Faculty volunteers (at least 20)</td>
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<td>Continue meetings with AFT to discuss proposed changes to the MoA – monthly until agreements are reached</td>
<td>Director of the Faculty Center Deb Martin, AFT Rep, Provost’s Fellow Jill Perry, Senate Rep</td>
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<td>Plan awareness campaign for Fall roll-out</td>
<td>Project faculty and students, Office of Service Learning, Volunteerism, and Community Engagement, Director of the Faculty Center Deb Martin</td>
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<td>Summer 2013</td>
<td>Make final revisions to instrument</td>
<td>Director of the Faculty Center Deb Martin, Olga Vilceanu, Advisory Board, AFT Rep</td>
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<td>Final upload for Fall 2013 implementation</td>
<td>Director of the Faculty Center Deb Martin, Anne Pinder</td>
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<td>Make negotiated changes to the MoA</td>
<td>AFT, Vice President for Employee and Labor Relations, Bob Zazzali, Interim Provost James Newell</td>
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<td>Fall 2013</td>
<td>Begin incremental implementation of instrument</td>
<td>Director of the Faculty Center Deb Martin, Incoming tenure track faculty and all adjuncts at all Rowan Glassboro and Camden campuses (including the Medical School and CGCE), Faculty applying for promotion to Full Professor, Faculty undergoing A-328 reviews, Adjunct faculty</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Roll out awareness campaign</td>
<td>Project faculty and students, Office of Service Learning, Volunteerism, and Community Engagement, Andrew Perrone, Director of the Faculty Center Deb Martin</td>
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Note: Tenure track instructors in years 2-4 and Assistant Professors applying for promotion would be advised to continue with the instrument already in use.
| Spring 2014 | Continue incremental implementation of instrument | • Director of the Faculty Center Deb Martin  
• First-year tenure track faculty and all adjuncts at all Rowan Glassboro and Camden campuses (including the Medical School and CGCE).  
• Faculty applying for promotion to Full Professor  
• Faculty undergoing A-328 reviews  
• Adjunct faculty |
| Summer 2014 | Continue awareness campaign | • Project faculty and students  
• Assistant Director Office of Service Learning, Volunteerism, and Community Engagement Andrew Perrone  
• Director of the Faculty Center Deb Martin |
| Summer 2014 | Review data and processes | • Director of the Faculty Center Deb Martin  
• Faculty Center Advisory Board  
• Olga Vilceanu  
• Provost’s Fellow Jill Perry  
• AFT Rep |

Respectfully submitted*,

Jill Perry (co-chair), Deb Martin (co-chair), Bill Freind, Mira Lalovic-Hand, Marilyn Manley, Anne Pinder, Olga Vilceanu, Joy Xin

*Dr. Jeff Maxson attended only one meeting and has chosen to not write a minority report.
Appendix A

Online Student Evaluation of Teaching Effectiveness
(4.30.12)

Anchors
Always = A; Very often = VO; Sometimes = S; Rarely = R; Never = N

Domain 1: Organizing and explaining material in ways that are appropriate to students’ abilities
1.1 The instructor taught the subject matter in a way that helped students learn.
1.2 The instructor gave clear explanations.
1.3 The instructor asked questions that promoted thinking.
1.4 The instructor listened to and built on student responses.
1.5 The instructor provided timely and useful feedback.
1.6 The instructor accommodated students’ differences.

Domain 2: Creating an environment for learning
2.1 The instructor treated students with fairness and respect.
2.2 The instructor maintained positive, professional relationships with students.
2.3 The instructor used strategies that actively engaged students.
2.4 The instructor created an environment for cooperation and collaboration.
2.5 The instructor was prepared for each class.

Domain 3: Helping students become autonomous and self-regulated learners
3.1 The instructor communicated course and lesson goals.
3.2 The instructor helped students to meet high expectations.
3.3 The instructor stimulated students’ intellectual interests.
3.4 The instructor helped students to make personally relevant connections to course material.
3.5 The instructor was open to student feedback.

Open-ended Prompt
Tell a future student about this instructor and course.
Appendix B

Berk, writing in *Thirteen Strategies to Measure College Teaching* (2006) cites the first edition of Davis’s (1993) *Tools for Teaching*. In the first edition Davis synthesized the results of studies on good teaching and identified four clusters of instructional skills, strategies, and attitudes (dispositions) that seem to capture the essence of effective teaching. In the 2nd edition (2009), Davis cautions the use of such instruments (student evaluations alone have not proven to be effective in improving teaching) but recommends Berk as the latest and still the best book on the topic. These categories guide the development of the instrument.

1. Organizing and explaining material in ways that are appropriate to students’ abilities
   a. knows subject matter
   b. can explain difficult concepts
   c. gauges students’ background knowledge and experience
   d. identifies reasonable expectations for student progress
   e. selects appropriate teaching methods and material
   f. devises examples and analogies that clarify key points
   g. relates one topic to another
   h. assesses whether students are learning what is being taught

2. Creating an environment for learning
   a. establishes and maintains rapport with students
   b. responds to students’ needs
   c. communicates high expectations
   d. gives appropriate feedback
   e. respects diverse talents and learning styles
   f. emphasizes cooperation and collaboration
   g. uses strategies that actively engage learners

3. Helping students become autonomous, self-regulated learners
   a. communicates goals and expectations
   b. directs students into making their own connections to course content
   c. views learning process as a joint venture
   d. stimulates students’ intellectual interests

4. Reflecting on and evaluating one’s own teaching (addressed in MoA under Self-Appraisal of Performance 2.1111)
   a. critically examines why one is doing what one does
   b. identifies the effects of what one does on one’s students
   c. imagines ways to improve one’s teaching

   (Berk’s chart, cited from pages 51-53, is an adaptation of Davis pp. xi-xx.)

*Red text* indicates characteristics best evaluated solely by departmental personnel.
*Blue text* indicates characteristics best evaluated by students.