**QTI Practical, Mixed-Methods Guide to Use FCQs as a Measure of Teaching Effectiveness**

This guide offers practical suggestions for how departments can

* Operate equitably and transparently;
* Learn about the instructional work of faculty;
* Use limited available evidence to make decisions;
* Recognize that substantive decisions cannot be based solely on this process;
* Identify needs for future change to departmental evaluation of instruction.

1. **Three Buckets**

Make three buckets: exceptional, commendable, needs improvement. Everyone starts in the commendable bucket; the rationale for moving anyone out of commendable must be compelling and well documented.

1. **Mapping the Terrain**

Review a sample (8-10) of FCQs from several different instructors to “take the temperature” of responses. *Do not look solely at the item average*; rather, look at individual responses to see if they suggest patterns. Scan the open-ended responses (if present) to learn what *really* mattered to students. Taking brief notes might be helpful.

1. **Grouping Responses into a Terrain Map**

Identify groups of questions to which students responded and cluster items together *qualitatively*, not *quantitatively*. These groupings can illuminate the classroom climate, culture, and students’ learning experiences. Do you see patterns such as “classroom management” (starts/ends on time; returns assignments in a timely fashion); “inclusivity” (treats all students with respect; uses diverse examples)? How do these groupings compare to the instructor’s other responses or overall departmental responses? What do the individual item responses suggest about student experiences? Was the instructor’s total response rate high, low, virtually non-existent?

1. **Locating**

Note the departmental averages for the groupings you created in #3. With your terrain map, now review a specific instructor/course/section. Context can help. For example, if the instructor is teaching for the first time at CU, has just launched a new course, or replaced the originally assigned instructor at the last moment, students may react strongly to factors that are largely beyond the faculty member’s control. *Evaluate the instructor, not the situation*.

Open-ended responses can shed light on the scaled items that you grouped in #3. Some evidence will probably fall at one end or the other of a range and “bracket” the student feedback. Note extremes and be attentive to patterns. Some extremes may indicate a student venting about—or glorying in—a classroom experience. More than a couple extreme responses may warrant attention.

The rationale for moving anyone from “commendable” must be compelling and well documented. A very low/high quantitative score deserves attention, yet it should not be the exclusive evidence for evaluation. Compare your FCQ findings against other evaluative evidence you have. How does that evidence compare?

1. **Future Orienting**

Based on your overall evaluation, suggest opportunities and set goals for the instructor’s professional growth. Identify how this process worked for students, faculty, you, and the university? What could improve the process? What needs to happen and by when to make sure that next year’s process will serve everyone better?