



# Boulder Faculty Assembly

UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO **BOULDER**

BFA Executive Committee Notice of Motion  
*Recommendation to Review the Open Comment Section on Boulder FCQ's*  
BFA-R-030424

**Whereas** the Faculty Course Questionnaire (FCQ) is a required part of annual faculty evaluation and is intended as an assessment tool to provide actionable feedback to instructors with the goal of improving the learning environment; and

**Whereas** the FCQ includes an open comment section asking for qualitative student feedback which has been found in most major studies to show clear evidence of bias and to be the area most often recommended for removal; and

**Whereas** perceived anonymity opens the door to inappropriate communication to instructors and subsequent uses of these comments; and

**Whereas** there is literature on total anonymity as a communication medium that allows for disregard of the responsibility of the impact of words on the addressee; and

**Whereas** underrepresented faculty groups are disproportionately affected by anonymous comments; and

**Whereas** the use of the open comment section as a means to report instructor misconduct is not recommended by the CU Boulder Office of Institutional Equity and Compliance (OIEC) which instead requests that any report of misconduct be made through appropriate OIEC official channels; and

**Whereas** students reporting misconduct may be in vital need of campus support from the [Office of Victim Assistance \(OVA\)](#) Respondent Support Services in [Counseling and Psychiatric Services \(CAPS\)](#) and/or other campus services that will likely not be addressed by anonymous use of the open comment section; and

**Whereas** the open comment section provides a useful option for gathering anonymous student feedback which faculty utilize for improving courses and teaching methods; and



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**Whereas** according to University of Colorado Administrative Policy Statement ([APS](#)) 1009 [Multiple Means of Teaching Evaluation](#) “each campus shall have a process for determining common questions for the” [FCQ] and “that the campus process for determining common questions shall include faculty and student representatives...from the appropriate shared governance body;”

**Therefore, be it resolved** that the Boulder Faculty Assembly recommends per [CU Administrative Policy Statement \(APS\) 1009](#); part IV. Section A that the CU Boulder Office of Academic Affairs convene a working group composed of faculty and student representatives from or nominated by the appropriate shared governance bodies to review the issues listed below and deliver a report of recommendations to the Provost prior to October 30, 2024:

1. Would the removal of the open comment section be an overall benefit or cost to both faculty and students?
2. What additions or changes to the FCQs should be made to provide students with the proper resources and information on reporting inappropriate behavior and alerting them to campus support services?
3. Should the university create an inventory of recommended practices for faculty to collect student feedback on courses and teaching methods that is reviewed annually and notes potential bias issues, and if so, how should this inventory be created and publicized?

*Submitted by BFA Executive Committee: March 4, 2024*

*Approved for submission to Assembly by the BFA Executive Committee: April 1, 2024*

*Submitted to the BFA General Assembly: April 4, 2024*

*Assembly representatives vote to withdraw the resolution unanimously on May 2, 2024*



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## Index

### Part I:

#### **Studies and articles on the bias of anonymous comments and impacts on underrepresented faculty**

<https://scatter.wordpress.com/2019/06/22/protecting-students-or-enabling-trolls-why-faculty-evaluations-should-not-be-totally-anonymous/>

<https://georgetownvoice.com/2015/04/16/passing-judgement-the-effects-of-anonymous-evaluations/>

<https://www.chronicle.com/article/why-we-must-stop-relying-on-student-ratings-of-teaching/>

<https://www.insidehighered.com/news/2022/10/31/ratings-and-bias-against-women-over-time>

<https://theconversation.com/lose-some-weight-stupid-old-hag-universities-should-no-longer-ask-students-for-anonymous-feedback-on-their-teachers-173911>

<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3778528/>

<https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s10734-014-9716-2>

<https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/87567550903253643>

<https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/02602938.2021.1888075>

<https://journals.sfu.ca/jalt/index.php/jalt/article/view/249>

<https://www.theguardian.com/higher-education-network/blog/2014/may/09/student-feedback-waste-of-time>

[Gender Stereotypes: The case of MisProfesores.com in Mexico](#)

### Part II:

#### **Resources from CU Boulder's Center for Teaching & Learning on student learning assessment**

[CU Boulder Center for Teaching & Learning Classroom Assessment Techniques \(CATs\)](#)

[Feedback to Inform Your Teaching](#)

[Assessing Student Learning](#)