Department of Physics
Quality Teaching Initiative
Policies & Procedures regarding Teaching Evaluation - Recommendations April 2022

Background:
In Fall of 2020, Interim Dean James White charged all academic units in the College of Arts and Sciences to take more scholarly and effective approaches to teaching evaluation. In short by the end of spring 2022, each unit is to have:
- Taken responsibility for updating and externalizing their standards, policies and procedures for teaching evaluation;
- Identified a scholarly and disciplinary contextualized framework for conducting effective evaluation;
- Employed multiple measures of teaching effectiveness that include evidence-based tools and practices.

By June 1 2022, we are to provide an update to these ends, with the expectation of having improved measures, standards, and policies for teaching evaluation in place for fall 2022.

Our department established a working task-force in fall of 2021. Through working meetings (weekly or every other week) the committee has thoroughly reviewed our current policies / procedures, drawn from existing scholarly resources, and adapted work produced from relevant units. The committee is composed of: Daniel Bolton, Oliver DeWolfe, Noah Finkelstein (chair), Ethan Neil, and Keith Ulmer.

Outcomes/ Recommendations:
Defining dimensions, criteria, measures and levels of proficiency of teaching evaluation: At the heart of our work was contextualizing a scholarly framework of teaching quality to the physics department. The physics QTI task-force, drew from the Teaching Quality Framework (TQF) initiative dimensions, which had adapted work from decades of scholarship in higher education and teaching. We developed a 4-dimensional framework of teaching quality (preparation, enactment, outcomes, mentoring) that spans the professional activity of teaching. For each of the dimensions of this Physics QTI framework, we specify specific criteria for evaluating effectiveness (column 1). These criteria are divided up into three categories, basic, professional and advanced. Sources of evidence (column 3 and data sources below) are used to determine whether these criteria are met. Depending upon which criteria are met a proficiency level can be assigned (column 2). A spot for narrative summary is included in column 4. The front-page summary sheet aggregates overall outcomes.

Mapping proficiency levels to ratings of effectiveness (e.g. merit, excellence, etc.). Once proficiency levels have been established for each of the four dimensions, an overall rating may be provided that is specified for the appropriate position (tenure line or not) and the level of promotion being addressed (continuing review, tenure/ promotion, promotion to full, etc.). These mappings are provided in an overall rating guideline.

Tools and Practices: Multiple Measures of Teaching.
The QTI-Physics team reviewed existing approaches for collecting data to evaluate effectiveness and building upon our current practices, other existing resources and the requirements of the college and recommend the following approaches and tools for conducting data collection and analysis for evaluating effective teaching practices. We disaggregate approaches by each of the three major data sources or voices: peer review, self-report and student voice.

Peer review: peer review is a hallmark of all scholarly activities including teaching. While this includes classroom observations, it is not limited to such activities. This overall document recommends the processes for peer review (to be conducted by the teaching evaluation committee). Each of the two processes are anticipated to take the same amount of time for both the instructors and evaluators. Two processes are described:
1) Teaching Circles - a recommended activity of building community, improving teaching practice, and evaluating effectiveness. It builds on current practice in the department. Conducted once per year
2) Standard 1:1 Peer Review / Observation - building on long-standing standard practice in the department. Conducted each term.
Each of these approaches to peer review would draw from and use the same Peer Review Form. It is also suggested that Peer Review of a course portfolio (see self-report) could substitute for a standard peer review / observation.

Self report: Ultimately it is up to the educator being evaluated to assemble materials for review by the evaluation committee. All faculty under review are to produce a statement of teaching activities; the following guidelines will facilitate the production of an effective teaching statement. An optional but highly recommended 'multiple measure' of teaching effectiveness is the production of a teaching portfolio. Processes and Guidelines for a teaching portfolio can provide consistency and quality of this approach for documenting teaching effectiveness. As noted, a recommended practice is to substitute a teaching portfolio for an observation, as a subject of review by the Teaching Evaluation Committee.

Student voice: Engaging and using student perspective in the review of teaching is important (but far from the only form of evaluation). Improved processes for collecting and using student voice in the review process, including: classroom interviews (required) as part of the peer review process, student letters (as a substitute or addition to classroom interviews), and recommendations for use of FCQs (required). Classroom interview protocols are designed to complement classroom observations. Guidance for letters for students from classrooms and mentees can assist with the collection of effective measures.

A living document & continuous improvement. This effort is only the first-pass at enhancing our evaluation system. It is designed as a pilot effort that will be adapted, iterated upon and updated as we put these approaches into practice. In addition to reviewing this approach once enacted, the department should proactive revisit our policies and procedures around teaching evaluation in association with each external review (ARPAC) cycle.

A quick summary of the new resources / tools/ process proposed by the QTI Committee

Resource Name	Link	Description
Summary Document	https://docs.google.com/document/d/1ZLExMyIcu2T-2itQfpsjhkKnlYj6rCGmiiYrGABHypA/	An overall summary of the proposed approaches for advancing teaching evaluations in physics.
Framework / Rubric for Evaluation	https://docs.google.com/document/d/1gwwfy5sWQ_Msc_V8_Uz-mtSW2va0PF3DADSI377Xmmg/	A 4-dimensional framework that captures the broad areas of evaluation, the specific criteria, and associated measures.
Levels of Accomplishment	https://docs.google.com/document/d/1658E2fCCpll-fgBgTaJtmk6Od8X6KAvV4uWU0TvXJsA/	Proposed processes for defining merit, excellence, and levels of accomplishment in teaching
Processes for Peer Review/ Observation	https://docs.google.com/document/d/1njtQyVtwywcW3-ul223tXfPerKyaneenuGrzggY1DTU/	Approaches for conducting peer review including: observation, teaching circles and portfolio review
Peer Review Form	https://docs.google.com/document/d/1nZlcJMgpZl0fXiXLCyYQlh4r2r169HN3OmTOcb7UTh0/	A structured form for collecting observations from class and reflections on educational materials.
Statement of Teaching	https://docs.google.com/document/d/1unzfvB0Whh6koXC35XeQciBQxZK9J20M_QmfK30P-Jk/	Guidelines for writing up a statement of educational activities.
Processes for creating a teaching portfolio	https://docs.google.com/document/d/1uzZz5xVfAQC1zsj-UNGeBWEBqlAAd0_Drd2zJyOXlok/	Recommendations on when and how to create a portfolio
Guidelines for a teaching portfolio	https://docs.google.com/document/d/1gQOj5tyyf5tOFs4qEeCdp16igsBXUa7dwaKki8_CKv4/	Structure and framework for materials to be included in a teaching portfolio
Processes for collecting evaluations from students	https://docs.google.com/document/d/1DznY-93ejReyqBFz8e6toZACAuAEKXBqiVjLyEsGZXo/	Suggested processes for use of classroom interviews, FCQs, and student letters
Protocols for classroom interviews	https://docs.google.com/document/d/1NLf6PL8yR8bMaV0_efqYPYoAw-yndXfW/	Guidelines, questions, and response form for conducting class interviews.
Student letter templates	Student letters from classes; student letters from mentees	Templates for letters from students in classes and mentees