

Best Practices—Moving Beyond the FCQ

The BFA passed Resolution **BFA-M-1-040518** in May 2018 to remove two omnibus questions from the FCQ due to the ways that they ask students to evaluate the instructor in a way that the instructor's personal identity characteristics are highly likely to be brought into question. The resolution also reinforces the University of Colorado policies that require units to use multiple measures in evaluations of teaching. The BFA therefore recommends the following best practices to all units.

1. *Give less weight to the FCQ.* Because we recognize that numerical scores on the FCQ may contain bias, give weight to measures that are likely to have the least bias. Such measures include peer observations by people who have been trained in avoiding implicit bias, teaching materials and syllabi, student interviews/focus groups conducted by trained facilitators, and faculty-produced narratives of teaching.
2. *Privilege formative assessment.* Given that it may be impossible to eliminate bias from survey data, it may be most appropriate to consider using surveys such as FCQs as formative assessments that help guide revision of teaching and curriculum, and not for summative personnel evaluations. Communicate these assessments clearly to faculty annually.
3. *Employ multiple measures at every turn.* Official Regent Policy, as outlined in APS 1009 “Multiple Means of Teaching Evaluation”, calls for every unit to have and to employ at least three measures of teaching (one of which has to be the FCQ or something similar that captures student opinion), and that this has to be used, not just at promotion or contract review, but also at every salary consideration (that is, annual merit). The APS provides an extensive list of possible multiple measures: <https://www.cu.edu/ope/aps/1009> Have regular discussions about multiple measures and effective teaching practices at faculty meetings.
4. *Look for trends over time in teaching effectiveness,* not just focusing on an individual course, semester or year in isolation. Note improvements or lack of improvement over the review period.
5. *Look for corroborating evidence.* Review all questions on the FCQ and note any outliers by comparing those high or low scores with other measures. Rather than privileging any one data point in isolation, look for evidence elsewhere in the multiple measures of teaching. For example, a low FCQ score may be reflected in the syllabi and student letters. Conversely, a high FCQ score should not mask problematic evidence elsewhere in the file.
6. *Invite discussions at your faculty meetings about implicit bias and equity.* The Center for Inclusion and Social Change offers a number of workshops that can be set up at dates and times that are convenient for your department/unit. See: <https://www.colorado.edu/cisc/trainings-workshops> Making discussion of bias and equity a regular part of your department’s culture is a step toward changing culture. Work on inclusive excellence can’t be the job of only one committee or individual; it must be taken up as work that is expected of everyone.
7. *Resources.* Teaching Quality Framework (draft [rubric](#)). The FTEP [services](#) for classroom observation, consultation, reflection. The ATDT services for [portfolios](#) or ASSETT (A&S) services, [class observations](#) and [more](#). The Special Edition of Studies in Educational Evaluation titled "[Evaluation of teaching: Challenges and promises](#)".