

# CU Policies Related to Measuring Teaching Effectiveness

[DRAFT<sup>1</sup>]

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## Introduction

CU-Boulder and system-wide policies around promotion and tenure guidelines: 1) require (and provide guidance) for use of multiple measures of teaching effectiveness, 2) support the use of measures of teaching quality that are defined by the primary academic unit / department, and 3) provide guidance on the use of the required student ratings, FCQs.

The University requires that primary units have their own guidelines for their reappointment, promotion, and tenure (RTP) process, however, one requirement across all units is that candidates for RTP must submit multiple measures of teaching. While the Regents and FA/VCAC have provided guidance (e.g., see 2013 Regential APS #1009 and the 1998 VCAC memo, below), such lists are not exhaustive and these bodies welcome any other legitimate method of teaching assessment, defined by the college/school, primary unit, or by the candidate to fit the unique nature of the teaching activities that are represented in the dossier. Many units on campus have been working to better align their teaching evaluation practices with known scholarship on teaching evaluation by: a) examining their current teaching evaluation practices; b) identifying or creating tools that better assess teaching quality and fill gaps within their current evaluation practices in order to align the multiple measures from three key voices (peers, students, and self); and c) implementing these tools along with procedures for their use. Below are resources that highlight existing policies related to measuring teaching quality.

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<sup>1</sup>The following materials were assembled by the Teaching Quality Framework Initiative (<https://www.colorado.edu/teaching-quality-framework/>) team. They represent our understanding of current campus policies, but they may not be an exhaustive list of resources. Please contact us to provide additional information, should you have it.

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## **Guidance on the Development and Use of Multiple Measures of Teaching**

Official Regent Policy (APS 1009) requires that a minimum of three components should be included for evaluation of teaching. One of these must be a student evaluation, but the other components may be defined by the primary unit (see Guidance on Departmentally Defined Teaching Quality, below). There are a variety of policies/resources that list/describe representative, but not exhaustive, suggestions for multiple measures of teaching evaluation ([APS 1009](#), [Gleason, 1998](#); [Cox, 2007](#)), which are briefly described here.

### *Multiple Means of Teaching Evaluation*

Administration Policy Statement (APS) 1009 (July 2013) [[link](#)]

This official Regent Policy is designed to provide information that can be used to improve the quality of teaching and to facilitate an equitable and comprehensive evaluation of teaching across the graduate and undergraduate curricula of the University. For each faculty member, a minimum of three components shall be included in evaluations. One of these must be a student evaluation, which must include, but is not limited to, the data from the Faculty Course Questionnaire or a similar, campus-approved system and form. Each primary unit, in keeping with its individual role and mission, may implement additional components. The appendix includes a representative, but not exhaustive, list of suggestions for components to be used in the evaluation of teaching.

### *Dossier Checklist for Comprehensive Review, Tenure, and Promotion*

Vice Chancellor's Advisory Committee (VCAC) (September 2015) [[link](#)]

This checklist that is to be included at the front of all dossiers for reappointment, promotion, and tenure includes the requirement of multiple measures of teaching. Two required elements are the FCQ Instructor Summary and the FCQ Summary for each course taught. Two or more additional measures are required, but what those measures are can be defined by the candidate or unit.

### *Multiple Measures of Teaching - 10 Ideas for Satisfying*

Todd Gleason, AVC for Faculty Affairs (October 1998; updated as Dean March 2010) [[link](#)]

This memo has been posted to the A&S policies and procedures for reappointment, promotion, and tenure website and is cited in the 2007 follow-up by Jeff Cox, AVC for Faculty Affairs (see below). It gives instructions/commentary on ten example measures of teaching that can be used to satisfy the requirement (see APS 1009 above) that multiple measures of teaching be used in the teaching evaluation process. Note that the included list is not exhaustive, and that the VCAC accepts any other legitimate method of teaching assessment as defined by the primary unit.

*Multiple Measures of Teaching*

Jeff Cox, AVC for Faculty Affairs (November 2007) [\[link\]](#)

This memo includes much of the same information as contained in the 1998 memo by Todd Gleason (see above). It offers guidelines to clarify some issues around gathering multiple measures for evaluating teaching. As in the original 1998 memo, the suggestions included are not exhaustive and other methods of teaching assessment can be defined by the primary unit.

*Best Practices—Moving Beyond The FCQ (BFA-R-2-102918.4)*

BFA Diversity Committee Notice of Motion (December 2018) [\[link\]](#)

This motion by the Boulder Faculty Assembly responds to a prior motion suggesting the removal of the the two omnibus questions from the FCQ due to documented bias in the FCQs. The notice includes a list of best practices, including “employ multiple measures at every turn.” In addition to linking to APS 1009, links to several campus resources for teaching evaluation (e.g., FTEP, TQF) are included.

## Guidance on Defining Teaching Quality at the Academic Unit Level

Official Regent Policy ([APS 1009](#)) states that each primary unit, in keeping with its individual role and mission, may implement components of evaluation that complement the required use of FCQs. Each primary unit should have a document, available upon request, which describes the standards and procedures for reappointment, tenure, and promotion in that unit. Below we include relevant text from a variety of sources that establish that it is up to the primary unit/department to define measures of quality teaching.

*Policy 5M: Reappointment (to a tenure-track position), Tenure, and Promotion*  
Board of Regents (April 2014) [\[link\]](#)

“Primary units develop criteria that explicate the teaching, research and leadership and service expectations for faculty, such as expectations for articles, books, and/or research grants, measures of clinical excellence, etc., in terms of their scholarly field. These primary unit criteria, once reviewed for rigor, fairness and consistency with regent requirements and approved by the dean and vice chancellor for academic affairs, are included in the candidate’s dossier and shall guide evaluation at every level of review.”

*Reappointment, Tenure, and Promotion of Tenure Rank Faculty*  
Office of Faculty Affairs (January 2017) [\[link\]](#)

“The definition of the terms "meritorious" and "excellence" are, of course, discipline specific. Your college or school may also have examples of criteria that it employs. Regent policy requires that each primary unit have available upon request a document which describes the standards and procedures for reappointment, tenure, and promotion in that unit. In general, the University seeks multiple measures for each of the three areas of responsibility.”

*Multiple Measures of Teaching*  
Jeff Cox, AVC for Faculty Affairs (November 2007) [\[link\]](#)

“Candidates should work with their PUEC and department or school or college on putting together multiple measures of teaching...The gathering of these multiple measures is a joint responsibility of the candidate and the unit; the candidate should make sure that s/he has in place all the multiple measures s/he finds appropriate, and the unit should make sure that the measures it deems necessary for the evaluation of teaching on a regular basis are included.”

*Standards, Processes and Procedures for Comprehensive Review, Tenure, Post-Tenure Review and Promotion*

Administration Policy Statement (APS 1022) (July 2014) [[link](#)]

“Each primary unit shall develop specific written criteria and procedures for measuring the performance of candidates in the primary unit that are consistent with the standards herein...The primary unit criteria shall include a description of the level of achievement that warrants the designations “meritorious” and “excellent” performance in teaching, research or creative work, and leadership and service as well as in other applicable evaluation areas. It will also provide a description of the types of evidence that will be used to evaluate the candidate against the performance standards” (VII. Evaluation Criteria).

*Appointment, Reappointment, Tenure, and Promotion Criteria and Standards for Tenure-Track and Tenured Faculty*

Regent Law Article 5: Faculty, 5.B.5 (September 2014) [[link](#)]

“In order to provide a fair and unbiased evaluation, each primary unit shall develop specific written criteria and procedures for measuring the performance of candidates in that primary unit, which are consistent with regent policy.”

*Performance Ratings for Faculty (Annual Merit)*

Administration Policy Statement (APS 5008) (July 2012) [[link](#)]

For annual merit, “A faculty member's performance shall be evaluated based upon performance standards developed by each academic unit and according to any written expectations agreed to between the faculty member and the unit.”

## Guidance on the Use of FCQs

Official Regent Policy (APS 1009) requires that a minimum of three components should be included for evaluation of teaching, and that one of these must be a student evaluation through the Faculty Course Questionnaire, or a similar campus-approved system and form. Below we include statements and recommendations from various sources regarding the use of FCQs and the interpretation of FCQ data.

### *Multiple Measures of Teaching - 10 Ideas for Satisfying*

Todd Gleason, AVC for Faculty Affairs (October 1998; updated as Dean March 2010) [\[link\]](#)

This memo from Faculty Affairs suggests that the back of FCQ forms provides a space for students to provide open-ended feedback regarding instructors and courses. It recommends that these comments be submitted to a member or committee of the PUEC, then summarized by a departmental committee before being submitted to the dossier [Note: this may be potentially adapted given the switch to online only FCQs].

“My recommendation is that all the forms from a course (blanks and written forms) be submitted to a member or committee of the PUEC, who in turn certifies that all the forms were submitted. The blanks can then be set aside and the forms with written comment can either be submitted to the dossier, or more appropriately, abstracted and analyzed by a committee from within the department and their report submitted to the dossier.”

### *Multiple Measures of Teaching*

Jeff Cox, AVC for Faculty Affairs (November 2007) [\[link\]](#)

In this expansion of the 1998 memo, Faculty Affairs reiterates the potential utility of student comments on the backs of FCQs [Note: Again, these may be potentially adapted for online forms].

“The backs of FCQ forms provide another source of anonymous student comments. If the faculty member decides to include these forms in the file, all the forms from a course, whether or not they include comments, should be submitted to the PUEC, who in turn certifies that all the forms were submitted for their analysis.”

### *Dossier Checklist for Reappointment, Tenure and Promotion*

Vice Chancellor's Advisory Committee (VCAC) (September 2015) [\[link\]](#)

This annually released document from the Vice Chancellor's Advisory Committee provides a list of the required contents of dossiers for reappointment, tenure, and promotion. In the most recent version, it requires the submission of the FCQ Instructor Summary and an FCQ Summary for each course taught.

*BFA Support for Removing Biased FCQ Measures for Evaluation of Teaching in Promotion, Tenure, Reappointment, and Merit Evaluation (BFA-M-1-040518)*  
BFA Diversity Committee Draft Resolution (May 2018) [[link](#)]

This resolution from the Boulder Faculty Assembly articulates their recommendations that FCQs be used primarily as formative feedback rather than summative assessment, that evaluators be made aware of potential bias in FCQs, and that the omnibus questions be removed.

“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.”

“Awareness of biases in evaluation must be increased campus-wide.”

“FCQ questions should not ask students to evaluate the instructor in a way that the instructor's personal identity characteristics are highly likely to be brought into question. Specifically, the current questions that ask students to "Rate the instructor overall" and “Rate the course overall” should be immediately removed.”

*Best Practices—Moving Beyond The FCQ (BFA-R-2-102918.4)*  
BFA Diversity Committee Notice of Motion (December 2018) [[link](#)]

This release from the Boulder Faculty Assembly follows their 2018 resolution regarding FCQs and reiterates their recommendations.

“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.”

“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.”

“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 low data point in isolation, look for evidence elsewhere in the multiple measures of teaching. Conversely, a high FCQ score should not mask problematic evidence elsewhere in the file.”