



PROVOST AND VICE PRESIDENT FOR ACADEMIC AFFAIRS

November 9, 2005

Dear Department Chairs,

Several department chairs have expressed concern regarding the onerous task for administrative assistants created by the transcription requirements of student evaluations. The burden of this important work has been exacerbated by both the volume of student evaluations in some departments and the need for a timely turnaround so that the transcribed evaluations are completed by the mid-January closing date for periodic evaluations and performance reviews. Further, on-line student evaluations, with the exception of on-line courses, are **not** an option until a campus-wide policy has been developed and approved.

Because of these concerns, I have consulted with the Provost's Council, the University Faculty Personnel Committee, and the Faculty Affairs Committee regarding alternative approaches to our student evaluation process so that we might relieve some of the burden currently felt by staff at the department level, while still maintaining its integrity. All consulted were in agreement that student comments provided invaluable feedback to faculty. As a consequence, removing the student comment section from the evaluation instrument was not an option. Some concern was expressed that students may be reluctant to write critical comments that were not transcribed since handwriting could be recognized, and students might enroll in future courses with the same faculty member. All agreed that it is most important to provide timely turnaround of student evaluation comments, not only for RTP purposes, but because they are an important faculty development tool.

Following this consultation, I am establishing the following process for the administration and compilation of student evaluations:

1. Written student evaluations will **not** be transcribed. All written student evaluations will be copied in department offices and delivered to faculty members immediately after class grades have been posted.
2. Original student evaluations will remain in a secure location in department offices for inclusion in performance reviews and periodic evaluations.
3. Student evaluations collected as part of the regular student evaluations process shall be anonymous and identified only by course and/or section (CBA 15.16). Faculty shall announce to students the class date when student evaluations will be administered so that students have an *option* of typing their comments. If students choose to type comments, they must be collected during the class period designated for the administration of student evaluations. Typed student evaluation comments must be anonymous, identified by course and/or section and respond directly to the in-class evaluation instrument.
4. Any student communication or evaluation provided outside of the regular evaluation process **cannot** be anonymous and must be identified by name to be included in a Personnel Action File.

5. The quantitative component of student evaluations (e.g., Scantron form, etc.) will continue to be administered in-class. Copies of these summaries shall be delivered to the faculty member after class grades have been posted. The original summaries of the quantitative component of student evaluations shall be placed in the faculty member's Personnel Action File in the Office of the Dean.

I hope that these changes to the compilation of student evaluations will relieve some of the work burden for staff at the department level. If you have any questions regarding the administration or compilation of student evaluations, please contact Colleen Mullery, extension 5086, or your Dean's Office.

Sincerely,



Richard C. Vrem
Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs

cc: Craig Klein, Chair, University Faculty Personnel Committee
Simon Green, Chair, Faculty Affairs Committee
Susan Higgins, Dean, College of Professional Studies
James Howard, Dean, College of Natural Resources and Sciences
Bob Snyder, Interim Dean, College of Arts, Humanities, and Social Sciences
Bill Cannon, Director, Information Technology Services
Colleen Mullery, Associate Vice President for Faculty Affairs