

College of Forestry Goals, Process, and Guidelines for Evaluation of Teaching

The College of Forestry (COF) strives to be the premier forestry educational institution in the world, educating the current and next generation of scholars, practitioners, and users of the world's forest resources. In order to reach our educational goals, it is imperative that we regularly review and evaluate our teaching programs for relevancy and effectiveness.

The Faculty Senate of Oregon State University appointed an Assessment of Teaching Task Force, and adopted their report in October of 1998. Included in that report were recommendations for college and university-level assessments (Attachment A). This administrative memo of the COF provides our guidelines and procedures by which we implement the recommendations of the Task Force. Individual departments and programs will extend these guidelines to meet specific needs, and will produce their own set of procedures and criteria. Departments and programs will make these available to all faculty members in their department.

GOALS OF EVALUATION

Regular evaluation of teaching will assess the content and delivery of COF courses, and will provide guidance for teaching improvement. The specific goals are to:

- 1) Assess development and delivery of resident, extended, and continuing education classes;
- 2) Assess the relevancy and effectiveness of teaching materials and subject matter;
- 3) Identify areas for improvement, and guide teaching enhancement efforts within the COF;
- 4) Provide objective information on faculty members' teaching performance for the promotion and tenure process.

EVALUATION OF EDUCATIONAL EVENTS

The COF requires a student assessment of teaching in each resident education class, using the minimum set of survey questions developed by COF faculty (attachment B). Instructors or departments are encouraged to add questions to address specific issues or concerns. Department Heads and Program Leaders can make exceptions in unusual circumstances (e.g., classes with very few students, seminars, reading and conference courses, or unusual class formats not conducive to the standard survey questions), but should be mindful of the

necessity to have teaching evaluations for the promotion and tenure process, and other periodic reviews.

Extended and continuing education events vary considerably in length and format, and program leaders will decide which of these events should be evaluated. A specifically-designed class evaluation form is to be used for extended or continuing education classes.

PEER REVIEW OF FACULTY TEACHING PROGRAM

The COF requires each department to conduct a peer-review of teaching for each faculty member (not necessarily every course). Department Heads and Program Leaders will work with faculty members to decide which courses should be peer reviewed. That review must be criteria-based, and Department Heads and Program Leaders will work with faculty to develop the criteria to be used. A peer-review of each faculty member's teaching must be completed at least once every 5 years, and once before any promotion or tenure decision. This policy applies to all faculty members employed by OSU who teach classes, including extended and continuing education classes. Peers can be either internal or external to the program, and should include at least one subject matter expert in the faculty member's field.

REPORTING TEACHING EVALUATIONS

In response to recommendation 4 of the Task Force, the COF requires that student assessment of teaching from the standard survey instrument be made available to each faculty member, their Department Head or Program Leader, and the Dean immediately following each term. In addition, Department Heads and Program Leaders will include a summary of the teaching review process in their annual report to the Dean. Student assessments and peer evaluations (if applicable) will be reviewed and discussed by the Department Head or Program Leader during each faculty member's annual review. Peer evaluations do not have to be kept in the faculty member's record, but at least one peer review of teaching must be included in any promotion and tenure dossier. Student survey evaluation records will be kept by Departments and the Forest Media Center (FMC).

ENHANCING TEACHING QUALITY

Activities or materials that are available to enhance instruction (e.g., materials, guidance, or short courses provided by the FMC and other OSU units) will be made available to faculty members. The COF will continue to support teaching enhancement activities provided by the FMC, and will ensure that assistance is available for faculty members each year.