

DEPARTMENT OF WOOD SCIENCE & ENGINEERING FACULTY PEER TEACHING REVIEW PROGRAM

Affirmed by faculty, October 2000
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The faculty of the Department of Wood Science & Engineering view excellence in teaching as an integral component in our success. Accordingly, we believe that all faculty members can benefit from periodic review and assessment of their teaching effort. To achieve this goal, we have proposed a peer-review of teaching. The primary focus of the review is to ensure that our courses compel higher-level learning for our students.

Goals

The goals of this program include:

- To assess development and delivery of resident, extended, and continuing education classes
- To assess the relevancy of learning objectives and effectiveness of teaching materials and subject matter (not a curriculum review)
- To assess efforts used for continuous improvement and provide guidance for future teaching enhancement
- To provide objective information on faculty teaching performance for the faculty review process.
- To recognize the efforts and dedication of departmental teaching faculty

Frequency of Evaluation

Each faculty member will be reviewed at least once every five years as per the university guidelines. A faculty member may, however, elect to be reviewed at any time. The Department Head will maintain and distribute an annual schedule to ensure that faculty can adequately prepare for review.

Review Process

The evaluation will be undertaken by the Peer Teaching Review Committee and will include input from students. According to Sell and Chism (1988 as cited in Chism 1999), “peers are the best source of judgments on teaching performance” for “subject matter expertise, course goals, instructional materials and methods, assessment and grading practices, student achievement, professional and ethical behavior, and thesis supervisions.” In contrast, “students are the most appropriate judges of day-to-day teacher behaviors and attitudes in the classroom.”

Committee Composition: At the beginning of each academic year, the Department Head will name the Peer Teaching Review Committee with a minimum of three faculty members. Normally, faculty will serve on this committee for no more than three consecutive years.

Teaching Portfolio Deadline: Faculty to be reviewed will provide their teaching portfolio to the committee by the date requested by the Department Head, typically early in the fall quarter. The materials to include in the teaching portfolio are detailed in a separate memo.

Teaching Evaluations: The Department will provide a compilation of student evaluations from the last 5 years for any resident instruction classes taught. Faculty members who have offered extended education or continuing education programs may also elect to submit post-course surveys.

Evaluation Process:

1. The entire committee will convene early in the fall to schedule the review process. A subcommittee of at least two people will be formed for each faculty member being reviewed. The subcommittee will pick which courses and labs to attend during the review process.
2. Each subcommittee member will observe at least one class or lab and record their observations (see attached evaluation sheets).
3. The subcommittee will arrange for the faculty member to leave the classroom for about 10 minutes during one of the lecture or lab visits. During this period, the subcommittee will gather informal comments from students. The subcommittee is welcome to invite students to communicate to one or both of them in private later as well as to solicit input from former students or students not available the day of the class visit.
4. Each subcommittee member will meet informally with the faculty reviewed soon after the teaching observations to go over comments, to ask questions about the teaching portfolio, and to discuss how and why the faculty has chosen their approach to teaching. This exchange is where some of the more detailed information will be exchanged, and it will also give an opportunity for the reviewer and the faculty to interact again about teaching.
5. The subcommittee will write the draft peer review document using all materials (including the teaching portfolio) and observations available.
6. The entire committee will read all of the teaching portfolios and will comment on all draft peer review documents before they are finalized, signed by the committee, and sent to the Department Head. The peer review document is in letter form. It outlines the strengths and weaknesses observed in both the written learning resources and the classroom delivery. The committee may also make suggestions for improvement. The primary purposes of these written assessments are to help faculty improve the level of instruction in our department and document success with instruction.
7. The Department Head shall then meet with the candidate to review the contents of the letter and, if necessary, to make recommendations for improvement including but

not limited to a plan of action followed by re-evaluation. On occasion, the Department Head may choose to assign a peer teaching mentor to the faculty member reviewed. The faculty member being reviewed has the right of appeal under University guidelines if he or she is in disagreement.

Attached Check Lists:

1. Peer Review Process Checklist – for scheduling and planning the review
2. Peer Teaching Evaluation Checklist – for preparing the peer review letter
3. Peer Teaching Observation – suggests many areas for comments during class or lab observation. It is understood that not every category on the list will be observable during the observations.

References

- Chism, N. Van Note. 1999. *Peer review of teaching: a sourcebook*. Anker Publishing Company, Bolton, MA.
- Sell, G. and N. Chism. 1988. "Assessing teaching effectiveness for promotion and tenure: a compendium of reference materials." Columbus, OH: The Ohio State University Center for Teaching Excellence.