

Georgia State University
College of Arts & Sciences
POLICY ON ASSESSMENT OF TEACHING EFFECTIVENESS
FOR VISITING INSTRUCTORS AND VISITING LECTURERS

The College of Arts and Sciences is committed to the assessment of teaching as a means of determining effectiveness in promoting student learning and of identifying constructive ways of improving teaching performance for all faculty. Even highly effective instructors can benefit from regular feedback on their performance as measured by a variety of significant criteria. Such feedback can help faculty gauge their effectiveness and guide reflection on the continued improvement of their teaching. Accordingly, College faculty undergo regular assessment of their instructional efforts. The following describes the assessment procedures for Visiting Instructors and Visiting Lecturers.

At the completion of each semester, members of the departmental executive committee or a subcommittee approved by the Dean's Office shall provide the Chair a teaching rating for each visiting instructor or visiting lecturer. The ratings shall employ the following terms: outstanding, excellent, very good, good, fair, poor. Committee members may also provide a brief statement explaining the most significant factors that affected these ratings. The Chair may discuss with committee members the grounds for the ratings and, as appropriate, mentor visiting faculty on this basis for the sake of improving their teaching.

Among the factors committee members and other evaluators consider in their assessments are:

1. Quality of course content.

Committee members shall assess quality of course content through review of syllabi, examinations, and other supplementary materials. Syllabi should be reviewed for conformity with university guidelines and to see that reading assignments are appropriate to the course level and catalog description. Course materials should also be assessed for their appropriateness in relation to the current state of knowledge in the field. To assist the committee in judging these matters, faculty members may provide additional materials, such as customized texts, handouts, software, and other relevant information. In departments that give standardized and/or departmental examinations, scores on these examinations should be included for review.

2. Enhancing creativity and independent critical thinking; new teaching techniques

Credit should also be given for courses that cultivate students' curiosity, creativity, and critical acumen, or that employ new and especially effective teaching techniques.

3. Student evaluations

a. Committee members shall review the student evaluation scores in the context of the range of scores for specific courses and for similar level courses (i.e., 1000, 2000 etc.) both within the

department and within the disciplinary area. The information, which will be provided by the Chair, shall also include other important variables, such as class size, whether the course is required or an elective, the response rate on the evaluations, and number of students enrolled in the course.

b. Committee members shall also review written evaluations and factor these into the merit score. Members may, if they see fit, include for the Chair a brief account of the most salient features of the written evaluations, noting significant patterns in the comments.

4. Teaching Portfolios

To facilitate the evaluation process, each faculty member shall compile a teaching portfolio containing the materials required for the above assessments. Portfolios shall include numerical evaluations for all courses. In addition, faculty shall include in the portfolios more complete data (syllabi, exams, written student evaluations and other materials) for one course from each of the distinct types of course they have taught in a given semester. For example, if a faculty member taught only sections of English 1101 in a given semester, then his or her portfolio should contain detailed information from one of the sections of English 1101, whereas if the faculty member taught sections of English 1101 and English 1102, then the portfolio should contain detailed information from one of the sections of English 1101 and from one of the sections of English 1102. It shall be the faculty member's responsibility to have these portfolios ready for review soon after the completion of each semester, at a date set by the Chair.

5. Additional Methods

Some departments employ additional assessment methods, such as peer review, and, if so, the Chair, in consultation with the departmental Executive Committee and the Dean's Office, may require that information from these other assessment methods be included in the portfolio.
