Proposal on Procedures In Arts And Sciences For Documenting Teaching Excellence

EPPC subcommittee on Teaching Evaluations in Promotion and Hiring Decisions
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Rationale: This committee was formed to examine how teaching factors into hiring and promotion in Arts and Sciences. While the committee concluded there is no need to add new teaching requirements to the standards for tenure and promotion, it found there is a need to articulate current standards, to clear up confusion among departments and faculty members about the place teaching holds among the criteria for hiring and promotion, to offer recommendations on how to improve the visibility and quality of teaching and to articulate how information about teaching is communicated to hiring and promotion committees. The committee recommends that excellence in teaching be emphasized at all ranks of the ladder faculty. The goal of these recommendations is to recognize and highlight the excellent teaching found within Arts and Sciences, not to alter the current balance among teaching, research and service that forms the basis for hiring and promotion decisions. Thus, the EPPC subcommittee on Teaching Evaluations in Promotion and Hiring Decisions recommends the following:

- **Recommendation 1. Articulate each department's vision of exemplary teaching**
  Each department within Arts and Sciences is asked to prepare a short statement on what constitutes exemplary teaching within the disciplines found in the department; an example is attached as Appendix I. Each department's statement will be provided to all current and new instructors in the department, and will serve as the basis for establishing expectations for faculty at all ranks. These statements will be collected by EPPC and distributed to all departments. The statements will also be shared with new chairs during chair orientations, and will be examined and amended if necessary during each ARC review.

- **Recommendation 2. Reconsider departmental approaches to documenting teaching excellence**
  Each department within Arts and Sciences should review and, if appropriate, revise their current practices for the articulation of faculty teaching excellence on a regular basis. For faculty recruited after January 1, 2019, departments may choose to adopt the new template suggested in Appendix II for preparing statements regarding teaching excellence for all new departmental hires and for all promotion cases. Departments also have the option of continuing to use their existing procedures and templates. The goal of such a change in procedures is to provide a more complete picture of teaching quality than is available from student course evaluations alone; such a template may also serve as a framework to further encourage the development of teaching skills among faculty.

- **Recommendation 3. Communicate consistently regarding Arts and Sciences' teaching values**
  New instructors in Arts and Sciences should learn in orientation about the role of teaching excellence in the life of a scholar-teacher at Columbia. New faculty member orientation should

include explicit statements from the Provost and the Arts and Sciences Executive Committee about the value of teaching.

- **Recommendation 4. Recognize and incentivize professional development efforts**
All faculty members should be supported if they choose to engage in professional development that is evidence-based, improves teaching practices and enhances student learning. Such formative offerings should be selected, where possible, based on their causal impact, so that departments and faculty members can make informed choices on the best training for their individual needs and goals. Faculty members should be offered -- by the Provost and/or Arts and Sciences -- monetary supplements that may be received either as additional compensation or as a research supplement for completing teaching training programs. Professional development should be recognized as valuable for even the best and most experienced teachers.

- **Recommendation 5. Provide uniform guidance on the role of teaching in hiring and promotion to department chairs** Department chairs should be asked to familiarize themselves with the departmental statements on teaching in recommendation 1, and are responsible for helping new and current faculty members to understand the department's teaching expectations. In addition, department chairs should ensure that a suitable context is provided in promotion cases to explain why a faculty member is teaching specific courses, how their teaching assignments are expected to change over time, and how their evaluations, enrollments and teaching quality compare to other faculty members and courses. The chair should also interact with the administration of Arts and Sciences to ensure that the teaching evaluation information provided to the Promotion and Tenure Committee is suitably prepared. The new chair orientation should include discussion of the importance of teaching and a reminder that chairs are responsible for conveying the department's teaching standards to junior faculty. Chairs should be reminded by Arts and Sciences to consult the tenure case statement guideline section on teaching as they prepare tenure case statements for both internal and external candidates.

Appendix I. Example of a departmental statement on exemplary teaching

The mission of department X is to teach students how to describe, analyze and explain phenomena in terms of underlying molecular mechanisms. As part of this overarching goal, we seek to train students in fields of active research, and prepare them for a careers in basic research, as well as to train students with other career interests in critical thinking about natural processes, including topics of general interest. Independent research is a critical step in development toward the program goal of being able to describe, analyze and explain phenomena using chemical, physical and mathematical mechanisms. The intellectual arc of our departmental educational program progresses from foundational material to reading and analysis of advanced primary literature. Intermediate students are introduced to the scientific literature, while advanced students are expected to perform independent research and to integrate their data with both the primary literature and the larger scientific enterprise. Our program goals are specifically to have students learn to:

- Describe, analyze and discover mechanisms underlying natural processes through experimentation, modeling and scholarship
- Understand and apply common experimental design principles and approaches to develop a mechanistic understanding of biological processes
- Use appropriate analytical methods to describe and interpret empirical data, including both quantitative analyses and visualization of data
- Gain insight into the chemical, physical and mathematical bases of the natural world.
- Be able to critically evaluate, defend and critique experimental data
- Behave ethically, demonstrating a respect for animal and human subjects, privacy of personal information from human subjects and integrity of research data
- Demonstrate an ability to collaborate effectively with diverse others
- Demonstrate information literacy through the ability to obtain, assimilate and explain relevant primary sources on topics of interest; attain proficiency in the use of large data bases and the algorithms for exploring complex information systems

We seek to teach courses in which students gain a new perspective that forever alters how they interact with the world, and that cements a love of lifelong learning about the natural world. We work to realize these program goals through the following methods:

- Active learning, in which students are provided an opportunity in class to actively interact with course material through class discussions, audience response systems, discussions and problem-solving sessions with classmates. Active learning has been documented in numerous studies to enhance both student engagement and student learning.

- Formative feedback and rubrics, in which students are provided examples of the types of assignments that will ultimately lead to a summative assessment of learning in the course, and given feedback on how their performance aligns with a rubric describing various performance levels in the course. Formative feedback has been demonstrated to reduce student anxiety and stress, and to increase learning.

- Inclusive teaching, in which students from diverse background, cultures and learning styles are considered when pedagogical techniques and examples for discussion are selected. Inclusive teaching increases the retention of diverse groups in educational programs. For example, when

discussing individual scientists, we encourage the use of examples from diverse cultures, genders and ethnic groups, if appropriate to the pedagogical goals of the class. In addition, we recognize that some students readily contribute to discussions in class, but others may have cultural or personal barriers that inhibit expression, so we encourage providing a variety of modalities by which students can demonstrate their mastery of course material.

- <u>Reflective teaching</u>, in which instructors start from the learning outcomes they wish to achieve, and then design class activities, assignments and assessments in order to achieve these outcomes. Faculty members then reflect several times throughout the semester on the aspects of the course that have met expectations, exceeded expectations, or not met expectations, the possible causes of these outcomes, and how the course might be adjusted to improve outcomes. Soliciting feedback from students throughout the course is a tool that assists reflective teaching, and allows students to provide formative feedback to the instructor prior to the summative course evaluation.

We encourage each new departmental instructor to discuss this statement with the chair of the department.

Appendix II. Sample template for documenting teaching effectiveness of instructors for hiring and promotion

Departments may choose to continue using their existing procedures, or to adopt this template, or a modified version of this template, as part of their tenure and promotion procedures:

- *Teaching statement*. Candidates will be asked for a statement of their teaching philosophies that identifies the pedagogical approaches favored by the candidates, how these have evolved over time, and how these approaches support student learning. It should also include strategies used for promoting inclusive teaching to address the diverse types of learners encountered in the classroom, and a discussion of common problems encountered in teaching students along with the approaches used to solve these problems. The statement should place the teaching of the candidate in context, explaining how the enrollments, evaluations and courses taught compare to the teaching performance of similar faculty members.

- *Course materials*. Syllabi should be provided for courses taught, along with a statement regarding the goals of the course, the structure of the course and the material examined. Candidates may choose to share evidence collected that the course goals have been realized. In addition, examples of assignments and student responses to assignments for at least three assignments should be included. Candidates may further provide a statement explaining the rationale for providing the assignments to the students, in terms of what course goal was being examined and how the responses to assignments constituted or did not constitute evidence that the course goal had been realized for students. These assignments and response should be placed in the context of other courses at Columbia and in the field of the candidate.

- *Professional development*. Documentation of any professional development as a teacher and/or mentor, and any awards received should be noted. This might include completion of teacher or mentor training programs, publications and conference presentations or attendance related to teaching or mentoring, along with a statement about how these professional activities foster the teaching philosophy and professional development goals of the candidate and the department. Any course development, innovation and/or leadership activities related to teaching should be provided, along with a statement describing why these activities were undertaken, how they met or did not meet expectations and what impact they are expected to have on future activities of the candidate.

- *Mentoring activities*. The candidate should provide a summary of mentoring activities, including a complete list of doctoral, postdoctoral and undergraduate students mentored, along with a statement of the mentoring approaches used.

- *Course evaluations*. The current practice of providing numerical summaries of course evaluations should continue, but these will be prepared in consultation with the department chair. In addition, the numerical scores of the candidate and enrollments will be compared to a reference set of scores and enrollments for similar faculty members and courses in the department; these comparison choices will be made in consultation with the chair, the candidate and the administration of Arts and Sciences. The context for the courses taught, the evaluation scores and the enrollments will be discussed by both the department chair and, if desired, the candidate in their statements.

The above information will be obtained for internal promotions to associate professor with and without tenure, and to full professor. For external senior faculty hires, as much of this information will be obtained as possible, with the understanding that all of this information may not be available.

This template, if adopted, should be applied to all new faculty members hired after January 1st, 2019 and to all further promotions of faculty tenured after January 1, 2019. Departments are also encouraged to create a plan for formative development of their faculty and to identify criteria for evaluating teaching excellence; this will allow faculty members to identify areas for improvement toward meeting the departmental teaching standards, and to understand what constitutes excellence in teaching in the view of the department. Formative feedback should be separated as much as possible from summative judgments of teaching effectiveness. Any evaluations of faculty teaching should be based on validated procedures reported in the literature, and those performing evaluations should be trained in the proper use of such evaluation methods. To supplement department efforts, note that the Columbia Center for Teaching and Learning (CTL) is one venue that provides formative professional development through a range of programs (e.g., workshops, institutes, and seminars) and services (consultations and formative teaching observation services). The CTL is not involved in hiring, promotion and tenure decisions.

Appendix III. Summary of current review processes related to teaching

A. Current review process for language lecturers

For reference, the current review process for language lecturers is as follows.

In all cases, beginning with the developmental review in the second year, the Standing Committee on Language Lecturers will require evidence of a full and complete departmental review of the candidate's work. Reviews in the second, fifth, and eighth years should include evaluation by a three-person review committee. The department chair will appoint a three-person committee to conduct a review and make a recommendation to the department for renewal or non-renewal. It is important that at least one member of the review committee be trained in language pedagogy and at least one member of the review committee be external to the department, but not necessarily external to the university. The department will deliberate on the committee's recommendation. The outcome of those deliberations will be communicated to the Executive Vice President for Arts and Sciences in a letter of transmittal.

The review process should entail:

1) Examination of the candidate's dossier, which includes an updated curriculum vitae, a statement of teaching philosophy, a statement of professional work in progress and samples of course materials such as syllabi, handouts and supplements.

2) Evaluation by each of the three reviewers of classroom performance composed after observing at least two classes, and a review of student evaluations for all classes taught by the candidate since the last review (if applicable). The evaluations composed by the three reviewers should be attached to the letter of transmittal to the Executive Vice President for Arts and Sciences. Copies of all student evaluations should be submitted along with the summary data page for each set of student evaluations.

The following will be assessed through a review of the statement of teaching philosophy, classroom observation, and the student evaluations:

1) Strategies used to promote target language communication
2) Strategies used to meet the needs of all learners
3) Reflection of pedagogical goals as reflected in the work assigned to students
4) Strategies for engaging students in cultural activities within and outside the classroom
5) Consonance between pedagogical practices and the candidate's statement of teaching philosophy

The following will be assessed through the examination of the curriculum vitae and the statement of professional work in progress:

1) Evidence of professional growth in the field of language pedagogy
2) Active involvement in the profession either at Columbia or nationally
3) Professional leadership experience and performance

B. Current review process for lecturers in discipline

In all cases, beginning with the developmental review in the second year, the Promotion and Tenure Committee will require evidence of a full and complete departmental review of the candidate's work.

Reviews must include evaluation by a three-person review committee, appointed by the department chair to conduct a review and make a recommendation to the department for renewal or non-renewal. It is important that at least one member of the review committee be an expert in the lecturer's area of research, creative or policymaking activity and at least one member of the review committee be external to the department, but not necessarily external to the University. The department will deliberate on the committee's recommendation. The outcome of those deliberations will be communicated to the Executive Vice President for Arts and Sciences in a letter of transmittal.

The review process should entail:

1. examination of the candidate's dossier, which includes an updated curriculum vitae, a statement of teaching philosophy, a statement of professional work in progress and samples of course materials such as syllabi, handouts and supplements;
2. individual evaluations by each of the three reviewers of classroom performance composed after observing at least two classes, and a review of student evaluations for all classes taught by the candidate since the last review (if applicable). The evaluations composed by the three reviewers should be attached to the letter of transmittal to the standing committee. Copies of all student evaluations should be submitted to the standing committee along with the summary data page for each set of student evaluations.

The following will be assessed through a review of the statement of teaching philosophy, classroom observation, and the student evaluations: 1) strategies used to promote student involvement/attentiveness; 2) strategies used to meet the needs of all learners; 3) reflection of pedagogical goals as reflected in the work assigned to students; 4) strategies for engaging students in activities within and outside the classroom; and 5) consonance between pedagogical practices and the candidate's statement of teaching philosophy.

The following will be assessed through the examination of the curriculum vitae and the statement of professional work in progress: 1) evidence of professional growth in the field of the discipline; 2) active involvement in the field or profession either at Columbia or nationally; and 3) professional leadership experience and performance.

Report to the Promotion and Tenure Committee

In instances of a positive vote by the department, the chair of the department will prepare a letter of transmittal to be sent to the Executive Vice President for Arts and Sciences. The letter will record the result of the departmental vote and summarize the basis for the department's positive recommendation. It will include a discussion of the candidate's teaching load and course enrollments and be accompanied by an analysis of teaching performance. The statement will analyze the available data and reports of teaching observations as they reflect both the instructor's strengths and areas in need of attention. The letter should also speak to the department's recommendations at the last review as well as to the candidate's responses to them. The letter should be accompanied by the candidate's full dossier: curriculum vitae, the statement of teaching philosophy, the statement of professional work in progress, samples of course materials such as syllabi, handouts and supplements to the text and written reports of classroom observations and post-visitation discussions from each of the faculty members who observed the candidate's class and examined the student evaluations. Please see Appendix B below for instructions on submitting the dossier in PDF files.

C. Excerpts of current tenure review guidelines

For reference, the current tenure review guidelines, as described in the Provost's document "PRINCIPLES AND CUSTOMS GOVERNING UNIVERSITY-WIDE TENURE REVIEWS" include the following:

- Even more critical are the qualifications of the individual proposed to fill the position. In every instance, the nominee must be an outstanding scholar, a person who has demonstrated the capacity for imaginative, original work and who shows promise of continuing to make significant contributions to research. Excellence as a teacher is also necessary, and service to the University and discipline is important.
- The department or school supports its assessment of the candidate's expected contribution to its educational programming with course syllabi and other forms of written evidence appropriate to its field. In addition, it supplements its assessment of the nominee's teaching with evidence of his or her abilities as a teacher, such as a statistical summary of course evaluations either at Columbia or from the candidate's previous institution, the results of classroom observations, a representative sample of student course evaluations, information on the candidate's former students and teaching awards.
- Similarly, in evaluating a candidate's teaching record, TRAC considers:
    - The quality of classroom teaching, as measured by student evaluations;
    - Mentoring of doctoral students and post-docs, as shown by their number and their careers after completing their studies with the candidate;
    - Awards for teaching;
    - Contributions to the development of curricular programming at the institution at which the candidate serves; and
    - Other indicators of a candidate's educational commitment and excellence such as work with pre-doctoral students and participation in disciplinary initiatives in curricular development.

    - Teaching Qualifications
        - As part of the case statement, the department or school discusses the nominee's qualities as a teacher. It explains what the teaching expectations are in the department and/or school and it includes information on courses taught, students (both graduate and undergraduate) and postdocs advised, and, where appropriate, participation in curricular development. It also assesses the nominee's effectiveness in the classroom and as a mentor.
        - Evidence of the nominee's educational contributions, such as course syllabi, may be included in support of this section of the statement.
        - The discussion of teaching effectiveness should be substantiated by documentation, such as the results of surveys of student opinion, letters from current and former students or reports on classroom observations. If the nominating department or school uses student evaluations for that purpose, it should include a statistical summary of the results for two or three of the key questions asked (such as the overall quality of the candidate's teaching or the quality of the course) using the table appended to the statement as Exhibit F. The department or school may also include the statistical results for other questions but should not include individual student forms. Those forms may be included, instead, as an appendix to this section.
        - The discussion of the candidate's role as a mentor should be accompanied by a list of the students and postdocs advised and their current positions when that information is known.

Sample Summary of Teaching Evaluations – Arts and Sciences Faculty

Description of the scale used to evaluate the course and instructor.

Excellent: 5   Very Good: 4   Good:3   Fair: 2   Poor: 1

Course and Questions	Semester Taught	Enrollments	Responses Received	Average Rating	Standard Deviation
Course 1	**COURSE - TITLE**				
	Spring 2015				
	Section 001	80	43		
Question 1	Overall effectiveness of instructor			4.44	0.80
Question 2	Overall quality of course			4.23	0.87
	Section 002	70	38		
Question 1	Overall effectiveness of instructor			4.19	1.05
Question 2	Overall quality of course			3.86	1.06
	Spring 2014	85	37		
Question 1	Overall effectiveness of instructor			4.32	0.78
Question 2	Overall quality of course			4.14	0.82

C. Current dossier requirements for Columbia Presidential Teaching Awards

The focus of the dossier should be on documenting the impact the candidate has had on the education, intellectual development and future of Columbia students. As the competition is particularly keen, we suggest that the dossier include as many of the following as are applicable:

- A statement of no more than 750 words summarizing the qualities of the candidate as a teacher and advisor. If she has made innovative contributions to our educational programs by, for example, developing imaginative new courses or creatively using multimedia technologies to enhance student learning, or if she has played an important role in directing one of our educational programs, we would also encourage you to describe those contributions in your statement.
- Information on educational excellence beyond the classroom, such as community-oriented teaching, innovative programs affecting departmental instruction or the application of new media technologies for educational purposes.
- Information on dissertations and post-docs supervised, and the current positions of former students.
- Up to three letters of support from current and former students: undergraduate, graduate, or both.
- Up to two letters of support from colleagues who have had the opportunity to observe her teaching and advising, inside the classroom or out.
- A summary of student teaching evaluations over the past 5 years, including class sizes and average overall rating scores, as well as any relevant *textual excerpts for the past five years*, if available. Please follow the format below to the extent possible in summarizing teaching evaluations:

Term/Year	Course #	Course Name	Enroll ment	Average Overall Course Rating (describe scale)	Average Score for Quality of Instruction (describe scale)
Spring 2010					
Summer 2010					
Fall 2010					
…					
Summer 2014					
Fall 2014					
TEXT – Representative qualitative comments sampled from the past 5 years					

- A curriculum vitae.

Appendix IV. Additional resources related to effective methods for teaching recommended by colleagues

Buller, J.L. (2012). Best Practices in Faculty Evaluation: A Practical Guide for Academic Leaders. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass. Available as an ebook through CLIO:
https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/columbia/detail.action?docID=875813
or for purchase: https://www.amazon.com/Best-Practices-Faculty-Evaluation-Practical/dp/111811843X

Danielson C. *The framework for teaching. Evaluation Instrument.* Charlotte Danielson, 2014. ISBN: 978-0615597829. See www.danielsongroup.org.

Fink LD. *Creating significant learning experiences. An integrated approach to designing college courses*. San Francisco, CA, USA: John Wiley and Sons, 2013. Available as an ebook through CLIO:
http://web.b.ebscohost.com.ezproxy.cul.columbia.edu/ehost/detail/detail?sid=3bf8e289-55b6-41c5-ad41-5becb351b4d6%40sessionmgr103andvid=0andhid=125andbdata=JnNpdGU9ZWhvc3QtbGl2ZSZzY29wZT1zaXRl#AN=86025anddb=nlebk Or for purchase: https://www.amazon.com/Creating-Significant-Learning-Experiences-Integrated/dp/1118124251

Graham R. (2016) *Does teaching advance your academic career? Interim report on the development of a template for evaluating teaching achievement.* Royal Academy of Engineering. ISBN: 978-1-909327-24-5. Available to download from: www.raeng.org.uk/evaluatingteaching. For an online version of the report and evaluation toolkit: www.evaluatingteaching.com.

Handelsman J, Miller S, Pfund C. *Scientific Teaching*. New York, NY, USA: Roberts and Company, 2007. https://www.amazon.com/Scientific-Teaching-Jo-Handelsman/dp/1429201886

Seldin, P. (2006). Evaluating Faculty Performance: A Practical Guide to Assessing Teaching, Research, and Service. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass. https://www.amazon.com/Evaluating-Faculty-Performance-Practical-Assessing/dp/1933371048

Wiggins G and McTighe J. *Understanding by design, 2ⁿᵈ expanded edition*. Alexandria, VA USA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, 2005. http://www.ascd.org