Overview: Peer Review of Teaching

Objectives: Improve teaching effectiveness and provide evidence of teaching effectiveness for evaluation processes.

PROCESS FOR SELECTION OF PEER EVALUATORS

(1) Instructor option; (2) Administrator option; (3) Combination of (1) and (2). In most disciplines for which the evaluation is being conducted, the evaluator has expertise in the subject although this requirement may not be consistently required. A few units utilize a specifically designated trained reviewer across all units.

EVALUATION PROCESS DETAILS

a. Observation of Classroom Teaching: Perceived appropriateness of materials and methods; depth of material covered; correlation of topics with course syllabus and learning outcomes for course; currency of the material presented. Interaction with instructor by reviewing syllabus and course goals prior to evaluation enhances experience.

b. Evaluation of course materials: Review of materials used in the class can provide a more in-depth assessment of the course and therefore more useful feedback to the instructor.

c. Peer reviewers should work one-on-one with instructor in contrast to “committee of peers.” Results should be shared only with instructor. Report by peer reviewer should outline suggestions for improving teaching effectiveness.

d. Training of reviewers and use of a standardize assessment template (many available) will improve quality and consistency of information collected.

FACTORS TO CONSIDER IN IMPLEMENTING PEER REVIEW

a. Time allotted to peer evaluations can be extensive and therefore could be burdensome to reviewers

b. Reviewers’ efforts must be seriously recognized

c. Process has to be non-judgmental

d. Feedback to Department chairs/deans should not reflect nature of review—merely that exercise was completed.

e. Instructor resistance to peer evaluations exists for various reasons (Berk, 2005)

f. Peer evaluations should be regular—a one-time classroom review may be insufficient

g. Departments/Colleges should consider development of processes/policies for peer evaluation

h. Literature generally discourages use of student evaluations as part of peer evaluations
i. “The evidence for peer’s effectiveness in broadened evaluative roles is scant and inconsistent. – article calls for caution regarding roles that peers should assume in evaluating teaching. – questioned whether it is the “right thing to do.” (Burns, 1998)

j. Creation of peer teaching discussion groups usually viewed as positive aspect of process

RESOURCES REQUIRED

a. Training of reviewers by TILT as to what should be focus of assessment
b. Standardized templates recommended by TILT tailored when appropriate to units