

Tips for Peer Evaluation of Online Courses

Based on past and current peer evaluation procedures at the University of Florida. Fully online courses should be evaluated after grades are submitted and the course has closed, so evaluators can see all course content and student evaluations simultaneously. Evaluators should be given “instructor” roles in Canvas to allow for access to student and instructor comments on assignments and discussions.

- Evaluation team (three) should include a subject area specialist, another faculty member who teaches online, and an administrator (graduate or undergraduate coordinator depending on the course level).
- A pre-meeting with the faculty member should be held to discuss metrics from earlier course offerings including, perceived course strengths/weaknesses, student evaluations, student grade range, and the faculty members teaching philosophy.
- Evaluate course before a faculty members three-year review and again before promotion.
- In T&P letters, document changes in course content and structure that occurred based on the first review, and changes initiated based on student feedback.
- Evaluators can use Quality Matters or a similar rubric for evaluating online courses; however, the rubric should not be the only evaluation tool. Courses are developed to serve different audiences and needs (large enrollment undergrad course v/s small undergrad capstone course) and cannot be evaluated by one rubric.
- Evaluators should note the following when they review courses:
 - Does the instructor set the tone for appropriate conduct in the course (welcome video, easy to find office hours/contact info, is a syllabus statement about honor code easily found)?
 - Is the course material easy to access and presented in a logical order?
 - Is course content up-to-date and presented in multiple formats (videos, readings, short lectures)?
 - Are lectures and attachments ADA compliant? Is material accessible (closed-captioned, PDFs viewable with a screen reader, images supplied with alt text)?
 - Are assignment instructions and due dates easy to find? Are due dates distributed across the semester or heavily loaded at the end of the semester?
 - Are assignment points tied to several high stakes assignments/exams or are students given numerous lower stakes assignments to complete? If all high-stakes exams are used, is a proctoring service used and explained?
 - Are students given adequate feedback on assignments? Is feedback and grading timely? Are rubrics used and are they available to the students?
 - Are students given the opportunity to provide instructor feedback at the mid-point of the semester (formal mid-point online evaluation or discussion prompt requesting feedback). If yes, did the instructor adjust course material based on the feedback?
- A post-review meeting with the faculty member should be held to discuss the evaluation.

If you would like to discuss this document please contact Jennifer Gillett jgillett@tamu.edu.