

Lecturer Evaluation Policy  
Department of Mathematics & Statistics  
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The Department of Mathematics & Statistics values quality instruction. We strive for excellence in our classrooms and aim for continual improvement. Part of growth and improvement is a mechanism for feedback and evaluation as implemented by the Lecturer Evaluation Committee. The Lecturer Evaluation Committee performs the evaluation of lecturers according to the policies and procedures laid out in this document.

## **1. The Lecturer Evaluation Committee (LEC)**

### **A. Selection**

The LEC shall be composed of at least five tenured faculty members. Eligibility for the LEC ballot is determined by the Department Chair in consultation with the faculty. The members of the LEC shall be elected by the tenured and tenure-track faculty in the spring semester to begin service the following fall semester. The committee members shall serve for staggered two-year terms.

### **B. Duties:**

The LEC is responsible for deliberating and making recommendations regarding lecturers undergoing evaluation. A written summary of the LEC's recommendation is required for each lecturer under evaluation. The Chair of the LEC is responsible for determining which lecturers are to be evaluated and/or observed each year, and for assigning members of the Classroom Evaluation Committee (CEC, see Section 1.C) to conduct classroom observations.

The evaluations written by the LEC may be used in all personnel decisions, including the assignment of courses and recommendations for or against range elevation.

### **C. Classroom Evaluation Committee (CEC):**

The CEC shall be a committee of the whole consisting of tenure-line faculty minus the members of the LEC and minus faculty in their first year at Cal Poly Pomona. The CEC will be responsible for performing in-class teaching observation of lecturers and graduate teaching associates. The Chair of the LEC is responsible for assignment of members of the CEC to perform in-class teaching observations of lecturers.

## **2. Criteria**

The faculty of the Mathematics and Statistics Department recognize the primary importance of teaching among the responsibilities and duties of its lecturers. Lecturers are expected to promote the study and learning of mathematics and statistics through effective communication, clear elucidation of mathematical concepts, and maintenance of appropriate academic standards.

The LEC shall determine if a lecturer's teaching performance is satisfactory or unsatisfactory based on a review of the following materials –

- class climate evaluations by students,
- CEC in-class peer observations,
- course materials, including syllabi and exams,
- grade reports and distributions,
- any written self-evaluation prepared by the lecturer,
- a statement, if any, prepared by the course coordinator if the lecturer taught coordinated classes in the period under review,
- any signed letters submitted by students, faculty, and staff. Letters from students shall contain the student's Bronco I.D. A copy of each letter submitted that is not already contained in the lecturer's Personnel Action File (PAF) must be given to the lecturer. The lecturer shall have the right to respond or submit a rebuttal statement or response in writing to the LEC no later than ten days following receipt of the letter. Within the first three weeks of each term a request for written comments will be publicly posted for the lecturers undergoing peer review that term,
- any items placed in the Lecturer's PAF during the period under review.

**A. Class Climate Evaluations:**

Class Climate Evaluations, also referred to as “student evaluations,” will be conducted for each class taught in each term. Summaries of the evaluations will be returned to the temporary faculty member, a copy placed in the PAF, and a copy retained in the Department office. Appendix 10 (Student Evaluation of Teaching) of the University Manual outlines the general procedures for class climate evaluation on this campus and can be found on the Faculty Affairs website.

The LEC may examine the responses to all of the questions on the student evaluation forms (see Appendix C for a copy of the form and the list of questions). In particular, the LEC may examine Questions 1, 2, 4, and 8 for evidence that the instructor is effective in communicating and elucidating course content; Questions 3, 11, and 15 for evidence that the instructor maintains appropriate academic standards; and Question 14 to summarize the overall effectiveness of the instructor.

In general, it is expected that “Satisfactory” averages for Questions 1, 2, 4, and 8 and for Questions 3, 11, and 15 fall in the range of 1.0 to 2.2. Averages in the range of 2.2 to 2.5 may be considered “Satisfactory” depending on other evidence provided.

For each instructor and each course, the LEC will consider the percentage of responses to Question 14 that lie in the Good to Very Good (1-2) range.

- If 60% or more of the responses to Question 14 are in the Good to Very Good range, the response to that question for that course shall be considered “Satisfactory.”
- If 75% or more of the responses to any question are in the Good to Very Good range, the response to that question for that course will be considered “Good.”

- If fewer than 60% of the responses are in the Good to Very Good range, the response may be considered Satisfactory if supporting evidence of mitigating factors is provided. Lecturers with cumulative scores below 60% will meet with the Department Chair and discuss strategies to improve. If scores do not improve, a lecturer may not be offered future teaching assignments.

If 2 or more courses taught by the instructor during the period under review are below the minimum standards described above, evidence of mitigating circumstances may compensate. Examples of mitigating circumstances can be found in Appendix B. The lecturer has the right to include a written self-evaluation which may address these mitigating circumstances; however, this is not required.

### **B. Peer observations of Classroom Teaching**

Peer observations of classroom teaching allow for a more complete picture of an instructor than that afforded by a reliance solely on student evaluations. As fellow instructors, peers are uniquely able to observe and provide informative feedback on teaching.

Appendix A contains the form to be used for peer observations of classroom teaching. The feedback provided on this form is meant to encourage all parties to approach the process of peer observation with an intent to improve and refine our teaching. Comments on positive aspects of the teaching (question 3 on the form in Appendix A) let an instructor know what is going well. Suggestions for improvement or advice (question 4 on the form in Appendix A) should be taken as helpful constructive criticism. These suggestions are supposed to help an instructor improve, but do not represent concerns that need to be addressed by the LEC.

On the other hand, comments about “areas of concern that must be improved” (question 5 on the form in Appendix A) should be taken as directives that must be addressed. The LEC should note these comments and look for evidence that these areas of concern have been addressed. If these areas of concern that have been noted in past peer reviews have been corrected, they should be noted in later peer reviews so the LEC can take this into consideration during the review process. By the time a lecturer is eligible to receive an initial or subsequent 3-year appointment, peer review shall indicate significant improvement of noted deficiencies.

### **C. Course Materials**

The LEC will examine course materials to ensure that appropriate academic standards are being maintained. It is typical for lower division courses to have most of the overall grade determined by examinations, with a relatively smaller portion of the grade coming from homework or quizzes. Most lower division course materials should also follow these guidelines:

- Final exams should be cumulative. This does not necessarily mean that every topic must be covered on the final, but topics should span the range of material and be a broad sampling of the total material.
- Exams and other work should include problems that ask students to reason in a variety of ways, such as graphically/visually, algebraically, and in the context of real-world problems, as appropriate for each course.
- Final exams should include problems in a range of difficulty, from straightforward to challenging and in between. The straightforward questions represent the basic skills that are needed to provide a solid foundation in the material. The challenging questions should require students to demonstrate some mathematical maturity. Most courses have culminating material that requires students to think critically, solve problems, and interpret their work. For example, in calculus word problems in optimization and related rates require a greater level of mathematical sophistication and maturity. In an introductory statistics course, students must use valid statistical reasoning to apply and interpret the results of hypothesis testing.
- The same final exam should not be given in classes in different terms. While individual problems on an exam may sometimes be repeated, the expectation is that final exams are newly created each term.
- Syllabi should conform to university guidelines.
- Individual courses may have more specific written guidelines in the book dependent outlines maintained in the department office, and instructors should follow those guidelines.

There are no prescribed grade distributions or pass rates, but if the grade distribution in a lower division course falls outside of departmental norms, the LEC will carefully examine the course materials to determine if there are any issues that need to be addressed. If an instructor knows that his or her grade distribution for a particular course is unusually skewed, the instructor may include an explanation in the (optional) self-evaluation submitted as part of the evaluation process (see Section D).

#### **D. Self Evaluation**

Instructors may choose to submit a self-evaluation regarding anything relevant to their teaching or to their LEC evaluation. Such a self-evaluation will be required for instructors eligible for an initial 3-year appointment. For all other lecturers, a self-evaluation is optional.

A self-evaluation may be used to explain or discuss results of class climate surveys, respond to peer observations, or simply to discuss the lecturer's evolution as an instructor and philosophy of teaching. Appendix B includes examples of the types of supporting documentation an instructor may wish to include in a self-evaluation.

#### **E. Responsibilities of the Lecturer**

All lecturers are expected to abide by university policies regarding email, office hours, and other instructional duties. This includes:

- Holding scheduled office hours
- Scheduling weekly office hours according to university guidelines (as of 02/27/18, 16 min/WTU)
- Arriving to class on time
- Responding to student email
- Communicating with the office staff or Department Chair when unable to make it to office hours or class
- Submitting grades on time
- Promptly submitting materials to the department at the end of each term

### **3. Procedures**

#### **A. Student (Class Climate) Evaluations**

Student evaluations shall be conducted in every course and collected in accordance with university policy and the collective bargaining agreement (CBA). In particular, instructors should take care to follow procedures to ensure that student feedback is anonymous. The department will distribute instructions to all faculty each term with instructions on the procedures for conducting student evaluations.

#### **B. Peer Observations**

Peer observations will be assigned by the LEC Chair and performed by members of the CEC. The member of the CEC will arrange a visitation with the temporary faculty member with at least 5 days' notice. The written, signed evaluation will be reported on the department approved form (Appendix A) and given to the candidate within two weeks. The evaluation should be discussed with the lecturer by the evaluator. The candidate will then sign to acknowledge receipt of the form and the signed form will be turned over to the LEC Chair. The LEC Chair will place this signed form in the lecturer's PAF within two weeks.

The scheduling of peer observations will follow all guidelines outlined in the CBA.

At a minimum, peer observations will be performed (a) in the first semester that a new lecturer teaches for the Department; (b) for faculty on a one-year contract, at least once a year; (c) at least twice during a 3-year contract, usually in at least two different years of the contract.

Further peer observations may be conducted at the discretion of the Department Chair, the LEC Chair, or at the request of the lecturer.

#### **C. Course Materials**

Materials are to be turned in to the Math Department upon request. Failure to submit documents by the deadlines may negatively affect the evaluation. The materials to be collected are:

- Syllabi for each class
- Final exams
  - A blank final exam
  - A worked final exam and key
  - All students' written final exams
- Grade roster screenshot from BroncoDirect with submitted grades
- Grade roll sheet, with records of all scores earned by students (HW, exams, final exam, total recorded grade)

All items except for the students' final exams are turned in electronically and stored in a password protected folder. After one semester, the students' final exams are either shredded or returned to the faculty member.

These materials are used by the department in two ways: (1) for the purposes of LEC review; and (2) to allow the department chair to answer student questions about grades more easily, especially in situations in which the faculty member is not currently employed by Cal Poly Pomona. Additionally, faculty members who perform a peer observation may use their own written report in writing letters of recommendation at the request of the instructor who was observed.

All materials collected by the Department or the LEC may not be otherwise disseminated or used for any other purpose beyond lecturer evaluation or program assessment. The uses for lecturer evaluation are as described above. Anonymized materials may be used in doing assessment of the departmental program as a whole, but not to do evaluation of individuals outside of the formal LEC process. In particular, syllabi and final exams (blank or worked exams) will not be shared with students or with faculty who are not involved in the evaluation process.

#### **4. Frequency of Peer Evaluation**

The frequency of peer evaluation (as conducted by the LEC) is described in the Collective Bargaining Agreement CBA Article 15, "Evaluation." Articles 15.23-15.34 govern the frequency of evaluation. This article generally gives a minimum number of LEC evaluations that must be conducted, but allows for additional evaluations upon request.

- Faculty on 3-year contracts will be evaluated by the LEC at least once during the term of their appointment, during the third year of their contract.
- Faculty who are eligible for an initial 3-year contract will be evaluated by the LEC in the year preceding the beginning of the 3-year appointment.

- In most cases, faculty who are on 1-year contracts should be evaluated by the LEC annually.

## 5. Timeline

Evaluation criteria and procedures shall be made available to faculty within 14 days after the first day of instruction of each term. Student evaluations and collection of course materials will occur each semester, as described above. Peer observations may be done in either Fall or Spring semester. The dates and deadline below may be modified only by request of the lecturer being observed.

Yearly Schedule for peer observations:

Second week of each term	Notification of Lecturer Evaluation policies and procedures
By week 4 of each term	CEC faculty members assigned peer observations
By week 6 of each term	Peer observations scheduled
By week 10 of each term	Peer observation occurs
Within 2 weeks of observation	Peer observation form completed and submitted to instructor
By week 15 of term	Peer observation submitted to LEC chair and to dean's office for PAF

## 6. Appendices

- Appendix A: Peer Observation Form, to be used by members of the CEC for evaluation of class visits.
- Appendix B: List of examples of supporting documentation that may be included in a self-evaluation or that may be considered by the LEC.
- Appendix C: Copy of the Class Climate form.



Appendix A: Peer Observation Form

Lecturer Name: _____	Date: _____
Course/Section: _____	Time Arrived: _____
Name of evaluator: _____	Time Left: _____
# of students present/ enrolled: _____	

In the questions below, please consider the following factors: organization of presentation; concern that students understand the material; providing the students with challenge; ability to explain information and concepts; creating and maintaining the students' interest; willingness and effectiveness in answering student questions; knowledge of subject; control of class; overall effectiveness on the day of the classroom visit.

1. Short Description of topics covered:

2. Modes of instruction observed (lecture, group discussion, small group activity, etc) and description of lesson

3. What aspects of the instructor's teaching were notably strong?

4. What suggestions or advice would continue to improve the instructor's teaching?

5. Are there any areas of concern that must be improved and discussed in follow-up observations or evaluations?

## Appendix B: Examples of supporting documentation

Good teaching does not always result in positive student evaluations, so it is important that instructors have other ways to present evidence to demonstrate the quality of their teaching. The following list gives suggestions and examples of the types of supporting evidence that instructors may use to document their efforts in teaching, as well as some mitigating factors that might serve to explain weaker student evaluation scores. Instructors may wish to elaborate on some of these themes in a self-evaluation to be submitted to the LEC.

### Practices that potentially demonstrate high quality teaching:

1. Innovations in teaching. An instructor may wish to write a self-evaluation describing instructional innovations that he or she is particularly proud of.
2. Projects or other assignments that encourage critical thinking and conceptual understanding. In a self-evaluation, an instructor may submit evidence of interesting assignments or projects.
3. Data. Any data about student success can be useful. If you have particular types of data you would like, please discuss with the Department Chair to determine what is available.

### Mitigating factors that may explain student evaluation scores below the minimum standards:

4. Teaching a course for the first time. An instructor who teaches a course for the first time often does not yet know common student difficulties or how to present the material. In this situation, it is understandable that the student evaluation scores may not be as strong as expected.
5. An outlier. If an instructor has a single section of a course with significantly weaker student evaluations, but has other sections of the course with much better evaluations, that single section may be an outlier.
6. Trying new techniques. Part of innovating in teaching involves taking risks. Instructors may be wary of adopting new methods in teaching, for fear that their student evaluations may be affected if things don't go as planned. An instructor may write a self-evaluation to explain what they tried and how it went. It is recommended that if an instructor is planning major changes to the instructional design of a course, he or she may want to consult with the Department Chair first, to identify any pitfalls and get advice on whether or how to make the changes.

