

**Office of the President  
California State University, Chico**



**Executive Memorandum 21-026**

**October 25, 2021**

**From:** Gayle E. Hutchinson, President

**Subject:** Student Feedback on Teaching and Learning Policy

Upon the recommendation of the Academic Senate and the concurrence of the Provost, I approve the Student Feedback on Teaching and Learning Policy, effective immediately.

<b>Policy Title:</b>	EM 21-026 Student Feedback on Teaching and Learning Policy
<b>Contact:</b>	Institutional Research and the Academic Senate Office
<b>Supersedes:</b>	EM 15-010
<b>Revision:</b>	
<b>Enabling Legislation or Executive Order:</b>	

**PURPOSE**

To provide a systematic framework in which the University evaluates learning and teaching through one aspect of evaluation known as Student Feedback on Teaching and Learning (SFOT). SFOT will serve as one component of the University's strategy for improved student learning and should be combined with additional assessment methods, such as peer observations and teaching portfolios.

**I. SCOPE:**

This policy applies to all students, staff, faculty, and administrators conducting or managing instructional activities at CSU, Chico.

**II. POLICY:**

SFOT refers to the specific questionnaires as well as the processes used to accomplish the systematic campus-wide collection of student feedback, analysis, reporting and interpretation of data and feedback on the quality of teaching and learning in order to do the following:

- Establish processes and instruments to provide accurate, timely, reliable, and valid information to contribute to evaluation of teaching (parameters);
- Provide feedback to faculty for improved teaching and learning (formative);
- Contribute information to retention, tenure, and promotion decision-making (evaluative).

In order to accomplish the stated purpose and scope, the University Student Feedback on Teaching and Learning (USFOT) Committee will be established. The mission of the USFOT Committee is to:

1. promote the growth and development of good pedagogical practice by fostering a culture that values the input of everyone participating in the learning experience;
2. provide counsel about the most current research and best practices about the ways SFOT can aid in cultivating inclusive pedagogical innovation and promoting meaningful student input and participation in their educational success;
3. establish guidelines about how to interpret and understand SFOT when used for teaching improvement as well as evaluating faculty performance;
4. provide recommendations about how SFOT can be used as part of an overall strategy for improving student learning.

**USFOT Committee Structure:** All members are voting members and shall consist of:

Members: (Two-year staggered-term)

- One faculty member selected from each instructional College appointed by their College Dean.
- Three students (one graduate and two undergraduate) chosen by the Associated Students Board of Directors

Ex Officio members:

- Chair of Faculty and Student Policies Committee serves as chair of the USFOT committee)
- Chair of Student Academic Senate (or designee)
- The Associate Vice President for Academic Personnel (or designee)
- Dean (appointed by the Provost)
- Director of Institutional Research (or designee)
- CFA Representative
- Representative of Staff Council

The ex officio members will also serve as an executive committee of the whole, empowered to make decisions during summer and intersession periods and when time constraints necessitate it. The College representatives are expected to be or become acquainted with the assessment practices and instrument(s) in their respective colleges in order to promote and maintain continuity and communication.

**Committee Type:** USFOT is a permanent Senate committee reporting to the Faculty and Student Policies Committee (FASP).

**Reporting structure:** Within two months after convening in September, the USFOT Committee will submit to the FASP Chair a list of goals it hopes to accomplish in the next academic year to further its mission. In May, the committee will send a brief report to the FASP Chair about its progress toward these goals as well as any recommendations (if there are any) about future policy issues that FASP should address to strengthen and facilitate the USFOT committee's charge.

### **III. RESPONSIBILITIES**

The USFOT Committee is responsible for:

1. recommending changes to improve the standard University instruments and procedures;
2. approving Department/Unit questionnaires or other evaluation instruments (henceforth, questionnaires and other evaluation instruments are referred to collectively as instruments) and procedures when different from the standard instruments and procedures;
3. promulgating instruments and processes that are commonly understood and effectively implemented with a continuity of communication; establish and maintain its organizational online presence;
4. annually advising Departments/Units of:

- their rights regarding the development and use their own instruments and procedures subject to the approval of the USFOT Committee;
  - the deadlines for submission of proposed revised and new Department/Unit instruments and procedures to the USFOT Committee;
  - the requirement to use the standard instruments and procedures during the following spring and fall semesters if the Department/Unit does not propose alternative instruments and procedures prior to the deadline;
  - submission deadlines at least two months before the deadline date;
5. annually reporting to the Academic Senate accomplishments/outcomes of USFOT activities;
  6. In order to promote a culture of shared innovation and participation with its mission, the USFOT Committee will initiate outreach and other ideas to foster collaborative communication across the University.
    - The USFOT Committee will establish and maintain its organizational online presence to promote its goals and to innovate ways to interface with the University community to provide advice and to receive ideas.
  7. The USFOT Committee will continue to initiate discussions about ways to promote SFOT participation across campus. They will advocate for processes and instruments that have scientific consistency and integrity and are valid, reliable and practical. They will recommend that Departments/Units adopt and persist in using standard procedures in the administration of their instruments.
  8. When invited, the USFOT Committee can advise the Colleges and Departments about their policies and procedures for the collection and processing of Department/Unit instruments in order to increase their efficiency and streamline administrative processes.

#### **IV. PROCEDURES**

1. The USFOT Committee shall be constituted by May 15 of each year by the Executive Committee of the Academic Senate.
2. The USFOT Committee shall hold its first full meeting by September 15 of each year; on this meeting they will choose the standing date and time for meetings and begin to implement their charge.
3. During the Fall semester each year, the USFOT Committee shall:
  - establish deadlines for submission and approval of Department/Unit instruments;
  - review proposed revised, and new Department/Unit instruments and for possible use in the following spring and fall semesters;
  - consider possible changes to campus-wide procedures regarding timing, distribution, administration, security. Processing, return, and storage of SFOTs and collected data;
  - submit the standard instruments and revised procedures to the Faculty and Student Policies Committee of the of the Academic Senate for review and approval if there are recommended changes.

#### **V. REFERENCES**

- [FPPP 4.0 and 8.1.b \(AY 14/15\) \(PDF\)](#)
- [CBA, articles 15.15 and 15.33 \(PDF\)](#)

#### **VI. APPENDICIES**

1. Instruments need to measure what they purport to measure (that is, be valid) and measure consistently over time and among respondents (that is, be reliable) (Arreola, 2000; Franklin, 2001, Hobson & Talbot, 2001).
2. Institution-developed instruments should clearly identify purpose, select specific aspects to be evaluated (e.g., course design), choose type of items (e.g., specific faculty behaviors, general

- overall effectiveness), and establish reliability and validity (Arreola, 2000).
3. Instruments should include both open and close-ended questions (Arreola, 2000; Cashin, 1999).
  4. Ask students to “consider how they have been changed by their encounter with the course material, not how they have been entertained by our [instructor] performance” (Hodges & Stanton, 2007).
  5. Questions should provide a reflective opportunity for students and reveal something to the instructor about teaching in the discipline (Rando, 2001).
  6. Use low-inference (individual behaviors) and high-inference (global measure – enthusiasm, clarity, or overall effectiveness) items that align with purpose (Abrami, 1985; Cashin, 1999, Cashin & Downey, 1992; Marsh & Roche, 1997, Murray, 1983; Renaud & Murray, 2005).
  7. Low-inference (specific individual behaviors)
    - a. Single score or measure of overall course cannot represent the multidimensionality of teaching (Marsh, 1987).
    - b. Specific behavior items can be clear to students and offer easy interpretation for instructors (Cashin, 1999).
  8. High-inference (overall global measures) Low inference ratings may be more affected by the systemic distortion hypothesis (that is, traits can be judged to be correlated when in reality they have little or no correlation) (Renaud & Murray, 2005). Ratings of overall effectiveness are predictable from specific classroom behaviors of instructors. Observer reports of these behaviors (e.g., addressing individual students by name, placing outline of lecture on the board) correlate with student ratings of overall teaching and measures of student learning and motivation (Murray, 1983)