

The University of Tennessee at Chattanooga  
**Course Learning Evaluations (CLE) Committee 2022-2023**  
**Final Report**

**Members:**

Deborah Mullen, MGT/RCOB (year 2), **CHAIR**  
Meredith Barbee, CHEM/CAS (year 1)  
Stephanie Eton, HHP/CHEPS (year 1)  
Jason Gordon, EDUC/CHEPS (year 1)  
Fang Yu Hu, HIST/CAS (year 2)  
Mohammad Mahtabi, ENME/CECS (year 1)  
Karen McGuffee, SDJS/CAS (year 3)  
Monica Miles, BGE/CAS (year 1)  
Elsa Mohamed, CPCS/CECS (year 1)  
Sheena Murray, ECON/RCOB (year 1)  
Brian Riberio, PHIL/CAS (year 1)  
Jaesin Sa, HHP/CHEPS (year 1)  
Two students (never seated by the SGA)  
Victoria Bryan, *ex-officio: Executive Director of WCTL*  
Cindy Williamson, *ex-officio: Executive Director of OPEIR*

**VICE-CHAIR & SECRETARY** were not elected due to the Chair's misunderstanding about the committee structure.

**CLE Committee Summary 2022-2023:**

Per the UTC Faculty Senate description, this committee's purview is to "recommend policies and procedures for student evaluation of faculty instruction and for using evaluation results to improve instruction."

In addition, the committee was charged by Jennifer Boyd, Faculty Senate President, Academic Affairs, the Commission on the Status of Women, and Walker Center to survey Department Heads and RTP committee chairs about their usage of the student and peer evaluations of teaching. The work built off previous work from this committee in 2020-2021 when a CLE bias report and survey were completed, and the alterations of the CLE by the committee in 2021-2022 to accommodate broader course modalities and attempt to encourage less student bias.

All meetings were held via Zoom to aid in scheduling.

### **Meeting 1: October 14, 2022**

Attendees: Deborah Mullen (Chair), Meredith Barbee, Stephanie Eton, Jason Gordon, Fang Yu Hu, Mohammad Mahtabi, Ethan Mills, Sheena Murry, Victoria Bryan, Monica Miles

Meeting Summary: Introductions and an overview of the planned work for the academic year: proposal about analyzing the newly revised CLE in 2023-2024 after a full year of usage and request to develop and field a Department Head/RTP Committee Head survey.

### **2022-2023 plan: Design an evaluation plan for the newly designed CLE survey.**

- redesigned last year by this committee aimed at lessening the impacts of bias and covering the current modalities of classes at UTC; approved by the Faculty Senate in Spring 2022
- Fielded this year for the first time in Fall 2022
- The design of the proposed evaluation (pre vs. post) will be completed this year, with implementation expected next year after one full academic calendar.

### **New Business: Information and data gathering for EDO and RTP**

- Per a request from the Faculty Senate President - Jennifer Boyd, Past President – Tammy Garland, Vice Provost – Matt Matthews, and Dawn Ford, Chair of the Commission for Women, CLE has been asked to collect information from RTP chairs and department chairs about how CLE and peer evaluations are used.
- This work is an ad hoc request in which the committee agreed to participate in
- It slightly extended our committee's responsibilities, yet members felt it was complimentary and helpful to understand across colleges and campuses.
- We will collect the information from RTP Chairs and Department Chairs
- An interesting observation from the committee – search committee members must recertify, including unconscious bias, annually, but no such requirement for EDO or RTP

**Commission on Women** – brief report from Deborah's conversation with Dawn Ford and from Stephanie, a member of both groups. She echoed the call for more information about the accommodations and awareness of bias in evaluations (EDO and RTP), especially for women and BIPOC faculty. The Commission also advocates for new and existing faculty with new preps to be given more time and space to settle into UTC and courses before citing low evaluation scores.

### **Meeting 2: November 11, 2022**

Attendees: Deborah Mullen (Chair), Meredith Barbee, Stephanie Eton, Fang Yu Hu, Mohammad Mahtabi, Ethan Mills, Monica Miles, Sheena Murry, Victoria Bryan, Cindy Wilkerson

### **Student and Peer Evaluation Survey of Department Heads and RTP Committee Chairs -**

- Design items and order survey instrument
- The plan is to field this survey in Qualtrics in February 2023, right after the RTP meetings, since some people may be new in the role.
- Survey to branch with some items only for department chairs (NTT, EDO) and all respondents receiving the RTP questions. We would like to ask that the RTP committee take a poll of opinions in the committee since there is often a difference in perspective.

### **Faculty and CLE Committee Questions for OPEIR**

Can our existing reporting system allow additional, conditional averages reporting within faculty control, such as comparisons to other women, BIPOC, and modalities?

[Data regarding gender and race/ethnicity isn't housed in Banner, where data for the course evaluations lives, so we couldn't pull it in as part of the evaluation. There is a modality](#)

question on the CLE, but I'd have to see if that could be used to filter responses or if some data points could be pulled from Banner. Also, I'd need to check to see whether we could use it the way you described above, even with the data. However, faculty can always request data from OPEIR regarding CLEs. We can provide comparative data around many different variables.

Is there a way to get the comments only from small N class sizes? Faculty understand the need not to make these identifiable, but how can faculty with consistently small class sizes see the comments to make improvements?

Yes. Faculty can request results for any classes with reporting disabled as long as there is more than one response. Just email [opeir@utc.edu](mailto:opeir@utc.edu) or put in a [data request](#). The results, including comments, are disabled more so that your department heads and other supervisors can't see the results, although you can share them as needed.

Is there a way to motivate student completion with a differential release date on final grades? (Do evals. and see grades ASAP vs. no evals. and see grades on last day of the grading period as seen at a different university)

This is a possibility but would need to be decided by the committee and probably needs to go through upper-level administration, as well. This has been discussed in the past, but there have always been reasons for not putting something like it in place.

### **Meeting 3: December 2, 2022**

Attendees: Deborah Mullen (Chair), Meredith Barbee, Fang Yu Hu, Mohammad Mahtabi, Ethan Mills, Monica Miles, Cindy Williamson, Karen McGuffee

**Student and Peer Evaluation Survey of Department Heads and RTP Committee Chairs - CLE** worked on all three surveys (RTP committee chairs, Department Heads, Deans, and Admin). The comments are incorporated into this set of surveys dated 12.15.2022.

### **Meeting 4: January 14, 2023**

Attendees: Deborah Mullen (Chair), Karen McGuffee, Stephanie Eton, Mohammad Mohammad, Fang Yu Hu, Sheena Murray

**Student and Peer Evaluation Survey of Department Heads and RTP Committee Chairs** -incorporate the final edits on the surveys from outside of committee stakeholders. Decision made not to survey Deans since there are so few – recommend that they are involved in the conversation reacting to the survey results.

### **Meeting 4: April 28, 2023**

Attendees: Deborah Mullen (Chair), Fang Yu Hu, Sheena Murray, Jason Gordon

**Student and Peer Evaluation Survey of Department Heads and RTP Committee Chairs** – review of the report to be shared with requestors. The survey response rates were too low for college-level aggregation of findings and are therefore presented as a unified aggregation.

Comments fall into two categories: Student CLE and Peer Evaluations

#### Student CLE

- Due to a widespread understanding of bias, Department Heads and RTP Committee Chairs see these as barometers indicating trends.
- Year-over-year improvement or consistency of high scores from student evaluations is important to reviewers. However, they seem to give some related contextual interpretation to the results with allowances for a new prep, early or late class times, etc. Change (improvement) is seen as necessary by the RTP Committees.
- Comments strongly suggest a campus-wide desire to change to a less biased instrument.

#### Peer Evaluations

- These are seen as more critical by both Department heads and RTP committees.
- Peer Evaluations are highly variable; every year by the same person, some once every 3 years by peers, the content and scope of the review process are inconsistent even within colleges. Few reviewers are trained instructional designers or Walker Center reviewers.
- Since there is a lack of uniform content reviewed, these reviews are unique to the reviewer.
- Responders were firmly against a UTC-wide peer evaluation framework but were open to a Department and College level synchronization of the process.

Recommendations Based on the Student and Peer Evaluation Survey of Department Heads and RTP Committee Chairs.

- Any instrument we can move to that will minimize student bias will be an improvement.
- As student CLE are problematic individually, an aggregation example of ways peers have presented these results to committees and department heads with the added context clues might be helpful to add to the Walker Center New Faculty course. (Mullen and Murphy have examples)
- Peer evaluations, as important tools, could be subjective and objective. It was noted that these reviews would be more developmental if a basic standardized outline ensured that reviewers were giving more systematic and consistent feedback. One member of the CLE committee noted that as an essential development tool, there also is no process for appealing or redacting something damaging, unlike the student CLE.

### **The committee discussed the University of Nebraska – Omaha tools (F-Impact and S-Impact)**

UN-O Recommendations for Implementation

#### F-IMPACT

Faculty self-assessment of high-impact practices (HIP) they engage in regularly, then scaled against the UN-O faculty sample average. Faculty can use this to identify HIP to add to classes. All classes should use some of these methods – none should use all.

#### S-IMPACT

The student version is in the process of being studied at UN-O. They are looking for volunteers also to use. The study aims to validate this survey of HIP and compare student assessment with faculty's assessment to see if they correlate.

Implementation Recommendations

#### F-IMPACT

- Voluntary self-assessment
- It could help identify HIP practices that faculty might want to add to classes (EDO – teaching)
- All HIPs are research-supported practices.
- Must be concurrent with currently required student and peer evaluations of teaching.

- It should be voluntary for inclusion in the EDO and dossiers at this time.
- We need to calculate UTC levels and, when possible, college and department levels.
- It still does not address all classes (arts, clinical practicums)

#### S-IMPACT

- All HIP scaled, no subjective items.
- Not yet available; in testing currently
- It still will not work for all class modalities and formats (i.e., small clinicals)
- Student attendance is not measured (so no weighting by # or amount of observation)
- When available, UTC needs to occur concurrently with CLE since faculty handbooks and RTP require these measures
- Unknown yet if the S version correlates with the F version; do students and faculty reports correlate, and in what ways, and to what degree?

UTC recommendation – What about adding a menu of qualitative items to choose from that are specific and positive-toned? Faculty could pick a few questions and use them in class or canvas discussion board to gain student-related comments on HIP. Motivated students might still use this space to make biased comments, but there is peer pressure to be responsive in at least a socially acceptable manner.

- What was the most important thing you will take away from this class?
- What assignment was most useful to you?
- What assignment was least useful to you?