

**EAS FACULTY PEER TEACHING EVALUATION**  
**(original documentation: September, 1995, modified September 2010)**

**I. Introduction**

A. Objectives

The primary goal of the EAS Faculty Peer Teaching Evaluation program is to provide feedback to individual faculty instructors in an effort to improve teaching in the department. Performed by faculty members, the peer evaluations will also provide documentation of teaching effectiveness which is complementary to the student evaluations that have been used for many years. The Faculty Peer Teaching Evaluation summary statements will also be used in normal promotion and tenure and other faculty evaluation purposes. Additional benefits of the Faculty Peer Teaching Evaluation process are: 1) increased awareness within the faculty of the EAS curriculum and course content; 2) the opportunity for faculty to improve their own teaching skills by observing their colleagues teaching.

B. Significance

As stated above, the primary goal of the Faculty Peer Teaching Evaluation is to improve teaching within the department. This objective is consistent with the College of Science Strategic Plan. **Faculty Peer Teaching Evaluations will also provide documentation of teaching effectiveness. Such documentation is now required for promotion and tenure documents.** More broadly, quality teaching is necessary for the success of the department's educational programs and is critical to the future of our increasingly technological society. The Faculty Peer Teaching Evaluation program is one approach to addressing these needs.

C. Other Considerations

We recognize that the department has multiple educational goals included in the curriculum, including service courses (mostly large-lecture classes, at an introductory level for non-majors), core courses designed for undergraduate majors, advanced and graduate-level specialty courses, and Earth and Atmospheric science education for preservice teachers. Of necessity, these courses have different characteristics, including class size and course format (lecture, laboratory, recitation, seminar). It is important that our evaluation process recognize these differences and appropriately assess teaching effectiveness within the context of the specific curricular objectives.

Furthermore, we recognize that teaching styles vary with course format and individual personalities. The goal of the Faculty Peer Teaching Evaluation is to assess teaching effectiveness, not influence teaching styles.

**II. Procedure**

A. Frequency of evaluation

In order to improve teaching within the department, to provide a basis for comparison of teaching effectiveness, and in the interest of fairness, all faculty will be included in the Faculty Peer Teaching Evaluations. The frequency of evaluations will be:

1. Assistant Professors and non-tenured Associate or Full Professors - every two years
2. Tenured Associate Professors - every four years
3. Tenured Full Professors - every seven years

*In addition, the Department Head may request that individual faculty be reviewed outside of the normal rotation*

An appropriate rotation within the department's faculty will be used to approximately equalize the number of evaluations per year, account for variations in teaching assignment or leaves of absence, and adjust the schedule of faculty selected for evaluation to the needs of the promotion and tenure process. Typically, Assistant professors will be evaluated during their second year and then once again before promotion consideration. If possible, different courses will be evaluated each time, and one undergraduate and one graduate course will be evaluated before promotion consideration.

#### B. Evaluators

Evaluators will be selected by the Department Head with input from each faculty member being evaluated. Each evaluator will perform the assigned evaluation during the academic year and prepare a report using the Standard Form (attached) and submit this to the Department Head by the end of the academic semester in which the evaluation is performed. The evaluator will prepare a draft Summary Evaluation (see section V of the EAS Faculty Peer Teaching Evaluation Standard Form) and discuss the Summary Evaluation with the faculty member evaluated. Based on this discussion, the evaluator may revise the Summary Evaluation which is then submitted to the Department Head for acceptance. The faculty member evaluated may elect to include a written response (section VI of the standard form) to the Evaluation statement and the peer evaluation in which case the response (section VI) will be included in all uses of the evaluation reports (see section IV). This summary statement and faculty member response (sections V and VI of the standard form) will be the primary result of the evaluation process (see section IV below). For faculty members nominated for promotion or tenure during the academic year in which they are being evaluated, results of Fall semester evaluations may be made available to the primary committee and the Department Head for use in promotion and tenure documents and discussions.

#### C. How an evaluation is performed

The evaluation for each course will involve written information and one or more classroom visits.

- 1) Written information (for each course) to be supplied to the Faculty Evaluator by the faculty member to be evaluated will consist of:
  - a. Narrative - a brief summary (about one page) describing the professor's course, educational objectives, typical enrollment, characteristics of the students, or any other information that the professor would like the evaluation subcommittee to know and which are related to the professor's teaching efforts. Such information might include information on how the course fits in to a curriculum or current or future plans, statements about educational philosophy, and efforts that the

professor has made to improve teaching, develop innovative approaches or materials, self-assessments, etc.

- b. Sample materials - Copies of sample materials from the course will be provided to the evaluation subcommittee. Sample materials could include course outline; reading lists; sample lecture notes, handouts, homework, laboratory assignments, quizzes, exams, and term paper assignments; and samples of student work.
- 2) Classroom visit – The evaluator will make at least one classroom visit to the course being evaluated. The date of a visit will be announced to the professor being evaluated at least one week before a visit.

Evaluation of written materials and classroom visits will be reported on the department's Standard Form.

### **III. Standard Form**

The standard form for use in reporting EAS Faculty Peer Teaching Evaluation is attached. Because the primary goal of this evaluation is teaching improvement, it is recommended that reports emphasize constructive criticism while attempting to fairly, uniformly and accurately document the quality of teaching in the department.

### **IV. Uses and Confidentiality**

The complete reports for each Faculty Peer Teaching Evaluation will be provided to the Department Head, the faculty member evaluated, and will be available for review by the department's primary promotion committee for candidates being considered for promotion or tenure. The summary statement (section V) and the faculty member response (section VI) of the Standard Form can be included in promotion and tenure documents, used by the Department Head to prepare university reports on the department's teaching effectiveness, used for nominations for teaching awards, or released for other purposes with the agreement of the faculty member evaluated. Other than these uses, the complete reports and the summary statements will be treated as confidential information.