

## **Proposed Revisions to APT Guidelines for Contributions to Teaching**

The accompanying revisions to the Guidelines for Appointment, Promotion, and Tenure are being presented by the DeLTA project. DeLTA is a National Science Foundation-funded initiative that aims to transform undergraduate education at the University of Georgia by aligning with five core commitments:

1. Design educational experiences to achieve clear and measurable learning outcomes
2. Base education decisions on evidence, including students' conceptions, capabilities, and attitudes
3. Actively collaborate and communicate about undergraduate education
4. Foster continuous teaching improvement
5. Promote inclusion and diversity

The DeLTA project is working at all levels of the institution to achieve change. Instructional action teams are expanding the use of evidence-based teaching practices at the course level. A leadership action team of department heads is creating new policies and practices that incentivize, recognize, and reward evidence-based teaching practices in departments. At the university level, DeLTA is partnering with university administrators and committees to propose revisions to policies and practices.

A primary aim of DeLTA is to create supports that allow for the use of evidence in educational decision making and promote continuous teaching improvement. This aim is important because universities have traditionally relied on end-of-course student evaluations to evaluate and document the quality of a faculty member's teaching. Although students should have a voice that informs instructional decisions, end-of-course evaluations typically suffer from a variety of problems. They negatively correlate with student course performance, suffer from low response rates, are confounded by issues related to course types (e.g., enrollment, discipline), are biased by instructor characteristics (e.g., gender, ethnicity, age), and are subject to misinterpretation when averages are used to describe ordinal data.

The proposed changes are meant to broaden and clarify the types of evidence that can be used to document teaching effectiveness and accomplishments and ultimately improve the quality of the judgments that can be made about a candidate's contributions to teaching. These changes are intended to apply broadly across disciplines and to serve all students who enroll at UGA, with their diverse abilities and range of skills. The changes have been reviewed and approved by the Faculty Affairs Committee of the University Council.

## GUIDELINES FOR APPOINTMENT, PROMOTION AND TENURE

**I. APPOINTMENT, PROMOTION AND TENURE**

Criteria for appointment, promotion, and tenure at the University follow from the University's mission to teach, to inquire into the nature of things and to serve society. University of Georgia faculty must meet the following primary responsibilities: teaching; research, scholarship, or other creative activities; and service to society, the University, and the profession. Academic appointment, promotion, and tenure are based upon a candidate's performance in these assigned areas. Faculty eligible to vote are expected to participate in the critical activities of faculty appointment, promotion, and tenure, except when there exists a significant conflict of interest. See glossary for definition of *Eligible Voting Faculty*.

**A. Contributions to Teaching****The Standard**

Teaching helps students develop knowledge, skills, and abilities within their chosen discipline and dispositions to continue learning. The University distinguishes between routine classroom performance and contributions to teaching that draw upon the teacher's depth and breadth of scholarly knowledge and their teaching expertise. Teaching includes not only formal classroom instruction, but also advising and mentoring undergraduate and graduate students. Use of the term "effective" and "effectiveness" throughout the document refers to the need to provide data that have been systematically collected and analyzed to support claims about teaching quality and teaching improvement. The term "systematic" means that evidence of contributions to teaching has been gathered, reviewed, and presented in an organized and methodical way that aims to reduce potential bias, allow for coherent evaluation, and promote continuous teaching improvement.

**Documentation**

Effectiveness in teaching is reflected by student learning and development and in improvements in the learning environment and curriculum. Evidence of teaching effectiveness may include, but is not limited to, any combination of two or more of the numbered categories (#1-9) listed below. In joint instructional endeavors, the evidence should specify the extent of each person's contribution.

1. Effectiveness shown by multiple forms of evidence, including two or more of the following:
  - a. A list of courses and information from student end-of-course surveys designed to reflect teaching effectiveness and creativity, rather than popularity. In such cases, information for all courses taught in the previous three years that have been evaluated should be included unless a candidate seeks early promotion, in which case information for two years is sufficient. The candidate should report appropriate quantitative data (i.e., range, mode) for items that provide summary evaluations of the course and instructor, if collected by the department or unit.
  - b. Indicators of ongoing efforts to make teaching decisions based on evidence and to improve teaching and instruction, such as reflection on course evaluation results, observations of the candidate's instruction, and examples of student work.
  - c. Program surveys of alumni attesting to the candidate's instructional contributions to alumni preparation for further education and careers.
  - d. Letters of support from former students attesting to the candidate's instructional performance both within the traditional classroom setting and beyond it.
  - e. Performance of students on uniform examinations, in standardized courses, or from assessment data collected as part of program outcomes assessment.

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- f. Accomplishments of the teacher's present and former students, including [examples of student work](#) or information to show the students' success both in learning the subject matter of the discipline and in pursuing it to a point of intellectual significance.
  - g. Effective direction of graduate study including theses and dissertations. [Documentation should include patterns of student progress toward degree, retention of students in programs and research group, or student scholarship or creative works.](#)
  - h. Evidence of successful direction of individual students in independent studies, special student projects, or student seminars.
2. Effectiveness shown by peer evaluation of expertise in instruction, including [any of the following](#):
    - a. [Systematic observations of instruction at multiple timepoints by peers trained in the use of established measures of effective teaching \(e.g., observation protocols, rubrics, review of instructional materials\).](#)
    - b. Selection for teaching special courses and programs.
    - c. Participation in special teaching activities outside the University, including international assignments, special lectureships, panel presentations, seminar participation, or international study and development projects.
    - d. Membership on special bodies concerned with teaching, such as accreditation teams or special commissions.
    - e. Invitations to testify before academic or governmental groups concerned with educational programs.
  3. Successful integration of teaching and research or teaching and service in ways that benefit students.
  4. Development or significant revision of programs and courses, including [any of the following](#):
    - a. Preparation of [effective](#) teaching materials, instructional techniques, curricula, or programs of study.
    - b. [Reflection over time on positive and negative comments from student end-of-course evaluations and on course assessment data. Reflection should summarize actions taken to maintain or build on positive course elements and to modify problematic elements.](#)
    - c. Collaborative work on courses, programs, and curricula within the University or across institutions.
  5. Honors or special recognitions for teaching accomplishments.
  6. Publication activities related to teaching, including [any of the following](#):
    - a. Textbooks, [curriculum materials](#), published lecture notes, abstracts, or peer-reviewed articles or reviews that reflect a candidate's teaching contributions and teaching scholarship.

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- b. Adoption of a candidate's **instructional materials such as** textbooks **and online materials**, especially repeated adoption, by institutions.
  - c. Presentation of papers on teaching before professional societies.
7. Receipt of competitive grants/contracts to fund innovative and evidence-based educational activities or to fund stipends for students.
  8. Departmental or institutional governance or academic policy and procedure development as related to teaching.
  9. **Sustained participation in teaching professional development that aligns with the candidate's efforts to improve their teaching, and demonstration of how participation has impacted the candidate's teaching practice.**