To: The University Senate

From: University Senate Faculty Affairs Committee

Subject: Evaluation of Teaching Effectiveness at Purdue University

Disposition: University Senate for Discussion

WHEREAS: University Senate Document 97-9 (Revised) indicates that “learning outcomes are important and should be evaluated;” and

WHEREAS: The use of the group medians of the students’ responses to the questions “overall, I would rate this instructor as” and “overall, I would rate this course as” are the current “common items” being used primarily, if not exclusively, for summative evaluations of faculty members, i.e., for promotion and tenure decisions; and

WHEREAS: It has been documented that student responses to this question are not accurate measures of student achievement of learning outcomes; and

WHEREAS: Research on student evaluations of teaching is indicating that the requirements in the “common items” section of University Senate Document 97-9 (revised) result in summative evaluation systems that are biased, easily manipulated, and inaccurate;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT:

Starting with the fall, 2017 semester, the questions “overall, I would rate this instructor as” and “overall, I would rate this course as” will no longer be mandatory university questions. Moreover, academic units are strongly encouraged not to use student responses to these questions for summative evaluation purposes, i.e. for promotion and tenure decisions.

For tenure-track faculty members that started at Purdue prior to fall, 2017, academic units should come to a mutual agreement on what will be used for their summative evaluations in support of the promotion and tenure process.

We request that the Provost’s office meet with Deans, individual promotion committees, and School/Department heads to describe the University’s expectations with respect to the use of summative course evaluation scores on the Promotion and Tenure Document.

Appropriate University groups should review all methods in use for summative evaluations as soon as possible initially, and then on a routine basis not to exceed an interval of 4 years. The review should include a report on best practices across the University and a comparison to methods used or proposed elsewhere for summative evaluations. These reports should be submitted and reviewed by appropriate personnel with the Provost’s office and by appropriate University Senate committees, and disseminated to primary and area committees.
Respectfully submitted by

Levon T. Esters

Voted For:
Linda S. Prokopy
Steven Landry
Krishnamurthy Sriramesh
Elizabeth A. Strickland
Evelyn Blackwood
Peter Dunn
Peter Hollenbeck
Ming-Ming Chiu
Bob Lucht
Vanessa Quinn
Paul Wenthold

Voted Against:

Did Not Vote/Abstained: