

TO: Steering Committee
FROM: Committee on Faculty Affairs
RE: Use of student feedback forms in special circumstances
DATE: November 13, 2013

Background:

In January 2013 the Dean of the School of Humanities and Social Sciences (HSS) sent a memo to the Steering Committee with a request that the use of student feedback forms in certain special circumstances be reconsidered. Examples of special circumstances include internships with no class meetings, and classes offered as a section 70 that have 6 or fewer students and where student feedback forms cannot be considered anonymous.

Charge:

The Steering Committee requested that CFA make a recommendation on whether or not:

- a) it is appropriate to require instructors to ask students to complete student feedback forms in classes under a certain enrollment (e.g., classes with 2 students or 4 students) in order to help guarantee anonymity and
- b) it is appropriate to require instructors to ask students to complete these forms in non-traditional classes, such as internship courses, since the course does not have traditional class meetings and students work independently with the instructor spending the lion's share of their "class time" on site in different internship locations (making the vast majority of the questions on the feedback form irrelevant or not applicable).

If CFA opts to change current policy, then it should clarify the nature of the courses that are to be exempt from the typical evaluation policy.

CFA Recommendation:

The current student feedback process is detailed in the [Procedures for Collecting Student Feedback on Teaching](#) and in [MOA 64](#). Both state that "Student feedback shall be collected from all sections of regularly scheduled courses each semester using the approved SFF" and "The SFF shall be completed anonymously and independently during the last two weeks of classes and prior to final exam week."

MOA 64 also states that: "The College and Union also agree to review and, revise, as appropriate, the responsibilities and procedures specified in this Memorandum of Agreement at a time when either party requests such a review."

CFA consulted with The College of New Jersey Federation of Teachers Local 2364. According to the AFT the intention of MOA 64 was to have the standard student feedback forms used in what are considered "normal" classes such as lectures or seminars given that student anonymity is very important in this process.

An MOA can only be changed through negotiations between the College and AFT. MOA's are formal agreements between Local 2364, AFT and the College and can be modified by negotiations at any time at the request of either party. Suggested changes should be submitted either to the College or AFT for consideration.

[MOA 62](#) on Curriculum Transformation lists the following courses where enrollment may be too low to ensure anonymity of student feedback forms, or non-traditional courses where the questions on standard student feedback forms may be irrelevant or not applicable:

Type of Course	Descriptions	Typical Enrollment Ranges	Weekly Contact Hours
Lecture / Studio	General or focused topic covered by lecture and demonstration followed by individual student work in class on a related project. Cap is based on the physical space of the facility and the expected nature and complexity of projects.	Variable	4
Advanced Tutorial (Group Study)	Focused topic with individualized mentoring; intensive reading and library work with student led discussions. Faculty meets with a small group of students together for approximately one hour per week; students meet more frequently to design presentations and critique each other. (Note: faculty can earn a maximum of 3 FWH per academic year in load.)	3	1
Group Research	Investigation on a focused topic performed by a group of students in collaboration with each other and led by a faculty mentor.	6	Variable
Independent Research	Student independent research with significant faculty involvement. (Note: faculty can earn a maximum of 3 FWH per academic year in load.)	1 – 6	Variable
Independent Study	Student works independently with only minimal faculty direction. (Note: faculty can earn a maximum of 3 FWH per academic year in load.)	1 - 6	Variable
Studio	Hands on instruction and experimentation normally in one of the fine or performing arts. CAP is based on the physical space of the facility and the expected nature and complexity of projects.	Variable	
Private Music Lessons *	Students work one to one with instructor in the study of music. 200-level lessons are for 30 minutes and are weighted at 0.37 FWHs per student. 300- and 400-level are 1 hour at 0.67 FWHs per student.	N A	0.5-1.0
Clinical	Learning setting is in a clinic (or related facility) where students deliver services under supervision of a licensed practitioner. Pre-licensure = 8-10 students for 9 hours/week at 0.67 FWHs. Seniors = 2 per group for varying hours/week at 0.13 and 0.14 per student.	Variable	Variable
Internship	A developmental experience focused on occupational or professional competence in an actual work setting and should be integrated with theoretical education.	1-15	Variable
Practicum	Students engaged in supervised practical experience. (For more than 30 students, 3 FWHs per semester.)	1-30	Minimal

Student Teaching	To be further defined		
Field-based Course	To be further defined - Similar to Soph-Prof or JPE		
Nursing Clinical	Learning setting in a hospital or other health care related facility where students provide comprehensive nursing care under the supervision of a licensed faculty member. A nursing clinical group consists of 8-10 students for 9 hours/week at 0.67 FWH per clinical hour. Capstone students are assigned 2 per clinical group for 9 hours/week at 0.13 and 0.14 per student.	8-10 Variable	9 Variable
Professional Practice Practicum	Licensed professional students in a planned supervised experience. Specific faculty on-site guidance/teaching and weekly course meetings	8-10 Variable	Variable

CFA recommends:

- that students not be asked to complete standard student feedback forms in classes with 1 to 6 students, where enrollment is too low to guarantee anonymity;
- that instructors in non-traditional classes such as internship or clinical courses, practicums, student teaching, advising seminars, study abroad, and field based courses for which the majority of the questions may be irrelevant or not applicable, are not required to, but have the option of administering standard student feedback forms or developing other, more relevant ways of gathering student feedback, for example, a Qualtrics survey with questions relevant to the internship/clinical/practicum/study abroad/advising experience.
- that the above types of courses from MOA 62 not be considered “regularly scheduled courses” for the purposes of collecting student feedback on teaching.
- that MOA 64 and the Procedures for Collecting Student feedback on Teaching be modified to reflect the relevant CFA recommendations.