

**Department of Philosophy  
Marquette University  
Evaluation of Teaching  
Rationale, Policies, and Forms  
(Final Department Approval, September 20, 2002)  
(Amended May 16, 2005)**

The evaluation forms and policies of the Philosophy Department are designed to meet three distinct but related goals: (1) To provide diagnostic feedback to individual teachers as a means to assist them in the development of their teaching skills; (2) To provide an evaluative record for individual faculty within the department which figures as a component in decisions relating to merit salary increases, promotion, and tenure; and (3) To provide a working data base whereby the department may document and diagnose its ongoing contribution to the University's teaching mission. It should be noted that a student in a course or a faculty member visiting the course differ both in the length of the visitation or exposure to the course and in the evaluative framework which they bring to their assessment. The central values which are sought in all of the assessments of all of our classes are largely the same. However, to avoid confusion, slight differences between student and faculty assessment of classes warrant slight different forms for assessment.

***I. Assessment of Undergraduate Teaching***

**A. Peer Review of Classes Taught by Regular Faculty**

This evaluation is used only for purposes of promotion and tenure or professional review. This means that the evaluation has two functions: (1) the evaluator's assessment of the adequacy of a colleague's undergraduate teaching and (2) provision of feedback and constructive criticism to the teacher which identifies strong areas and suggests ways for improvement in weaker areas.

The "Form for Teaching Evaluation of Graduate and Undergraduate Classes" is utilized. Undergraduate classes taught by junior faculty are evaluated normally during the spring semester of the second, fourth, and sixth years of the probationary period and, if needed, in the year prior to consideration for tenure and promotion. In addition to the current schedule of reviewing junior faculty, there will be a peer review of junior faculty in the second semester of the first year and in the third, fifth and other odd years of employment. Should a graduate class of a junior faculty member be reviewed during these years, that will suffice for his/her peer review of teaching for that year. The departmental instrument is used for both self-diagnostic and administrative review. Senior faculty normally are evaluated in the Spring semester prior to being considered for promotion or if they request an evaluation. Results of all evaluations become part of a faculty member's file.

**B. Faculty Review of Classes Taught by Graduate Students or Lecturers**

This evaluation has two functions: (1) the evaluator's assessment of the adequacy of a teacher's undergraduate teaching and (2) provision of feedback and constructive criticism to the teacher which identifies strong areas and suggests ways for improvement in weaker areas. Evaluators use the same form as used for peer evaluation of regular faculty. Completed forms are returned to the Assistant Chair. Their contents may be used for the purpose of letters of recommendation by the Assistant Chair or Chair regarding an individual's teaching ability. The contents of these evaluations may also be shared by the Assistant Chair or Chair with the Director of the Graduate Program relative to the assignment of financial aid for graduate students. Because of the relatively large number of graduate students that we employ, it is increasingly difficult to review all in the spring semester. Beginning in Academic Year 2005, the assistant chair will arrange to have all graduate students in their first and second year of teaching reviewed in the spring semester with all other graduate student teachers being reviewed in the fall semester.

**C. Student Assessment of Undergraduate Classes Taught by Regular Faculty**

The SPLT form is utilized. The SPLT is usually administered immediately following midterms during the fall semester, while the University-wide SCOTs are administered only at semester's end; so the

SPLT can provide a useful self-diagnostic instrument for faculty who are in the earliest stages of teaching development. Junior faculty in their first year of teaching at Marquette are required to administer the SPLT. Any other faculty member (junior or senior) may request its administration for all or selected courses or sections. The collective results of the annual administration are reported to all participants, and each participant receives also a confidential report on his/her course(s) with comparative data. Additional diagnostic information is usually available on request. Results of these evaluations do not become part of a faculty member's dossier for tenure and promotion review.

When the current stock of SPLT forms is depleted, a category identifying the student's college will be added to the form. The rationale for this addition is that this item has proven to have significance on other similar evaluation instruments.

Effective Spring 2005, the SCOT was replaced by the IAS. At present, however, the Department has no information about whether and in what format the new instrument for student evaluation of undergraduate classes will be included in the tenure and promotion process.

#### **D. Student Assessment of Undergraduate Classes Taught by Graduate Students and Lecturers**

The departmental SPLT student evaluation form is administered to all first and second year teachers in this category. They receive a report on collective results, and a confidential report (copies only to the Assistant Chair) of their own courses. Results of these evaluations do not become part of an instructor's official record of teaching at Marquette.

#### **E. Use of SCOT's for Graduate Student Instructors and Lecturers**

All instructors in this category administer the SCOTs in every semester. However, graduate student teachers in their first semester of teaching are not required to administer the SCOTs, but they may elect to do so.

#### **F. Informal Faculty Review of Graduate Student Teachers**

During the first semester of teaching by graduate students, the Assistant Chair may ask a regular faculty member to informally observe the classes of such instructors. The purpose of this evaluation shall be strictly to assist graduate students in teaching. However, faculty will inform the Assistant Chair if they believe that a mentor should be appointed to work with the student on teaching.

### ***II. Assessment of Graduate Teaching***

#### **A. Peer Review of Classes Taught by Regular Faculty**

This evaluation is used only for purposes of promotion and tenure or professional review. This means that the evaluation has two functions: (1) the evaluator's assessment of the adequacy of a colleague's graduate teaching and (2) provision of feedback and constructive criticism to the teacher which identifies strong areas and suggests ways for improvement in weaker areas.

The "Form for Teaching Evaluation of Graduate and Undergraduate Classes" is utilized. Junior faculty are reviewed in all graduate classes taught during the regular year after the first graduate class taught. Normally, the same graduate course (e.g., Phil 201) will not be evaluated more than two times. Results of all evaluations become part of a faculty member's file.

#### **B. Student Assessment of Graduate Classes Taught by Regular Faculty**

This evaluation has two functions: (1) the evaluator's assessment of the adequacy of a teacher's graduate teaching and (2) provision of feedback and constructive criticism to the teacher which identifies strong areas and suggests ways for improvement in weaker areas. This evaluation is considered anonymous by the department. The evaluation is given to all students registered in a course. Normally, the evaluation is to be administered at the end of the last regularly scheduled class for the semester. The completed forms should be returned to the department chair.

### ***III. Solicitation of Student Letters of Undergraduate and Graduate Classes for Tenure and Promotion Cases***

For selection of undergraduate letters of assessment, the Assistant to the Chair (or someone delegated by the Chair) uses recent class lists for undergraduate courses taught by the candidate to select a sampling of students with grades A through C inclusive. Class lists from the spring semester prior to the preparation of tenure and promotion cases are not considered.

For the selection of students on the graduate level, the Assistant to the Chair (or someone delegated by the Chair) contacts all graduate students taught by the instructor who can be easily reached. Class lists from the spring semester prior to the preparation of tenure and promotion cases are not considered. Letters will also be sent to students whose dissertation or MA Thesis was directed to completion by the candidate.

When placed in tenure and/or promotion dossiers for review by senior faculty, personal identifying information about undergraduate and graduate student letters will be masked.

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*Sample letter sent by department to request letters from graduate or undergraduate student:*

Dear :

The Philosophy Department and the University are considering Dr. N for tenure and promotion to Associate Professor in Fall \_\_\_\_\_. To more fully assess Dr. N's teaching, the University requires evaluations from his/her students. Our records show that you were a student in [class/semester information]. I request that you send me an evaluation of his/her teaching in that class. Please note that student evaluations are a very important part of a professor's tenure and promotion dossier, and they are taken very seriously by members of the University who will evaluate and determine Dr. N's case.

Be assured that any comments you write will be kept in confidence and will be reviewed only by the members of the University who are directly involved in the evaluation process. Please send your evaluation no later than \_\_\_\_\_. Note that if you are on campus, you can return your evaluation through campus mail. I thank you in advance for your cooperation in this important matter.

Yours &c

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*Sample letter sent by department to request letters from dissertation or thesis students*

Dear :

The Philosophy Department and the University are considering Dr. N for tenure and promotion to Professor in Fall \_\_\_\_\_. To more fully assess Dr. N's teaching, the University requires evaluations from his/her students. Our records show that Dr. N. directed your dissertation to completion in (date). I request that you send me an evaluation of his/her supervision of your dissertation. Please note that student evaluations are a very important part of a professor's tenure and promotion dossier, and they are taken very seriously by members of the University who will evaluate and determine Dr. N's case.

Be assured that any comments you write will be kept in confidence and will be reviewed only by the members of the University who are directly involved in the evaluation process. Please send your evaluation no later than \_\_\_\_\_. Note that if you are on campus, you can return your evaluation through campus mail. I thank you in advance for your cooperation in this important matter.

Yours &c

# **Form for Teaching Evaluation of Graduate and Undergraduate Classes**

## **Instructions**

Except for classes which meet only once per week, an evaluation should normally be undertaken in two consecutive classes.

### **I. Before Visitation of the Class**

- A. Obtain in writing information about the course and class: course description, syllabus, title of texts, class attendance policy, grading policy, workload of students, type and amount of written work (papers and exams) required, policy on late exams and assignments, class format (lecture, discussion, etc.), teacher's estimate of quality of students in class, examinations/assignments, and any other pertinent data.
- B. Meet with teacher to determine the relation of the classes you are visiting to previous and subsequent classes. Also obtain handouts (if any) and any other material to be used in the class.

### **II. Meeting with Teacher after Visitation of Class.**

- A. The evaluator should discuss the teacher's estimate of the class visited.
- B. At the post-visitation meeting, evaluators will be expected to communicate fully the substance of the evaluation to the instructor, including summary comments and the ratings assigned for individual items. If ratings for items and/or summary comments are revised after the post-visitation meeting, the instructor should be so informed by the evaluator.
- C. The Chair (Assistant Chair, in the case of graduate student instructors or lecturers) may at his/her discretion discuss the summary comments with the evaluator regarding issues of the clarity and/or the completeness of the comments (i.e., whether an overall summary of teaching effectiveness has been provided). In light of these discussions, the Chair (Assistant Chair) may request changes or modifications in the summary comments.
- D. The evaluator should submit the signed evaluation form together with all material collected from the instructor to the Chair (Assistant Chair) upon completion of the evaluation. A copy of the signed evaluation form will be provided to the instructor.

# Teaching Evaluation of Graduate and Undergraduate Classes

## Evaluation Form

Person evaluated

Semester of evaluation

Course evaluated

Please assign ratings according to the following categories:

Please elaborate, where necessary or appropriate, in summary written comments on the back of the form.

	Excellent	Poor					
	6	5	4	3	2	1	NA
<b>A. Course Content:</b>							
1. Conformity to catalogue description							
2. Conformity to course description, professor's objectives and syllabus							
3. Adequacy as a graduate level course							
4. Balance between historical and philosophical considerations (where appropriate)							
<b>B. Course Requirements:</b>							
1. Nature, clarity and fairness of requirements and assignments as stated on syllabus							
2. Nature and clarity of grading policy as stated on the syllabus							
<b>C. Quality of Teaching:</b>							
1. Adequacy of preparation							
2. Organization and clarity of class							
3. Appropriate depth of class							
4. Handling of questions and discussion							
5. Attitude toward students and course material							
<b>D. Overall:</b>							
1. Worth and interest of course material relative to course goals and requirements							
2. Overall teaching effectiveness							

**E. Summary comments.**

These comments will be included in the instructor's file for consideration in administrative review.

Comments must include a general assessment of the instructor's overall teaching effectiveness. Written comments must be provided for an item rated 3 or lower. Written comments, both positive and/or negative are welcome, including comments on what the evaluator found especially valuable or troublesome. These may include both general pedagogical points and specific points concerning the policies, readings, and teaching of this particular class.

The evaluator is encouraged to communicate verbally or in writing any particular comments which he/she believes are pertinent only to the instructor. Such comments *should not* be put in the summary comments below.

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(date)

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## Form for Student Evaluation of Graduate Courses

Person Evaluated: \_\_\_\_\_

Course Evaluated: \_\_\_\_\_

Semester Evaluated: \_\_\_\_\_

Please assign ratings according to categories provided.

	Excellent				Poor			
	6	5	4	3	2	1	NA	
<b>A. Course Content:</b>								
1. Conformity to course description, professor's objectives and syllabus								
2. Adequacy as a graduate level course								
3. Balance between historical and philosophical considerations (where appropriate)								
<b>B. Course Requirements:</b>								
1. Nature, clarity and fairness of requirements and assignments as stated on syllabus								
2. Nature and fairness of grading in light of grading policy								
3. Nature and clarity of grading policy as stated on the syllabus								
<b>C. Quality of Teaching:</b>								
1. Adequacy of preparation								
2. Organization and clarity of class								
3. Appropriate depth of class								
4. Handling of questions and discussion								
5. Attitude toward students and course material								
6. Provides helpful feedback concerning student writing								
7. Availability to students outside of class								
8 Stimulation of intellectual and philosophical curiosity								
9. Cultivation of clarity of thinking among students								
10. Nurtures the development of the students' own philosophical or scholarly ideas								
11. Helps students in oral articulation of philosophical ideas where appropriate								
<b>D. Overall:</b>								
1. Worth and interest of course material								
2. Overall teaching effectiveness								

Please elaborate, where necessary or appropriate, in your written comments on the back of form.

### **E. Comments**

Written comments both positive and/or negative are welcome, including comments on what you found especially valuable or troublesome. These may include both general pedagogical points and specific points concerning the policies, readings, and teaching of this particular class. All comments within the bounds of professionalism will be forwarded both to the faculty member and to his or her file for use during review for tenure and/or promotion.

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