

APPENDIX IV – TEACHING, RESEARCH, AND SERVICE

More information on the three areas of responsibility – teaching/librarianship, scholarly and creative activities, and service can be found in Chapter 4 of the *Faculty Manual*.

Teaching Policy: Using the Learning Experience Survey Effectively

Philosophy

The Learning Experience Survey is designed to provide faculty with specific feedback to help improve teaching and learning. It is important that students have a vehicle for communicating their learning experiences in their courses and know that USC Upstate faculty carefully consider this feedback. There is no expectation that faculty will act upon all feedback. However, even when the feedback does not lead to changes, knowing what students are thinking provides an opportunity for the faculty member to engage with their students so that students can better understand the rationale behind course and assignment design.

It is also important that students understand their responsibility to provide helpful feedback informed by their learning needs and experiences, not by their personal biases. To this end, the University supports a common introduction to the Learning Experience Survey that puts it in context of helping to provide useful feedback.

The instrument is intentionally designed to focus on specific aspects of the course that could impact student learning, rather than overall generalizations about the instructor. This strategy has been taken, in part, to help minimize students responding out of bias by focusing students' attention on specific course characteristics that are directly related to learning. Asking more specific questions also provides better information about how to address and provide support for faculty who are having issues in the classroom.

USC Upstate works to minimize bias through the use of the Learning Experience Survey results. Interpretation of results through a strict comparison of means is not recommended. Bias in relationship to instructor characteristics such as race and gender can influence course evaluations, and therefore, mean ratings. Additionally, course differences in level, range of student choice, and modality can all result in differences in means that have no relationship to the quality of the course. Therefore, comparing the mean rating of one course to another, or to all courses in a department or college/school, may be like comparing apples to oranges. It is better to put results in context of trend data (e.g., Are courses that received lower ratings in the past trending up?) and in context of a distribution (e.g., Where are the results in relationship to a larger distribution of results such as department, college/school or university?).

Even with careful attention being paid to the instrument and the interpretation of results, USC Upstate strongly supports the use of the Learning Experience Survey as only one of many sources of information about teaching and learning. Other sources include peer observation of class/online delivery; peer review of course design, syllabi, and materials; grade distributions; implementation of innovative, research-based pedagogies; and evidence of using assessment data to make improvements. The Center for Academic Innovation and Faculty Support (CAIFS) provides guidance on best practices for reviewing courses and for interpreting the results from Learning Experience Surveys.

Finally, USC Upstate recognizes that the usefulness of the results of Learning Experience Surveys are highly dependent upon response rates. One of the greatest factors affecting response rates is demonstrating to students that faculty actually use the results for improvement. Actively encouraging students to complete the Learning Experience Survey, discussing how the feedback has helped in the past, providing opportunities for feedback early in the course, and completing Learning Experience

Surveys in class when teaching face-to-face can all enhance response rates at the individual course level. CAIFS will work with faculty to effectively implement these and other strategies including in online courses. USC Upstate academic affairs administration, deans, and department chairs must also send a clear, consistent message that response rates matter by monitoring trends in response rates and recognizing faculty who have consistently high response rates.

Procedures

The Office of Institutional Effectiveness and Compliance is responsible for ensuring that all Learning Experience Surveys are administered and that appropriate procedures are followed.

The Learning Experience Survey administration will be integrated into Blackboard as much as possible to allow for as much direct access and communication as possible for both students and faculty.

Learning Experience Surveys will be administered in all classes with at least 5 students enrolled.

Learning Experience Surveys will open within the last three weeks of classes (opening dates will vary by length of term) and will close prior to the start of final exams.

If Learning Experience Surveys are administered during class time in face-to-face classes, the instructor must remain outside the classroom during the administration.

Results of Learning Experience Surveys will not be released until grades have been turned in to the Registrar.

Research Policies

University Funds. Annually, the University assigns a moderate sum for research purposes through the Teaching and Productive Scholarship Fund (TAPS). Application for TAPS funding is made to the Faculty Excellence Committee.

Outside Funds. Faculty members interested in externally sponsored research should consult with their chair, dean, and administrators with responsibilities for research, grants and advancement. To facilitate such support, the University serves as the contracting authority, and the Office of Sponsored Awards and Research Support assists in the preparation of proposals and in locating interested sponsors. A University signatory authority must approve any commitment to an outside agency that involves University participation. The University contributes to sponsored research when the work involved is significant to the purpose of the University.

Payments for Research. Normally, payments to researchers are limited to the rate of pay they receive as members of the faculty.

Relation of Research to Teaching Duties. Faculty members who have received a reduction in teaching in order to conduct research or perform other University duties are permitted, with the approval of their dean and the Senior Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs, to teach course overloads for additional compensation.

Grant Administration. The principal investigator or project director of sponsored research, training, or special projects is a faculty or staff member, normally the person who conceived and proposed the activity that resulted in the grant or contract. The principal investigator is not changed without the approval of the sponsor and the University. The principal investigator or project director is responsible for the technical direction of the project, for making all required technical reports, for administering all direct funds allocated to the project, and for

complying with the terms and conditions of the grant or contract. The Office of Sponsored Awards and Research Support assists the principal investigator or project director in resolving procedural or administrative problems.

Conflicts of Interest. Upon requests made through a department chair or dean, the Office of Sponsored Awards and Research Support, considers all suspected conflicts of interest in the area of grants and research. Should the Office of Sponsored Awards and Research Support determine there is a possible conflict of interest, it asks the individuals concerned to clarify and, if appropriate, rectify the situation. If requested to do so, the office advises and assists individuals with consulting agreements and issues relating to potential conflicts of interest. See also *On Preventing Conflicts of Interest in Government Sponsored Research at Universities* (ACE---AAUP Joint Statement, December 1964); ACAF 1.50, *Outside Professional Activities for Faculty* (University Policy for Academic Affairs).

Use of Human Participants and Vertebrate Animals in Research. The USC Institutional Review Board for the Use of Human Subjects in Research (IRB), a USC system faculty committee coordinated by the staff of the Office of Research Compliance on the Columbia campus, is responsible for reviewing all research involving human participants before being conducted by Upstate faculty members, staff, and students. The purpose of the committee is to protect human participants in accord with a formal assurance provided to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services by USC. Certain research projects may be exempt from IRB review.

The USC Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC), a USC system faculty committee coordinated by the staff of the Office of Research Compliance on the Columbia campus, is responsible for reviewing all research involving animal subjects before being conducted by USC Upstate faculty members, staff, and students. The purpose of the committee is to protect animal subjects in accord with the Principles for the Utilization and Care of Vertebrate Animals of the National Institutes of Health. The committee has implemented the recommendations of *The Guide for the Care and Use of Laboratory Animals* (National Academy Press, 1996), the Public Health Service Policy on Humane Care and Use of Laboratory Animals and is complying, and will continue to comply, with the Animal Welfare Act and other applicable laws and regulations concerning the care and use of laboratory animals. Upstate faculty members are responsible for compliance issues (for their own projects and those student projects they might be advising or assisting with) associated with the use of human participants or vertebrate animals consistent with the USC IRB and IACUC protocols.

Statement on Public Scholarship

The following is a statement on the definition of public scholarship at USC Upstate, created April 2, 2019.

USC Upstate Public Scholarship Definition

Institutional Issues

- A clear definition of public scholarship provides core components that are translatable across disciplines but can be adapted to each discipline;
- A clear definition allows the creation of metrics to track progress on public scholarship at USC Upstate as relevant to the strategic plan;
- Public scholarship should be considered to extend, apply, and amplify more traditional research, not replace it – public scholarship takes a step further than traditional scholarship by finding a way to reach a larger audience and have a bigger impact for the public good.

Issues to Leave to Unit Discussions

- Examples of public scholarship relevant to the unit;
- The role of public scholarship in unit criteria;
- The role of peer review in public scholarship;
- The distinction between community service and public scholarship;
- Whether or not compensation is inconsistent with public scholarship.

Overview

USC Upstate serves as a resource for the Upstate region of South Carolina and beyond through a foundation of reciprocal partnerships with public, private, and service organizations in the area. The faculty provides leadership in promoting economic, social and cultural development through teaching, service, scholarship and creative endeavors.

Definition

Public scholarship refers to a collaborative mode of creating and circulating knowledge with our community partners that is often interdisciplinary and is always informed by and anchored in methodologies of traditional peer-reviewed scholarship. Public scholarship extends, applies, and amplifies traditional scholarship to produce clear and tangible artifacts intended for the public good.

Examples

- Extension and application of traditional scholarship – needs assessment; action research; scholarship of teaching and learning, assessment, advising.
- Amplification of traditional scholarship – public policy advocacy; op-ed articles.