



Faculty Senate

Steering Committee

Agenda for meeting of Thursday, October 15, 2020, 4:00 pm

Zoom Meeting for Steering members and guests:

<https://ucf.zoom.us/j/96065398420?pwd=cHhLYnFKMVpIN1YrT2xOT3pYMG14QT09>

Meeting will be recorded and streamed live at: <https://youtu.be/mtflqfakVJA>

1. Call to Order
2. Roll Call via Qualtrics: http://ucf.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_38a2OmahEvzyXdz
3. Approval of Minutes of *September 24, 2020*
4. Announcements
5. Recognition of Guests
6. Report of the Provost
7. Committee Reports
 - a) Ad Hoc Budget and Labor Crisis Response – *Reid Oetjen*
 - b) Ad Hoc Health and Safety Crisis Response – *Steve King*
8. Old Business
 - a) COVID Discussion
9. New Business
 - a) Proposed New Conflict of Interest Policy # 4-504.3
 - b) SPol Task Force Report – *Grace White*
 - c) Time Change for Steering and Senate Meetings Beginning Next Year
10. Committee Reports, continued
 - a) Budget and Administrative Committee – *Nina Orlovskaya*
 - b) Information Technology Committee – *Jim Gallo*
 - c) Parking, Transportation and Safety Committee – *Adam Wells*
 - d) Personnel Committee – *Steve King*
 - e) Research Council – *Vicki Loerzel*
 - f) Graduate Council – *Jim Moharam*
 - g) Undergraduate Council – *Bill Self*
 - h) Ad Hoc Campus Equity, Inclusion and Diversity Actions and Programs Committee – *Joseph Harrington*
 - i) Ad Hoc Internal Communications – *Joseph Harrington*
11. Other Business



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Steering Committee

Minutes for meeting of Thursday, September 24, 2020, 4:00 pm

YouTube Link to access recording: <https://youtu.be/qonXTW-o4NQ>

- 1) Call to Order at 4:01 p.m.
- 2) Roll Call via Qualtrics
- 3) Approval of Minutes of *August 20, 2020*
 - a) Motion to approve, second,
 - i) Motion to amend, Under C2, established under the US Dept of Education, second, vote taken, motion carries
 - ii) Vote to approve minutes, minutes approved as amended
- 4) Announcements
 - a) Joe reports that the announcements are relatively brief. We have a somewhat unusual order of agenda today. We decided to do the remainder of the topic assignments first, because it is critical that those get to our committees. Then we have been bundling the COVID-19 items next so that there is a cohesive discussion versus scattering it out amongst the agenda. A couple of items for other business, one of which I have sent out already which is the proposed procedure for handling policies, hopefully there will be time for that. Also, modification to the charge of the Ad Hoc Equity, Inclusion and Actions Program Committee, which I will describe when I get to that committee report.
- 5) Recognition of Guests
 - a) Michael Johnson, Office of the Provost
 - b) Jana Jasinski, Office of the Provost
 - c) Carly McCarthy, Communications and Marketing
 - d) Kent Butler, Office of Equity, Inclusion and Diversity
 - e) Joe Adams, Office of the Provost
 - f) Allison Hurtado, Faculty Excellence
 - g) Lucretia Cooney, Faculty Excellence
- 6) Old Business
 - a) Our goal here is to decide whether to take up these topics, sending them to a committee, sometimes we ask for more information. We have already dealt with some of them, so the committee assignment in the left is where we left off. We took care of 4 at the last meeting and we have active ones from previous years are down at the bottom. We will not be talking about the old ones today. Our goal here is to decide where to send these or whether we are going to take them up.
 - i) Topics Assignments for 2020-2021 Senate Committee Action

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- (1) **#5 - Prohibited Conduct Policy review.** Topic Description: Review of Prohibited Conduct Policy #2-004.1 to include a requirement for follow-up. Proposed by Terri Fine.
- Chair Harrington explained that the proposed amendment would include a requirement for follow-up of complaints. For example, a harassment complaint, and there is sufficient credible evidence in the eyes of the investigators, there would be in fact be investigated, which has apparently, not always been the case in the past.
 - A senator stated that it looks to be a job for the Personnel Committee.
 - Another senator asked, what does it mean follow up? Who is following up?
 - Chair Harrington explained Professor Fine's concern, some of the harassment complaints that have been made since the *Let's Be Clear* campaign began did not result in an investigation of the complaint. She wishes to require that if there is sufficient credible evidence that it gets investigated. Is it covered in *Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA)*? But also it is done by Office of Institutional Equity. Who is going to follow up? There is a policy, Prohibitive Conduct policy, 2-004.1 and her desire is to produce a specific amendment to that policy. She has provided a large file with documentation. Personnel would have lots of background information to act it on – if we send it to them.
 - Motion to send to Personnel Committee.
 - Chair Harrington noted that things can be sent to more than one committee, but there needs to be one committee that oversee it.
 - Vote taken, motion passes. 12 yes, 0 nos.
- (2) **#6/15 – Final Exam Policy**
- The next one is relevant to #15. #6 is Final Exam Policy. Submitted by Jana Jasinski. Topic is: Review Final Exam policy for updates and revisions.
 - #15 – UCF Policy 4-400.3 Final Exams. Submitted by Compliance. Topic description is as follows: A final examination or alternative end-of-term assessment should be given in each course that is taught. Regardless of the type of mechanism employed for final assessment, or the course modality, each faculty member must provide continuous instruction for the full length of the semester, including the final examination period.
 - Clarify now that remote courses which originally were not online courses; slotted exam time versus which ones can be given in as an assignment to complete.
 - It was suggested to combine #6 and #15 and send it to UPCC, the Undergraduate Policy and Curriculum Committee.
 - Vote taken, motion passes. 13 yes, 0 nos
- (3) **#7 – Scientific Conferences at UCF.** Topic discussion: The organization of Scientific (or otherwise Academic) Conferences and Meetings chaired

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by UCF faculty should be managed through the Office of Research, rather than Continuing Education. Submitted by Luca Argenti.

- He has written up a documentation describing the benefits and costs are of moving to Office of Research.
- This could go to Budget and Administration or Research Council or both.
- Is that something that the Office of Research wants to take on?
- Move to assign to Research Council.
- Discussion: If we are moving this from anyplace, we really need to have Continuing Education needs to have input on this. That will be a part of the discussion for the Research Committee to investigate. *A senator requests that the Research Council talk to Office of Research and Continuing Ed to share information*
- Vote taken, motion passes. 13 yes, 0 nos.

(4) #8 – **Accommodations for J1 Scholars.** Topic discussion: UCF should consider reserving on-campus or near-campus accommodations for mid-term (one to six months) visiting scholars on J1 visas. Submitted by Luca Argenti.

- someone that comes to UCF for a couple of months; it is difficult to find short-term house in mid-semester. Visitors do not necessarily know or understand the US housing environment. Visitor would still need to pay for housing.
- It is research related and administrative related.
- A senator suggested Budget and Administrative.
- A motion was made to move it to Budget and Administrative. The CFO and those folks sort of run/have relationships with local vendors, like hotels.
- Vote taken, motion passes. 15 yes, 0 nos.

#9 – **Monitor progress of ERP update.** Topic discussion: UCF is upgrading the PeopleSoft ERP. This \$50M, 2+ year project is being run by the CIO and CFO, and UCF IT will implement its integration into campus IT systems. Then, all affected units will implement their processes into the ERP. The functions it serves are mainly budgetary and administrative, with some future academic functions (course registration, etc.). Several committees may wish to request presentations and give feedback, but one needs to update the Senate and Steering at each meeting, and recommend when presentations to Senate or Steering, or even Open Forums, are needed.

- Submitted by Joe Harrington.
- It is a large project. It will eventually affect academic areas, but it is not being put in the first round.
- Could go to several committees, but one group needs to take charge of it. It is a huge project.
- Moved to assign it to Budget and Administrative.
- Vote taken, motion passes. 16 yes, 0 nos.

- (5) #10 – **Required digital training for faculty and staff. Topic discussion:** A recurring problem with required UCF digital training is subjective questions (FERPA training), unrealistic quiz passing scores, no means to request feedback to know what was missed (FERPA Training), and erroneous scoring (ECCT). Submitted by Dr. Filler.
- Is this a B&A Committee topic or Personnel Committee topic? Where does this belong to be investigated?
 - No discussion. Motion to assign to Personnel.
 - Vote taken. 13 yes, 0 nos.

There are 5 policies that were announced this week for discussion. Two of them are related to the Title IX changes required by the US Department of Education. Two are financial in nature and the last one is final exam that we have already discussed.

- (6) #11 – UCF Policy 2-004.2
- Discrimination policy.
 - It is still under Personnel.
 - Comment: When we send this to a committee, for them to take it up, it is going to be much later than the actual meeting to decide the policy and I think you referred to that in your message. What is the point? Joe's response: So, in the email that was sent out a few days ago is an accelerated process. We basically decide the moment we are made aware of these which committee should receive it, notify either the chair or the whole committee by email. They have a week simply to flag it whether it needs to be changed, if it's a big concern or we don't need to worry about it. Joe thinks most of them we typically don't need to worry about. The policy can be brought to the next Steering or Senate, where it can receive feedback. The committee, can, on its own authority or representing itself give some feedback through the policy mechanism and they tend to pay a lot of attention to that feedback. If questions, the Senate chair would reach out to the Administration and provide concerns, asking to halt the clock on the 30 days. Our process normally takes 10 weeks, while and process takes 30 days. We are reviewing and approving sending of those policies.
 - Joe put it on the topic list in order to track it and that all have input where it goes.
 - Everyone is encouraged to sign up for policy notifications. They come out once a week.
 - Motion to assign to Personnel, second, discussion, vote taken, motion passes. 13 yes, 0 nos.
- (7) #12 – UCF Policy 2-012 Title IX Grievance Policy
- Similar to Department of Education edit on all the University policies in the country.
 - Motion to assign to Personnel, seconded.

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- Discussion: Is it true that all agreements, procedures, and everything which is related to grievances needs to be bargained. How does this policy even originate if it is in collective bargaining? it is an excellent question for the Personnel Committee to raise. Personnel Committee has access to Administrators, so we can ask that question. They may say we're forced by law to do it and the CBA is no longer in compliance with the law. They may not, Joe does not know, but that would be the kind of thing that you would definitely want to have out in the committee. It has to do with a policy, all we are doing is giving input and our input might be these changes may need to be bargained.
- Vote taken, motion passes. 13 yes, 0 nos.

(8) #13 – UCF Policy 2-107.6 Signature Authority/Salary Supplement Policy

- The delegation of signature authority and the right to, or who has the authority to supplement somebody's salary by giving them a chunk of money. Proposed to go to Budget and Administrative committee.
- Motion to assign to Budget and Administrative, second,
- No discussion.
- vote taken, motion carries. 14 yes, 0 nos.

(9) #14 – UCF Policy 3-114 New Construction, Remodeling and Renovation Projects

- Sounds like BnA.
- Discussion: none.
- Motion to assign to Budget and Administrative, second, vote taken, motion carries. 15 yes, 0 nos.

7) Report of the Provost

- a) Fall Semester - Fall semester is going well. It appears that both face-to-face and remote classes are going well. Faculty have more confidence that the approach we've taken to face-to-face classes is effective in preventing transmission of COVID 19. He has asked the colleges to begin planning the spring semester with more face-to-face classes available.
- b) Spring Break - Most universities are considering canceling spring break and either starting later or ending earlier or even moving spring break toward the end of the semester.
- c) Dean Searches - Search for a library dean is about to get underway with the search committee being a rather broad selection across the university. Also searching for CREOL dean.
- d) Thanks Steering Committee and all faculty for dedication to student success and successful launch of unusual semester.
- e) Order of Questions - Joe mentions that many of the senate chairs are recognizing that Zoom has a tendency to amplify loud voices. He will be calling on people who haven't had a chance to speak before others who have. There is a chat and members can put questions or comments there to be recognized as well.

f) Questions/Comments

- i) A senator commented that he has been teaching face-to-face and has had a good experience with the room being cleaned. Once in a while there is an issue with Zoom. He is planning to teach face-to-face again next semester.
- ii) Another senator commented that he feels eliminating spring break makes sense. He has heard some concerns from faculty about being asked to teach more face-to-face classes in the spring. They are concerned about a second wave of COVID 19 coming through. The provost confirms that he has asked the deans to schedule more face-to-face classes for the spring. There are physical restrictions as to how large classes can be held. If there is an outbreak, there may be a reevaluation of this request.
- iii) A senator noted that pushing the spring break to the end of the semester would be good and noted that a committee he is on was concerned about budget cuts. The provost stated that he asked nonacademic units to give estimates about how cuts would affect their units.
- iv) Another senator expressed the desire to retain spring break.
- v) A senator would like to know if there will be an expansion of the targeted screening.
- vi) A senator would like to know if there are any planned disciplinary actions regarding required screening. The provost stated state delegates the authority to the president.
- vii) A senator asked whether tenure-earning faculty will have their clock extended. Jana Jasinski stated that the clock has been extended to October 1st. The provost said that anyone who feels they need the extension, should take advantage of it.

8) Committee Reports

- a) Ad Hoc Budget and Labor Crisis Response – Reid Oetjen
 - i) Committee focused on research related issues and have found that travel has been affected; having to work remote/home schooling has also affected ability to research.
 - ii) No bias for research, no course releases.
 - iii) Library resources could be negatively affected in the future. BRIDGE funding has been cut.
- b) Ad Hoc Health and Safety Crisis Response – Stephen King
 - i) Screener app – very poor student use, especially those on campus. Students are going on campus and not using the app to get cleared. Rec and Wellness center is requiring that they show the app is used for clearance to be let in the facility.
 - ii) Targeted screening – spoke about who should be targeted besides the Greek house, such as faculty teaching face-to-face, staff that disinfects/cleans classes and all people who interact with patients.
 - iii) A senator asked whether coming back from spring break would be similar to the start of the semester. Steve King confirms that their committee is very concerned about that. The senator supports the idea of spreading spring breaks days out across the semester so there is not a chance for students to go away.
 - iv) Another senator expressed that she would like to see random testing done after Thanksgiving, as students will still be coming on campus. This might help with the decision about spring break.

9) New Business

- a) COVID19 on Campus
 - i) No update
- b) Ad-Hoc EID Charge Change
 - i) Chair Harrington reported that in setting up this committee, it was found out that there is a similar committee being set up through at the university level as well. Met last week with president and others and it was determined that the committee being set up by Kent Butler with DEI should run the university committee with members included from the senate. Curriculum and any training that affect policy will be the responsibility of the senate ad hoc committee. Then it would be communicated to the university committee. Dr. Butler told him he agrees that the senate should have an operational committee. Chair Harrington wants to update the action plan to include brainstorming and pursuing ideas, working into proposals and bringing to senate. Non-personnel issues will go to this committee.
 - ii) Proposes to update the charge of the Ad Hoc Equity, Inclusion and Diversity Committee to the final two jobs and tasking the Bylaw Committee with a proposal to amend in order to create a permanent EID Committee pending the Steering and Senate's votes. This committee should not replace or supplant any existing committees, but rather act as a source of ideas. It would develop and evaluate programs and policies in areas within the purview of the Faculty Senate whose goals are to reduce systemic racism or improve equity, inclusion and diversity at UCF. The committee will work with existing entities, including relevant Senate committees to bring these ideas to fruition and to evaluate the effectiveness of such programs. The committee will also handle EID-related personnel and policy issues.
 - iii) Curricular ideas would go to Undergrad or Grad Council committees. A senator stated that he would like to see a permanent EID committee rather than an Ad Hoc committee. Vice Chair Scott asked for a motion. Motion to change the charge and the name of the ad hoc, second, discussion, vote taken, motion passes.

10) Committee Reports, Continued

- a) Budget and Administrative Committee – *Nina Orlovskaya*
 - i) Two meetings since last Steering Committee
 - ii) Discussion about library budget and committee is concerned. They had much discussion about this.
 - iii) They also had discussion about the new ERP project.
- b) Information Technology Committee – *Joseph Harrington*
 - i) The committee met twice, once for charging and then once more. A brief discussion of items on the agenda. Mike Sink gave a presentation. Response time for tickets to be handled. Security questions and concerns were discussed.
 - ii) To be worked on this year: Research support, ticket response time, and support to other operating systems.
- c) Parking, Transportation and Safety Committee – *Adam Wells*
 - i) Charge meeting was the only meeting so far. A senator would like to know if the police department received a 9% budget cut and is concerned about the implications. Dr. Wells stated they did not discuss this issue and will bring it up in the next meeting.
- d) Personnel Committee – *Steve King*
 - i) Initial charge meeting and one other meeting were held.



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- ii) They reviewed topics and discussed how to proceed.
 - iii) To be worked on this year: Faculty input for administrative appointments.
Discuss salary equity.
 - e) Research Council – *Vicki Loerzel*
 - i) Elected a chair at last meeting
 - f) Graduate Council – *Jim Moharam*
 - i) All committees met at the charge meeting. Subcommittees are scheduled to begin meeting next week. They voted to extend the university requirement for GRE for admission next fall. They also had a discussion about whether it should be used or not in the future. There are several masters' degree programs that do not require it.
 - ii) A senator noted that there is a discussion about library representation on the council/committees. The bylaw will be studied as to whether to change.
 - (1) Motion to make a topic and assign to Bylaw Committee to amend bylaws to allow librarians to serve on Graduate Council without being graduate faculty, second, vote taken, motion passes.
 - g) Undergraduate Council – *Bill Self*
 - i) Council met and was charged and elected the leadership.
 - ii) UPCC has met briefly.
 - iii) He did advise them that there are topics that will be steered to them and to respond quickly.
 - iv) Tim Letzring updated them that there is a new curriculum system coming.
 - v) They are not hearing any proposals yet.
 - h) Ad Hoc Campus Equity, Inclusion and Diversity Actions and Programs Committee – *Joseph Harrington*
 - i) Discussed in 9b
 - i) Ad Hoc Internal Communications – *Joseph Harrington*
 - i) No update
- 11) Other Business
- a) Final Exams – Keith Koons noted that the final exams policy review deadline is coming up next week. He would like everyone to review and comment.
 - b) Agenda for Senate – will be sent out tomorrow. UFF has requested to give the Campus Climate report. A senator mentioned the allegations from the former UFF president and wonders if this could be addressed. This could be asked and the president of the UFF could respond to the question.
 - c) Get out the Vote – Chair Harrington suggested to provide Zoom backgrounds and slides to encourage voter registration.
 - d) Library – Motion to have library give a report at November meeting, second, vote taken, motion passes
- 12) Meeting adjourns at 6:03 p.m.

**DRAFT
OCTOBER 2020**

SUBJECT: Reporting <u>Outside Activities, Financial Interests and a</u> Potential Conflicts of Interest or Conflicts of Commitment in Research	Effective Date: 08-20-12	Policy Number: 4-504. 23	
	Supersedes: 4-504, 4-504.12	Page 1	Of 7
	Responsible Authority: Vice President for Research & Commercialization <u>Director, Office of Compliance, Office of Research</u>		

DATE OF INITIAL ADOPTION AND EFFECTIVE DATE: 2-18-08

APPLICABILITY/ACCOUNTABILITY:

This policy applies to all university faculty, staff, student employees, and affiliates engaged in university sponsored and non-sponsored research.

~~faculty members, Executive Service employees, postdoctoral associates, Administrative and Professional employees, University Support Personnel System employees, Other Personnel Support employees, and students engaged in both sponsored and non-sponsored research.~~

PREAMBLE:

As a part of the University of Central Florida's UCF's academic and research mission, the university encourages its employees to participate in ~~sponsored~~ research, consulting, and other activities that benefit the university, participants, affiliates, and the public at large. In doing so, UCF employees are obligated to act in the best interest of the university and to ensure that outside activities or outside financial interests do not interfere with their obligation to the university. The existence of trust from the public and from the scientific community is paramount to the successful advancement of knowledge and the growth of the university's academic and research programs. In addition to the university's expectation that research be conducted with the highest ethical standards and professional integrity, federal laws and state statutes regulate conflicts of interest and establish related ethical and integrity standards. This policy establishes a process to comply with these regulations and statutes.

BACKGROUND:

Federal regulations and state statutes require institutions of higher education to bear primary responsibility for employees and affiliates to disclose outside activities, financial interests, and potential conflicts of interests and conflicts of commitment, ~~outside activity, and potential financial conflicts of interest~~. The university has the responsibility to establish conflict of interest policies and procedures to provide appropriate safeguards to protect the interests of the university and sponsored agencies, and to effectively communicate to faculty, ~~staff, members, employees,~~ students ~~employees,~~ and affiliates the university's conflict of interest and commitment policies and procedures.

POLICY STATEMENT:

All employees and affiliates engaged in university research must comply with federal regulations, state statutes, and university regulations and policies in regard to disclosing, managing, and reporting outside activities and financial interests. Employees engaged in the design, conduct, or reporting of research are required to disclose financial interests and outside activities and receive a determination by the university that the outside activity or financial interest does not affect the integrity of the university. Outside activities and financial interests must be disclosed annually and throughout the year as circumstances change but no less than 30-days prior to discovering, acquiring, or committing to a new financial interest or outside activity.

Employees are prohibited from directly or indirectly authorizing business transactions related to university sponsored programs or technology transfer with an entity where they hold an employment or contractual relationship, ownership, or other financial interest without an executed Conflict of Interest Exemption under Florida Statutes 112.313(12)(h) approved by the University President and Chair of the University Board of Trustees. Exemptions require full disclosure of the proposed transaction/relationship at least 30-days in advance and must be approved prior to beginning the activity.

Prior to submitting research applications to sponsors, investigators must complete an annual disclosure for the corresponding academic year. Investigators must disclose significant financial interests related to a sponsored research proposal, human subjects research protocol, and institutional animal care and use protocol at the time of application. Additionally, investigators must complete conflict of interest training prior to engaging in research. Training must occur at least once every four years or sooner if an applicable change occurs.

If an affiliate investigator engages in a university research through a subrecipient agreement and does not have a conflict of interest policy that is compliant with federal regulations and the sponsoring terms and conditions require a conflict of interest policy, the investigator is subject to university policy.

~~University faculty members, Executive Service employees, postdoctoral associates, Administrative and Professional employees, University Support Personnel System employees, Other Personnel Support employees, and affiliates engaged in both sponsored and non-sponsored research, must disclose conflicts of commitment, outside activity, and financial conflicts of interest to designated officials. All university employees (including students) and affiliates planning to participate in or are participating in sponsored and non-sponsored research activity must comply with federal regulations and state statutes in regard to disclosing, managing, and reporting significant financial interests. All employees engaging in research must annually or within 30 days of discovering, acquiring, or committing to a new financial interest or commitment, report potential conflicts of interest or commitment, or the appearance of a conflict. University faculty members, Executive Service employees, postdoctoral associates, Administrative and Professional employees, University Support Personnel System employees, Other Personnel Support employees, and affiliates responsible for the design, conduct, or reporting of research must complete conflict of interest training prior to engaging in research. Training must occur at least once every four years or sooner if an applicable change occurs.~~

The Office of Research ~~Compliance Office & Commercialization~~ is charged with oversight of the ~~sponsored research~~ conflict of interest ~~and commitment~~ program ~~for research~~ and is responsible for applicable policies, procedures, guidelines, and training to communicate the program requirements. In addition, the Office of Research ~~Compliance Office & Commercialization~~ is responsible for the review of ~~sponsored research related~~ disclosures and, when applicable, the review and approval of monitoring and management plans.

~~The~~ University Compliance, Ethics, and Risk ~~Office~~ is charged with ~~the~~ oversight of the ~~university's~~ conflict of interest and commitment program.

Noncompliance:

Failure by an employee to comply with this policy or a conflict of interest management or mitigation plan will result in disciplinary action up to and including termination for just cause. In accordance with state statutes, any employee engaged in the design, conduct, or reporting of research who failed to disclose any outside activity related to the employee's expertise or a financial interest outside the university shall be suspended without pay pending the outcome of an investigation which shall not exceed 60 days. Upon conclusion of the investigation, the university may terminate the contract of the employee.

DEFINITIONS:

Affiliate. A compensated or uncompensated subcontractor, sub-recipient, consultant, or other third-party entity performing sponsored research services for the university under a written or verbal agreement.

Conflict of Commitment. An employee's devotion of time to activities that adversely affect ~~his or her~~their capability to meet their primary university responsibilities. Examples may include but are not limited to outside employment, *pro bono* or volunteer work, and government service in the public interest.

Conflict of Interest. A divergence between an individual's private interests and ~~his or her~~their employment or volunteer obligations to the university such that an independent observer may reasonably question whether the individual's actions or decisions are influenced or determined by considerations other than the best interest of the university.

~~**Outside Activity or Employment.** Any compensated or uncompensated secondary employment or activity, private practice, private consulting, teaching, research, or other activity that is not part of the employee's assigned duties at the university.~~

Financial Conflict of Interest. A significant financial interest that could directly and significantly affect the design, conduct, or reporting of sponsored and non-sponsored research.

Financial Interest. Anything of value other than that provided directly by the university.

Institutional Responsibilities. An investigator's professional responsibilities on behalf of the university. The activities outlined in an employee's annual assignment or position description may include administration, teaching, research and creative activities, course preparation, curriculum development, lectures, evaluation of student efforts, academic advising, committee meetings and memberships, service on panels such as university review boards or data and safety monitoring boards, public service to include service on advisory committee's or review panels, and any other activity assigned by the employee's supervisor in accordance with university policies.

Investigator. The project director or principal investigator, co-investigator, key personnel, and any other person, regardless of title or position, who is responsible for the design, conduct, or reporting of sponsored and non-sponsored research. The term may include collaborators or consultants who are responsible for the design, conduct, or reporting of sponsored and non-sponsored research.

Monitoring and Management Plans. Taking action to address a financial conflict of interest, which can include reducing or eliminating the significant financial interest to ensure, to the extent possible, that the design, conduct, and reporting of research will be free from bias or personal financial gain.

Outside Activity. Any compensated or uncompensated secondary employment or activity, such as engaging in private practice, private consulting, teaching, research, volunteering or any other activity performed outside of the university. This definition of outside activity includes, but is not limited to, anything an employee does for an organization or an

individual, other than the university, that is related to the employee's expertise as defined in Section 1012.977, Florida Statutes. Activities such as serving on an editorial board, as an expert witness, visiting scholar, and honorary appointments are all outside activities that must be reported even when those activities are counted as a service assignment.

Research. A systematic experiment, study, demonstration, or survey designed to develop or contribute general knowledge (basic research) or specific knowledge (applied research) in all fields by establishing, discovering, developing, elucidating, or confirming engineering, science, medicine, education, mathematics, humanities, and research involving human subjects or animals. The term includes training, public service, and product development to include a diagnostic test or drug.

Significant Financial Interest.

(1) A financial interest consisting of one or more of the following interests of the investigator (and those of the investigator's spouse and dependent children) that reasonably appears to be related to the investigator's university (institutional) responsibilities.

(i) with regard to any publicly traded entity, a significant financial interest exists if the value of any remuneration received from the entity in the 12 months preceding the disclosure and the value of any equity interest or fixed asset value of the entity as of the date of disclosure, when aggregated, equals or exceeds \$5,000;

(ii) with regard to any non-publically traded entity, a significant financial interest exists if the value of any remuneration received from the entity in the 12 months preceding the disclosure, when aggregated, equals or exceeds \$5,000 or when the investigator (or the investigator's spouse and dependent children) holds any equity interest (e.g., stock, stock options, or other ownership interest); or (iii) intellectual property rights and interests (e.g., patents, copyrights, trademarks) upon receipt of income related to such rights and interests.

(2) The occurrence of any reimbursed travel (i.e., that which is paid on behalf of the investigator and not reimbursed to the investigator) related to the investigator's institutional responsibilities. This disclosure requirement does not apply to travel that is reimbursed or sponsored by a federal, state, or local government agency, or is funded through a sponsored contract or grant through the Office of Research & Commercialization.

(3) The term significant financial interest does not include the following:

(i) salary, royalties, or other remuneration paid by the university,

(ii) income from seminars, lectures, or teaching engagements sponsored by a federal, state, or local government agency, an institution of higher education, an academic teaching hospital, a medical center, or a research institute that is affiliated with the university,

(iii) income from service on advisory committees, review panels for a federal, state, or local government agency, institution of higher education, an academic teaching hospital, medical center, or research institute affiliated with the university.

PROCEDURE:

Annual Disclosure and Amendments:

Faculty, staff, and student employees engaged in sponsored research must submit an online Potential Outside Activity, Employment, and Conflict of Interest and Commitment Disclosure (AA-21) through the university designated reporting system on an annual basis and throughout the year, submit an Amendment to the disclosure within 30-days of discovering, acquiring, or committing to a new outside activity or financial interest. Disclosures of outside activities and financial interests related to sponsored research are routed to the Office of Research Compliance Office after supervisory review.

The Office of Research Compliance Office will escalate disclosures containing actual or potential conflicts of interest related to sponsored research to the Research Conflict of Interest Committee for review. The Research Conflict of Interest Committee will determine if a management plan or other action is necessary.

University Compliance, Ethics, and Risk conducts the final review of all disclosures containing outside activities and financial interests.

Project Specific Financial Interest Disclosure

Investigators applying for sponsored research or Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval, must complete the project specific Financial Interest Disclosure section with each proposal through the university's designated research enterprise management system. The Office of Research Compliance Office will review the project specific disclosures to determine whether they are considered a significant financial interest requiring review by the Research Conflict of Interest Committee. Financial interests reported in project specific disclosures must also be reported in the online Potential Outside Activity, Employment, and Conflict of Interest and Commitment Disclosure (AA-21) if not previously reported during the annual reporting period. The university considers Investigators to be responsible for the design, conduct and/or reporting of the research and must complete the project specific Financial Interest Disclosure section with each proposal through the university's research enterprise management system.

Faculty, Executive Service employees, and postdoctoral employees participating in or planning to participate in sponsored and non-sponsored research activity must complete the Potential Outside Activity, Employment, and Conflict of Interest and Commitment Disclosure Report (Form AA-21) on an annual basis and within 30 days of discovering, acquiring, or committing to a new financial interest or commitment.

Administrative and Professional employees, University Support Personnel System employees, Other Personnel Support employees, adjunct faculty, students, and affiliates planning to participate in or who are participating in sponsored and non-sponsored research activity must complete the Potential Outside Activity, Employment, and Conflict of Interest and Commitment Report (Form ORC-COI) on an annual basis and within 30 days of discovering, acquiring, or committing to a new financial interest or commitment.

~~The Office of Research & Commercialization in conjunction with the University Compliance, Ethics, and Risk Office will review disclosures. Disclosures containing actual or potential conflicts of interest will be reviewed by the conflict of interest committee. The conflict of interest committee will determine if a management plan or other action is necessary.~~

Training:

The Office of Research ~~Compliance Office & Commercialization~~ will provide conflict of interest training modules to investigators. Investigators are required to complete conflict of interest training prior to engaging in sponsored research at least every four years, and within a thirty day period if one or more of the following occur:

- 1) the university revises its conflict of interest policies,
- 2) an investigator is new to the university, and
- 3) the university finds that an investigator is not in compliance with the university's conflict of interest policy and procedures.

Reporting Conflict of Interests to Sponsors:

The Office of Research ~~Compliance Office & Commercialization~~ is responsible for reporting identified financial conflicts of interests held by investigators ~~investigator's significant financial interests~~ to sponsors in accordance with sponsors' regulations and their policies and procedures, to include annual reports, changes to management or mitigation plans, and retrospective reports. Investigators will provide sufficient data to the Office of Research ~~Compliance Office & Commercialization~~ and other designated university officials to report the nature and extent of the financial conflict.

Records:

The Office of Research ~~Compliance Office & Commercialization~~ is responsible for maintaining records relating to all investigator conflict of interest disclosures, the university's review and response to such disclosures, and all actions taken by the university in accordance with its policy and procedures for three years from the date the final expenditure report is submitted to the sponsor.

Noncompliance:

~~Failure by an investigator to comply with the university's financial conflicts of interest policy or a financial conflict of interest management or mitigation plan will result in disciplinary action up to and including termination for just cause.~~

Subrecipients and other Affiliates:

The Office of Research ~~& Commercialization~~ will incorporate for terms for subrecipients (includes affiliates) ~~terms~~ that establish whether the financial conflict of interest policy of the university or that of the affiliate's institutions will apply as dictated in federal agency guidelines ~~to the subrecipients' investigators~~. ~~Subrecipients shall certify as a part of the agreement that their conflict of interest policies adhere to the university's conflict of interest policy.~~

If the subrecipient does not have a conflict of interest policy that meets or exceeds the university's conflict of interest policy, the subrecipient investigators must be subject to the university's financial conflict of interest policy.

Public Accessibility:

When the Research Conflict of Interest Committee determines a significant financial interest is related to an investigator's Public Health Service (PHS) funded research, determines the significant financial interest is a financial conflict of interest, and the investigator still holds the significant financial interest, the University, through the Office of Research will ensure the following information is publicly accessible by a written response within five business days of a request:

- 1) the researcher's name, title, and research project role,
- 2) the name of the entity in which the significant financial interest is held,
- 3) the nature of the significant financial interest, and
- 4) the approximate dollar value of the significant financial interest (within dollar ranges) or a statement that a value cannot be readily determined.

~~The university will post the conflict of interest policy and procedure as well as corresponding conflict of interest guidelines on a publically accessible~~

~~Web site. When an investigator's significant financial interest is still held by the investigator and the conflict of interest committee determines the significant financial interest is related to the investigators sponsored research, the Office of Research & Commercialization will post the following information on a publically accessible Web site: 1) the investigator's name, title and research project role, 2) the name of the entity in which the significant financial interest is held, 3) the nature of the significant financial interest, and 4) the approximate dollar value of the significant financial interest (within dollar ranges).~~

RELATED INFORMATION:

- 1) UCF Regulation - 3.018 Conflict of Interest or Commitment; Outside Activity or Employment
- 2) UCF Regulation-4.029 Use of University Facilities; Definition; Priority of Use; Restrictions on Use
- 3) UCF Research Conflict of Interest Committee Charter
- 4) UCF Collective Bargaining Agreement
- 5) UCF Graduate Student Handbook
- 6) UCF College of Medicine Faculty Handbook
- 7) UCF Policy 3-008.2 Employment of Relatives
- 8) National Institutes of Health Grants Policy Statement, Part II, Terms and Conditions of NIH Grant Awards, Subpart A: General, Chapter 4.1.10, and Financial Conflict of Interest
- 9) The National Science Foundation Proposal and Award Policies and Procedures Guide, Chapter IX-Grantee Standards, Part A. Conflict of Interest Policies
- 10) Florida Statutes Title X, Part III Code of Ethics for Public Officers and Employees Chapter 112.313 - 112.326

- 11) Florida Statutes Title XLVIII Chapter 1012 Section 1012.977
- 12) Department of Health and Human Services 42 CFR Part 50 and 45 CFR Part 94 Final Rule
- 13) Food and Drug Administration Department of Health and Human Services Financial Disclosure by Clinical Investigators - 21 CFR, Part 54

RELATED UCF WEBSITES:

Office of Research - COI

University Ethics, Compliance, Risk Office - Conflict of Interest

FORM:

Potential Outside Activity, Employment, and Conflict of Interest and Commitment Disclosure (AA-21)

~~1) National Institutes of Health Grants Policy Statement, Part II, Terms and Conditions of NIH Grant Awards, Subpart A: General, Chapter 4.1.10, and Financial Conflict of Interest~~

~~2) National Science Foundation Award Administrative Guide, Chapter IV-Grantee Standards, Part A~~

~~3) State of Florida Code of Ethics for Public Officers and Employees - Florida Statutes, Title X,
—Chapter 112.313—112.326~~

~~4) UCF Regulation—UCF 3.018, Conflict of Interest or Commitment; Outside Activity or Employment~~

RELATED DOCUMENTS:

~~1) Public Health Service Conflict of Interest Regulations—Title 42, CFR Part 50 and 45 CFR Part 94~~

~~2) National Science Foundation Conflict of Interest Regulations—Title 45, Part 680~~

~~3) Food and Drug Administration Regulations—Financial Disclosure by Clinical Investigators—21 CFR, Part 54~~

~~4) UCF BOT-UFF Collective Bargaining Agreement~~

~~5) UCF Golden Rule Student Handbook~~

RELATED UCF WEB SITES:

<http://www.research.ucf.edu/compliance>

<http://compliance.ucf.edu/conflict-of-interest/>

FORMS:

1) ~~AA21 – Potential Outside Activity, Employment, and Conflict of Interest and Commitment Report (faculty, executive staff, and post-doctoral employees)~~

2) ~~ORC COI – Potential Outside Activity, Employment, and Conflict of Interest and Commitment Report (A&P, USPS, OPS (to include adjunct faculty))~~

3) ~~HR-11 – Report of Potential Conflict of Interest, Outside Activity and Employment for A&P or USPS Employees~~

4) ~~HR-12 – Use of University Personnel, Equipment, Facilities, Students, or Services~~

INITIATING AUTHORITY: Vice President for Research & ~~Commercialization~~ Dean, College of Graduate Studies and Vice President for Compliance and Risk

History: 4-504 4/21/2008; 4-504.1 10/8/2008; 4-504.2 8/20/2012

Student Perception of Instruction (SPoI) Task Force Report 2020



UCF Student Perception of Instruction (SPoI) Task Force Report to the Faculty Senate

Taskforce Members

Kelly Allred

Associate Professor, Nursing Practice

Zhongzhu Chen

Assistant Professor, Department of Physics

Lucretia Cooney

Director, Faculty Excellence

Jana Jasinski

Professor, Faculty Excellence

Tamra Legron-Rodriguez

Lecturer, Department of Chemistry

Eric Main

Associate Director, Faculty Center for Teaching & Learning

Ann Miller

Interim Director, Faculty Center for Teaching & Learning

Professor, Nicholson School of Communication and Media

Patsy Moskal

Director, Learning Resources

William Self

Professor and Associate Director of Undergraduate Affairs

Julie Sharek

Instructor, Integrated Business

Keri Watson

Associate Professor, School of Visual Arts & Design

Grace White (Chair)

Associate Lecturer, Department of Psychology

Introduction and Overview

The Student Perception of Instruction (SPoI) Task Force was convened in the spring 2020 in response to Faculty Senate Resolution 2018-19-12 (see http://facultysenate.ucf.edu/resolutions/2018_2019/index.asp) which was focused on improving the Student Perceptions of Instruction at UCF. The work of the task force was focused on reviewing questions and question validity, recommending better methods to evaluate teaching, and defining the role of the SPoI in the evaluation process.

For decades, use of student evaluations in faculty performance has been a hot topic in higher education and a point of significant criticism (e.g. Esarey & Valdez, 2020; Rosen, 2018). The most prominent area of discourse has been related to whether these surveys could reliably and accurately measure teaching effectiveness (Boring, Ottoboni, & Stark, 2016; Emery, Kramer, & Tian, 2003). Moreover, examinations of student evaluations of faculty performance at colleges and universities across the nation have shown a consistent and replicable pattern of bias against female faculty and faculty of color (Boring, 2017; Centra & Gaubatz, 2000; Harlow, 2003; Kogan, Schoenfeld-Tacher, & Hellyer, 2010; Laube, Massoni, Sprague, & Ferber, 2007; McPherson, Jewell, & Kim, 2009; Spooren, Brockx, & Mortelmans, 2013). Thus, the almost exclusive reliance on this biased metric in “high-stakes” personnel decisions like promotion, tenure, and awards can create and perpetuate systemic deficits for faculty who are not white and/or who are female. Therefore, it is incumbent upon universities to consider and weigh the impact of such reliance given the mounting evidence against their validity (Flaherty, 2020; Lederman, 2020).

A Brief History of UCF’s SPoI Survey

With regards to the history of SPoI at UCF, there is a body of literature and research on the 16-item SPoI (see appendix 1) which was in use between 1996 and Spring 2013. A brief summary of those studies is presented below:

- Research completed by Wang, Dzuiban, Cook and Moskal (2009) was able to generate general rules to discriminate between faculty rated as excellent and those rated as poor from SPoI data collected from student responses in academic years 1996 to 2001. These findings had practical applications in allowing faculty to be able to target specific areas of student perceptions which in turn may have increased overall ratings.
- Dzuiban, Moskal, Kramer, & Thompson (2012) explored whether there was a difference in the number of elements by which students evaluate their online courses depending on the degree of ambivalence they express about those courses. Further, if there was a difference, what were the dimensions and how did they relate to each other. This research examined student responses in academic years 2008-2010 at UCF. Overall, these data suggested that ambivalence (as indicated by 2, 3, 4 rating on Likert scale) was indicative of a more complex model of student satisfaction (Dzuiban et al., 2012). While students with no ambivalence used a general opinion which determined their evaluations, ambivalent students used multiple categories of information to formulate their ratings. For the most ambivalent (3), the students also evaluate the degree to which the instructor is responsive to them.
- Dzuiban and Moskal (2011) investigated whether the identical student rating instrument is measuring the same or different underlying teaching and learning constructs,

depending on the modality in which the course is offered? Approximately 1.1 million student responses to the 16 item SPI across 3 course modalities (online, blended, face-to-face) at UCF were analyzed. Findings showed data set characteristics for the 3 modalities resulted in a single factor which accounted for 70% of the total system variance. (Dzuiban & Moskal, 2011). The conclusion is: course modality had no impact on students when evaluating educational experiences. Thus, it seems that the same underlying criterion is being used by students when making these ratings regardless of modality.

Based on the above empirical literature, UCF's 16 item assessment appeared to be a valid and reliable measure of **students' perceptions** of instruction. None of the studies examined the current 9-item assessment (see appendix 2) which went into effect in fall 2013. It is possible to infer that the 9 items, which were derived from the 16-item assessment, likely share the same or similar reliability and validity. However, this is an empirical question. The process of assessment validation requires the exploration of the psychometric properties of measures cross-sectionally and over time. These metrics include, and are not limited to, predictive validity, construct validity, and criterion-related validity. Given the lack of this type of assessment validation data for the 9-item measure, the conclusions which can be drawn about its validity are limited. For the 16-item survey, based on the empirical literature, there is still a question of the impact of bias (based on age, gender, race and/or national origin) on these ratings. Specifically, none of the above research addresses or excludes the possibility of bias in the ratings. From a review of the empirical literature, we have a clear picture of how students at UCF viewed excellent and poor instructors (particularly for years 1996-2001). However, whether these subjective assessments are indicative of **objective teaching effectiveness and learning outcomes was not explored**. This question is not answered by the above research.

Given the information provided by the empirical data on the SPoI, we were able to come to a few conclusions and concerns. UCF's 16-item measure seems to have reliably captured **students' perceptions**. However, the question remains as to whether this is a sufficient and functional measure of objective teaching effectiveness and how these ratings connect to learning outcomes. Is teaching effectiveness only to be defined by student perceptions? This research also leaves concerns about bias in the ratings, which is not addressed by the previously reviewed literature. Without more data specific to measurement validation of the 9-item survey, evidence-based conclusions about its validity cannot be made. Further examination of the scope of application, and appropriateness of application, of SPoI as it relates to the objective evaluation of teaching effectiveness should be addressed.

Overview of Task Force Recommendations

This task force's charge is an important and timely one. The national discourse about student surveys highlights the delicate balance between giving students a voice in the academic process and creating an inclusive campus environment for female faculty and faculty of color. Faculty on the task force have also expressed concerns about an inability to introduce effective pedagogy which challenges students' thinking for fear of student reprisals in the evaluation process. Furthermore, concerns about the responsibility for faculty to remind students to complete these surveys, rather than having a university-controlled reminder mechanism, raises additional bias

possibilities. Given the complexity of the problem, the wide variety of concerns, and the high stakes associated with the SPoI, the task force did not arrive at a single, uniform conclusion, but instead came up with the following three possible recommendations for improving the SPoI, or improving the evaluation of teaching and learning in general, from which the Faculty Senate should select:

Recommendation A: Eliminate the Use of Student Perception of Instruction Assessment in Faculty Evaluation.

Recommendation B: Keep SPoI assessment with inclusion of bias awareness language and add additional measures of teaching effectiveness, including instructor reflection, peer review.

Recommendation C: Keep SPoI assessment with edits/changes to items and instructions to increase validity and reduce bias (e.g. bias disclaimers, example prompts)

A detailed summary and report related to each of the above recommendations is included in the next section.

Recommendation A: Eliminate the Use of Student Perception of Instruction Assessment in Faculty Evaluation.

- **Task Force Work Group Members:**

Tamra Legron-Rodriguez
Julie Sharek
Keri Watson

Explanation and Rationale:

In response to a growing body of research, organizations from the American Sociological Association to the Association of American Universities to the American Association of University Professors have issued statements questioning the validity of Student Perceptions of Instruction/Student Evaluations of Teaching, and colleges and universities from the University of Oregon to the University of Southern California have discontinued their use.

Research has demonstrated that SPOIs are:

- Only weakly related to teaching effectiveness
- Used in statistically problematic ways
- Are influenced by factors such as times of day and class size
- Are biased against women, people of color, and adjuncts

As a 2019 American Sociological Association report wrote:

“Despite the ubiquity of SETs, a growing body of evidence suggests that their use in personnel decisions is problematic. SETs are weakly related to other measures of teaching effectiveness and student learning (Boring, Ottoboni, and Stark 2016; Uttl, White, and Gonzalez 2017); they are used in statistically problematic ways (e.g., categorical measures are treated as interval, response rates are ignored, small differences are given undue weight, and distributions are not reported) (Boysen 2015; Stark and Freishtat 2014); and they can be influenced by course characteristics like time of day, subject, class size, and whether the course is required, all of which are unrelated to teaching effectiveness. In addition, in both observational studies and experiments, SETs have been found to be biased against women and people of color (for recent reviews of the literature, see Basow and Martin 2012 and Spooren, Brockx, and Mortelmans 2015).”

Moreover, as argued in a recent issue of Inside Higher Ed:

“Relying on biased instruments to evaluate faculty members is institutional discrimination. Indeed, it is simply a matter of time before a class-action lawsuit is filed against an institution for knowingly using biased instruments in evaluating its faculty.”

Mechanism for Adoption of Recommendation:

As one of the largest and most innovative universities in the U.S., a designated Hispanic-Serving and Minority Serving institution that is committed to access, inclusion, and diversity, UCF should discontinue the use of SPOIs, which perpetuate race- and gender-based biases, in the process of Faculty Performance evaluations.

Recommendation B: Keep SPoI assessment with inclusion of bias awareness language and add additional measures of teaching effectiveness, including instructor reflection, peer review.

- **Task Force Work Group Members:**

Eric Main

Ann Miller

William Self

Explanation and Rationale:

The idea that student evaluations can stand in for learning rests on two assumptions: that students can accurately gauge their own level of learning, and that they will accurately report those perceptions (Braga et al., 2014). However, a large body of research has shown that students are not good at assessing their own learning (Carpenter et al., 2020; Weinberg et al., 2009). Both laboratory and classroom data demonstrate that students are overconfident in their abilities in comparison to their actual performance (see review by Finn & Tauber, 2014). Many faculty members experience the results of this overconfidence firsthand when students come to them shocked by their poor performance on the first test, even though they thought they understood the material (Carpenter, et al., 2020; McGuire, 2015).

Furthermore, students have a strong tendency to erroneously misinterpret smooth, fluent learning experiences, such as enthusiastic lectures, for learning itself, even though empirical research has shown these teaching approaches to be ineffective or even counterproductive for actual learning (Motz, de Leeuw, Carvalho, Liang, & Goldstone, 2017; Williams & Ceci, 1997). In contrast, retrieval practice, spaced practice, and active learning have been demonstrated to be highly effective (Dunlosky, Rawson, Marsh, Nathan, & Willingham, 2013), but students often state that they do not learn well from these techniques, likely because they are less comfortable with the active nature of the learning experience. Deslauriers, McCarty, Miller, Callaghan, & Kestin (2019) found students rated instructors who employed active learning strategies less highly than those who used passive techniques, even though in reality students taught via active learning methods scored 10% higher on tests over the material. The researchers surmised that active learning by definition involves struggle for students, and students may interpret learning experiences that involve this kind of cognitive exertion as a sign that they are not learning.

As noted in the introductory material, students also seem not to be able to disentangle irrelevant factors from teaching evaluations (Yunker & Yunker, 2003). Research has demonstrated SETs to be affected by personal characteristics such as faculty gender (Weinberg et al., 2009), age (Sprinkle, 2008), nationality (Weinberg et al., 2009), and “hotness” (Felton, Koper, Mitchell, & Stinson, 2004), as well as situational factors like type of course (Uttl & Smibert, 2017), weather at the time of the SET (Braga et al., 2014), and even whether an independent administrator gave students chocolate before they filled out the evaluations (Youmans & Jee, 2007).

Finally, a few studies have found students’ accuracy and honesty in reporting to be faulty (Nilson, 2013). For example, a majority of students voluntarily evaluated guest lecturers in their undergraduate and medical school classes who had never taught them (Reynolds, 1977; Uijtdechaage & O’Neal, 2014), and marked their instructor down on promptness of returning assignments even though the instructor had returned all assignments during the entire semester on the following class day (Stanfel, 1995). More disturbing, up to a third of students use instructor ratings to get revenge on instructors they do not like, even to the extent of submitting false information (Clayson & Haley, 2011).

At best, then, student evaluations of teaching (SETs) measure perceived learning, which has little if any relationship to actual learning. However, it is likely that they measure something more akin to satisfaction with the learning experience (Nilson, 2013). Students may not have the same values about teaching that college administrators do. Administrators are concerned that students learn, knowing that learning will make it more likely that they will graduate on time and, subsequently, find employment in their field of study. Students, in contrast, may care primarily about their grades, and secondarily about experiencing a stimulating classroom environment, what Braga and colleagues (2014) refer to as professors' realized utility to students. This sort of satisfaction may be the basis of SET scores, scores that are commonly misinterpreted by administrators as teaching effectiveness.

Nevertheless, quantitative end-of-semester SETs are the most commonly used technique for assessing the quality of teaching among college faculty. Up to 94% of deans and administrators use them to inform a variety of personnel decisions (Miller & Seldin, 2014). Typically administered as electronic surveys with Likert-type items inquiring into teachers' clarity, organization, and caring for students, SETs are likely pervasive because they are time efficient and inexpensive to administer. But it also makes intuitive sense that students, who are in the position to directly observe both their own learning and their instructors' teaching, should have a major voice in providing input about their classes. This option, therefore, does not propose to do away with student evaluations, but to supplement them with other measures, so as to triangulate evaluation of teaching quality.

Proposed Improvement(s):

The AAUP (2015) *Statement on Teaching Evaluation* states that firsthand data from various sources should be gathered, including from students, but emphasizes the primacy of faculty colleague judgements of teaching effectiveness. They suggest that the following types of data should be systematically gathered: 1) factual description of what an individual does as a teacher including number and level and kinds of classes taught, the numbers of students, out-of-class activities related to teaching, course syllabi, tests, materials, and methods employed in instruction; 2) various measures of the effectiveness of these efforts including data from students, trained observers, faculty colleagues, and self-evaluation; and fair consideration of the relation between these efforts and expectations of the department and institution. (Additional ideas related to STEM education can be found at <https://www.aau.edu/sites/default/files/AAU-Files/STEM-Education-Initiative/P%26T-Matrix.pdf>.)

In this regard, we identified four institutions that can serve as aspirational models for UCF if we are to move toward a multi-measure evaluation of faculty teaching: the University of Southern California, the University of Oregon, the University of Kansas, and the University of Colorado at Boulder,

University of Southern California has developed a detailed peer review system. The shift was featured in an article in *Chronicle of Higher Education* (Supiano, 2018). Detailed resource for peer review are available at the [USC Center for Excellence in Teaching website](#).

University of Oregon has developed a holistic framework for teaching assessment than include peer review, self-reflection and student feedback. Detailed information is available about their procedures on the [Provost's web page](#).

University of Kansas is currently in the midst of a 5-year National Science Foundation grant to develop a framework called [Benchmarks for Teaching Effectiveness](#). The framework includes evaluation of teaching in seven areas, one of which is student perceptions. The university encourages the synthesis of information from instructor, peers, and students in departmental and school level evaluation.

Also funded by an NSF grant, the [Teaching Quality Framework](#) at the *University of Colorado Boulder* draws from multiple source of evidence to evaluate teaching include “voices” provided by the instructor, peer feedback, and student voices. The framework defines teaching as a scholarly activity with seven core elements.

The following principles are shared by all four of these institutional efforts:

- Student evaluations of teaching should not be the sole evidence on which teaching effectiveness is judged.
- At a minimum, three inputs should be included in the evaluation of teaching system: student feedback, instructor reflection, and peer review.
- Evaluation should be tailored by departments to make it appropriate to the discipline.
- Some shifts of wording are required in student evaluation instruments to make them appropriate for student input. The focus of these changes varies by institution.

Mechanism for Adoption of Recommendation:

Adoption of this recommendation would entail creation of a multi-disciplinary task force that would investigate peer and self-evaluation instrumentation currently available and pilot selected instruments across a range of departments. Based on the experience of the above-cited institutions, this would need to be a multi-year process in order to receive feedback across a range a disciplines and achieve faculty and departmental buy-in for the final product.

Recommendation C: Keep SPoI assessment with edits/changes to items and instructions to increase validity and reduce bias (e.g. bias disclaimers, example prompts)

- **Task Force Work Group Members:**

Zhongzhu Chen

Patsy Moskal

Grace White

Explanation and Rationale:

Student rating data can give voice to student experiences and concerns in the classroom. Thus, there may be some hesitation to abandon or diminish the student's perspective. However, student perspectives can also be tainted by personal biases unrelated to course content or instructor performance (Esarey & Valdez, 2020). As colleges and universities across the nation grapple with increased scrutiny and criticism of student surveys, many are choosing to try to address and mitigate these issues of bias (Flaherty, 2019; Peterson, Biederman, Andersen, Ditonto, & Roe, 2019). Evidence-based means to diminish these biases are lacking. Nonetheless, one possibility which has some empirical support, in the short-term, is cuing students to be aware of their biases prior to completing surveys (Peterson et al., 2019). This "cuing" is done through a statement or "disclaimer" which students read before making ratings on their instructors. Experimental research has shown that bias disclaimers can improve (or reduce) negative bias by up to .5 of a point for female faculty (Peterson et al., 2019). The improvements found in this research suggest bias disclaimers may be an effective tool in addressing gender bias in the short-term. However, their impact on racial bias and ageism was not explored (Peterson et al., 2019). Additional research which examines the long-term impact of these disclaimers must be completed to fully understand their effectiveness.

Similar to "cuing" students to their bias, it may also be beneficial to provide students with additional instruction and guidance on how to appropriately interpret each item on the evaluation form. Beyond bias, it has been called into question as to whether students have the ability to accurately review instructional quality (Jimaa, 2013). Therefore, an additional criticism of student rating data in faculty performance argues that students generally lack the knowledge, motivation, or perspective on the learning process, to provide meaningful evaluations of teaching. As a result, students' ratings on the items reflect more of their subjective feeling towards the course and the instructor, instead of a more objective judgement of the quality of instruction. The ratings could also be strongly influenced by comparison with other courses that the student happen to be taking simultaneously, resulting in a bias against more rigorous and challenging courses. If this is true, then providing students with assistance in framing their classroom experiences may be of benefit. One such method of providing context is to give examples of specific approaches, strategies, or experiences in the class being evaluated, which would be appropriate for receiving a Poor (1) rating or would be appropriate for receiving an Excellent (5) rating. These "example response prompts" would provide students with a mental framework, or context, upon which to gauge the students' experiences in the class and base course ratings. Thus, these prompts can steer students to think of specific types of relevant information when evaluating said experiences.

Proposed Improvement(s):

Bias Disclaimer. If student rating data are used in faculty evaluation, there must be an attempt to alleviate any impact of bias against under-represented faculty. Thus, we recommend that UCF adopt a bias disclaimer to be included in the SPoI prior to students' completion of their instructor ratings. **An example of an example bias disclaimer which could be incorporated into the SPoI is as follows:**

Student evaluations of teaching play an important role in the review of faculty. Your opinions influence the review of instructors that takes place every year. University of Central Florida recognizes that student evaluations of teaching are often influenced by students' **unconscious** and **unintentional** biases about the race and gender of the instructor. Women and instructors of color are systematically rated lower in their teaching evaluations than white men, even when there are no actual differences in the instruction or in what students have learned.

As you fill out the course evaluation please keep this in mind and make an effort to resist stereotypes about professors. Focus on your opinions about the content of the course (the assignments, the textbook, the in-class material) and not unrelated matters (the instructor's appearance). (*Adapted from Peterson et al., 2019*)

Due to the lack of long-term data on the effectiveness of these disclaimers, the university must recognize the role which bias may play in student ratings, if they are used for important decisions related to promotion, tenure, and awards. Given that there is no fool-proof method to root out bias, departments and colleges must take into consideration how much weight, or value, should be attributed to these ratings when making such decisions.

Example Prompts. It is important to emphasize that this work group does not recommend that a set of "one size fit all" example description should be imposed on all student evaluation forms, as it will be impossible to find examples that are general to all disciplines, all course sizes, and all models of delivery. Instead, we recommend that faculty and departments should be able to customize these "example response prompts" to their specific domain and/or course content. Thus, a requirement to create an adaptable SPoI assessment method or system, which appropriately addresses differences in learning requirements across content domains, course sizes and delivery methods, is a necessity. It is the consensus of our work group that a problem complicated as evaluation of teaching effectiveness could only be resolved by enabling and encouraging all faculty and administration across campus to engage in active discussion about the definition of "good teaching" in different contexts. To increase the validity of assessments, the SPoI must be able to address variation in teaching methods and/or modality for the example prompts. The current document provides examples of what those example prompts could look like. In other words, the following list is a "example of example", which we hope could serve as the seed for future conversation on teaching effectiveness. **An example of "example" prompts for SPoI items which could be incorporated into the SPoI are as follows, (see appendix 3 for all items):**

1. **Effectiveness organizing the course**

An instructor could receive a “1” rating for Effectiveness organizing the course if for example: for a Webcourse that has no modules, no headings or titles for information, no guidance for navigation, made frequent changes to the course format, assignment deadlines, F2F- content seems jumps from idea to idea, no consistency in presentation, unannounced changes to deadlines, etc.

An instructor could receive a “5” rating for Effectiveness organizing the course if for example: Most assignments and course materials are accessible via more than one method, with clear instruction on how to access and utilize. Different components of the course, such as homework, exams, lecture and reading materials, are well aligned with each other. Provides reasonable flexibility in schedule for students without compromising the rigor of instruction.

As stated with the “bias disclaimer,” long-term evaluations of the effectiveness of this method in improving students’ precision in course evaluation would be needed.

Appropriate Application/Use of Ratings. Until the effectiveness of bias reduction using these methods is known, we encourage use of other evidence-based practices in evaluating faculty performance. Given the possible bias inherent to student rating data, we urge departments, colleges, and administrators to view these data as “feedback” rather than as formal ratings. **There are also several statistical concerns and recommendations which must be taken into account for the appropriate use and application of these ratings.** These statistical issues include: (1) low response rates, (2) class size, (3) use of averages on categorical data, and (4) comparisons between distributions of scores (Stark & Freishtat, 2014).

Any statistician would state that use of metrics from a sample in which the response rate is low cannot be generalized to the larger population. Thus, making inferences about faculty performance if only a small portion of students have responded to their course SPoI may be inappropriate. Similarly, the average SPoI scores in small classes will be more greatly influenced by outliers, luck, and error (Stark & Freishtat, 2014). Therefore, instructors who teach smaller classes may be more affected by student rating bias, given that the *mean* is sensitive to extremes within the dataset. Hence, both low response rate and small class sizes may endanger faculty ratings, making these scores more vulnerable to bias.

It is of note that SPoI responses are ordinal categorical variables in which students make ratings from Poor (1) to Excellent (5). Stark and Freishtat (2014) point out that these student rating numbers are labels, not values. Thus, one cannot assume the difference between one and two is the same as the difference between four and five. Statistically, it does not make sense to average categorical variables. The appropriateness of use of parametric statistics with data which have Likert response formats continues to be debated among those who use statistics in the social and behavioral sciences (Leung, 2011). It is crucial that those making decisions from interpretations of the data understand the categorical nature of the variables and the appropriate ways in which to analyze these data. Lastly, if SPoI averages were statistically meaningful, it is improper to compare them with other scores, such as the departmental average, without knowing the distribution of scores (Stark & Freishtat, 2014). To further this point, it may be inappropriate to compare SPoIs of very different classes. Comparing the average without knowing the distribution, leaves out meaningful and required information for accurate interpretation. As an academic institution, utilization of scientifically rigorous methods to validate, implement, and interpret assessments must be our standard procedure. Overall, we must continue to explore

evidence-based methods to evaluate “effective” teaching, while understanding that these student ratings provide a portion of a larger picture in the totality of faculty performance.

Mechanism for Adoption of Recommendation:

Adoption of this recommendation would require alterations to the content of the current SPoI survey as well as the need for a more adaptive system of assessment. The inclusion of a “bias disclaimer” statement prior to students accessing the survey items would be required. Thus, students must view, read, and agree to proceed in order to complete their course evaluations. With regards to the additional “example prompts,” given the dynamic nature of these prompts depending upon the course or content area the SPoI system should be more dynamic and adaptable to specific courses. This requires the exploration of newer assessment system or technology which allows this type of customization. If this recommendation is selected an additional task-force or committee should be formed with the focus on this task as it relates to the technical aspects of the implementation of the desired changes. Lastly, departments and colleges must use and implement the statistically appropriate procedures for calculating and interpreting these measures. The inappropriate statistical application and comparison of the mean ratings can compound the impact of bias.

Summary of Report

As indicated by the Faculty Senate Resolution 2018-19-12, the university must take action to address its use and application of the Student Perception of Instruction (SPoI) survey in its current form. As an institution of higher learning, we cannot ignore, nor be complacent, about growing concerns and evidence of bias in student rating data. Attempts to mitigate the impact of bias can follow the three possible recommendations for improving the SPoI, or improving the evaluation of teaching and learning in general, which are to:

- (a) eliminate the use of SPoI in faculty evaluation,
- (b) keep the current SPoI with inclusion of bias awareness language and add additional measures of teaching effectiveness, OR
- (c) keep the current SPoI with edit/changes to items and instructions to increase validity and reduce bias.

The university must also encourage a holistic approach to evaluating faculty performance across all departments and colleges at the institution. At its very best, research on student data suggests that these ratings only account for **18% of the variance in how much students learn** (Kornell & Hausman, 2016). Consequently, over reliance on these “simple” metrics, like SPoI averages, can lead to inaccurate and unfair judgments of faculty.

It is of note that multiple professional organizations have urged universities to move away from a primary focus on student ratings in the evaluation of teaching (Flaherty, 2019). The American Sociological Association has been leading the charge in concert with other organizations in support of a cultural and institutional shift away from a reliance on these flawed metrics. As cited in this report, there is a significant body of research which suggests that use of these ratings in important personnel decisions leads to systemic bias against vulnerable groups, particularly women and people of color. Public universities, with similar size and scope as UCF, have been able to implement substantive changes to their faculty review process and student rating procedures the benefit of faculty and students (Flaherty, 2019).

Even more striking is the impact that the sole reliance on student rating data has on faculty pedagogy. Researchers posit that institutions which strongly depend on student rating data foster a culture of decreased rigor in their educational practices (e.g. Stroebe, 2016). Many faculty members across the nation also believe that decreasing educational rigor can increase student ratings (Morgan, Sneed, & Swinney, 2003). Thus, reliance on these ratings may have a counter-productive effect of increasing grade inflation while reducing the quality and impact of teaching. Not only are students spending less time engaged in the academic process, there also appears to be a significant *decrease* in improvements in critical thinking skills among more recent college graduates in comparison to college graduates of previous decades (Arum & Roksa, 2011; Pascarella et al., 2011). Therefore, universities must be willing to devote the time and resources to assess faculty accurately and fairly. Attempts to short-cut this process can only lead to biased and unjust evaluations which primarily hurt women and people of color. Moreover, an unwillingness to invest in a dynamic model of faculty evaluation also hurts the students whom institutions serve. Adoption of one of the recommendations of this task force, as they relate to the application and implementation of the SPoI survey, would better serve UCF’s core values of integrity, scholarship, community, and excellence in how we make decisions about faculty performance.

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Appendix 1

Student Perception of Instruction Survey (Prior to 2013)

From 1996 to Spring 2013, the SPI process consisted of sixteen multiple choice questions and four free response comment questions.

The multiple choice questions included:

1. Feedback concerning your performance in this course was
2. The instructor 's interest in your learn in g was
3. Use of class time was
4. The instructor 's overall organization of the course was
5. Continuity from one class meeting to the next was
6. The pace of the course was
7. The instructor 's assessment of your progress in the course was
8. The texts and supplemental learning materials used in the course were
9. Description of course objectives and assignments
10. Communication of ideas and inform at ion
11. Expression of expectations for performance
12. Availability to assist students in or outside of class
13. Respect and concern for students
14. Stimulation of interest in the course
15. Facilitation of learning
16. Overall assessment of instructor

Possible responses were Excellent, Very Good, Good, Fair, and Poor.

The free response comment questions included:

17. The thing (s) I like the MOST about this course
18. The thing (s) I like the LEAST about this course
19. What is your reaction to the method of evaluating your mastery of the course (i.e. , testing , grading, out of class assignments (term papers), instructor feed back , et c.)
20. Additional comments and suggestions for improvement

Multiple choice questions 1 through 8, and the comment s, were considered confidential and used only for instructor evaluation. However, the response to questions 9 to 16 were public information published by the university.

Appendix 2

Current Student Perception of Instruction (Spring 2013 to present)

In this version of the SPI, there are currently nine multiple choice questions and two free response comment questions, down from 16 and four prior to Spring 2013. The number of questions was reduced in the hopes of increasing student participation/response rates.

The multiple choice questions are

1. Effectiveness organizing the course
2. Effectiveness explaining course requirements, grading criteria, and expectations
3. Effectiveness communicating ideas and/or information
4. Effectiveness showing respect and concern for students
5. Effectiveness stimulating interest in the course
6. Effectiveness creating an environment that helps students learn
7. Effectiveness giving useful feedback on course performance
8. Effectiveness help in g students achieve course objectives
9. Overall, effectiveness of the instruction

Possible responses were Excellent, Very Good, Good, Fair, and Poor.

The free response comment questions are:

1. What did you like best about the course and/or how the instructor taught it?
2. What suggestions do you have for im proving the course and/or how the instructor taught it?

On November 30, 2013, the Faculty Senate approved the web publication of the responses for all nine multiple choice questions for Spring 2013 onward . However, the comments are still confidential. These SPI files can be found at <http://net2865.net.ucf.edu/>.

Appendix 3

Example for example SPol prompts

1. An instructor could receive a “1” rating for **Effectiveness organizing the course** if for example: for a Webcourse that has no modules, no headings or titles for information, no guidance for navigation, made frequent changes to the course format, assignment deadlines, F2F- content seems jumps from idea to idea, no consistency in presentation, unannounced changes to deadlines, etc.

An instructor could receive a “5” rating for **Effectiveness organizing the course** if for example: Most assignments and course materials are accessible via more than one method, with clear instruction on how to access and utilize. Different components of the course, such as homework, exams, lecture and reading materials, are well aligned with each other. Provides reasonable flexibility in schedule for students without compromising the rigor of instruction.
2. An instructor could receive a “1” rating for **Effectiveness explaining course requirements, grading criteria, and expectations** if for example, for a Webcourse and F2F, does not provide a written explanation of course expectations, does not provide any guidelines or grading criteria

An instructor could receive a “5” rating for **Effectiveness explaining course requirements, grading criteria, and expectations** if for example, Clearly communicated the expectations and grading schemes for the course early on, and remind students frequently during the semester.
3. An instructor could receive a “1” rating for **Effectiveness communicating ideas and/or information** if for example, for a Webcourse and F2F, students cannot understand or follow what the instructor is saying/writing, and the instructor makes little effort to adjust or improve over the semester.

An instructor could receive a “5” rating for **Effectiveness communicating ideas and/or information** if for example, for a Webcourse and F2F, the instructor utilized multiple methods to communicate idea/information, and students can understand the information with little difficulty.
4. An instructor could receive a “1” rating for **Effectiveness showing respect and concern for students** if for example, for a Webcourse and F2F, never responds to student questions or emails, does not provide feedback on assignments, do not make schedule adjustments for unexpected hardship such as a hurricane.

An instructor could receive a “5” rating for **Effectiveness showing respect and concern for students** if for example, for a Webcourse and F2F, actively reach out to students about their progress and difficulty, provide useful feedback to students, devotes extra effort to accommodate students with special needs such as providing alternative exam times.
5. An instructor could receive a “1” rating for **Effectiveness stimulating interest in the course** if for example, for a Webcourse and F2F, information discussed in course is un-useful or interesting to that specific topic

An instructor could receive a “5” rating for **Effectiveness stimulating interest in the course** if topically applicable instructional activities are presented in a manner that is motivating and relevant to students.

6. An instructor could receive a “1” rating for **Effectiveness creating an environment that helps students learn** if for example, for a Webcourse and F2F, does not provide an accessible inclusive classroom, (such as students are unable to access course materials/documents/text, etc or not all students have the ability to participate, engage with instructor)

An instructor could receive a “5” rating for **Effectiveness creating an environment that helps students learn** if all course materials are easily accessible and inclusive for all students and all students have ample opportunities to participate and engage with the instructor.

7. An instructor could receive a “1” rating for **Effectiveness giving useful feedback on course performance** if for example, for a Webcourse and F2F, does not provide information on how to improve on specific course topics, or does not provide corrective instruction on assignments, etc

An instructor could receive a “5” rating for **Effectiveness giving useful feedback on course performance** if the course provides students with rubrics and/or details on how they can succeed and/or improve on specific course assignments and assessments

8. An instructor could receive a “1” rating for **Effectiveness helping students achieve course objectives** if for example, for a Webcourse and F2F, does not state or provide learning objectives, workload is not enough to engage students or overwhelming; not doable.

An instructor could receive a “5” rating for **Effectiveness helping students achieve course objectives** if course learning objectives are clearly delineated and the course workload is appropriate.

9. An instructor could receive a “1” rating for **Overall effectiveness of the instructor** if for example, the instructor receives either a 1 or a 2 in all or most of the other categories, and makes little effort to improve the overall quality of the course.

An instructor could receive a “5” rating for **Overall effectiveness of the instructor** if for example, the instructor receives either a 4 or a 5 in all or most of the other categories, and provided students with an exceptional learning experience while holding academic rigor.