

Status of this memo

This memo includes an ad hoc policy for faculty evaluation only for AY 2020-21. The provisions in this memo augment those in University Faculty Personnel Policies (UFPP) for AY 2020-21 and supersede all conflicting provisions in subordinate college and department policies.

The policies and guidelines in this memo arose from shared governance in conformity with the Collective Bargaining Agreement. The Academic Senate Executive Committee unanimously approved a process whereby the Academic Senate Faculty Affairs Committee discussed and developed the policies and guidelines and sent them to Academic Personnel for consultation with the local chapter of the CFA. The policies and guidelines in this memo are informed by feedback from participants in the Academic Senate Fall Conference Retreat. Academic Personnel is issuing this memo.

Probationary tenure-track faculty had the option to extend their time to tenure by one year in light of significant challenges that may hinder professional development due to COVID-19. The policies and guidelines in this memo offer a similar response to the forced transition of the entire university to online and virtual distance instruction on an emergency basis. The overarching idea at stake in the framing of these policies and guidelines is that the evaluation of teaching excellence relevant to instructional faculty personnel actions should not rest decisively on the nature of course design and instruction under such emergency conditions, but instead on one's course design and instruction under normal instructional conditions. Nevertheless, in facing an emergency, good faculty should make intelligent, well-informed decisions about how to face the emergency, and feedback from department peers should continue to inform how faculty develop as instructors.

Ad Hoc Policies on Evaluation of Instruction in AY 2020-2021

1. Observation of instruction

- 1.1. As part of faculty evaluation processes faculty subject to evaluation may have their instruction of their students observed by evaluators including department peer review committee (DPRC) members and/or department chairs/heads.
- 1.2. Observation of classes is an unobtrusive observation of the instructional environment for the class, which may include any of the following:
 - Classrooms, laboratories, studios or any location where classes are normally scheduled.
 - Online tele-conferencing meetings (e.g. Zoom meeting sessions) of the class.
 - The current state of online instructional materials (e.g. a Canvas site for a course) as students would encounter them on any given day.
- 1.3. Course materials rendered into items included in a faculty member's Working Personnel Action File (WPAF) are not equivalent to the instructional environment. Such materials in the WPAF should be carefully reviewed by evaluators, but such review is not an alternative to observation of the instructional environment.
- 1.4. Per CBA 15.14, class observation requires at least five (5) calendar-day notice of observation coordinated between candidate and evaluator.
- 1.5. Due to prevailing needs for physical distancing and the protection of the health of students, instructors, and evaluators, any observation of in-person instruction must conform to institutional rules and guidelines for physical distancing.
- 1.6. Observation of in-person instruction requires both the instructor under evaluation and the evaluator to agree that in-person observation of in-person instruction is necessary. Any feasible alternative to direct in-person observation of in-person instruction should be used instead. Remote virtual observation of in-person instruction is permissible when feasible and unobtrusive.
- 1.7. Observation of synchronous virtual remote learning conducted in regularly scheduled virtual class sessions may be conducted by attendance of the evaluator in the virtual class session, or, if mutually agreeable between the instructor and evaluator, by the viewing of a recording of a class session.
- 1.8. Observation of asynchronous online instruction**
 - 1.8.1. Observation of asynchronous online instruction that does not involve regularly scheduled class meetings should be conducted within a predetermined timeframe established by consultation between the instructor and the evaluator.
 - 1.8.2. The evaluator should observe the current instructional environment as students would see it. Evaluators should be granted access to the instructional environment in a mode equivalent to the way students encounter the class and not as the instructor encounters the instructional environment.
 - 1.8.3. Reasonable means of observing the online instructional environment may be negotiated by the instructor and evaluator. Some ideas follow. The instructor may provide the evaluator a guided tour of the instructional environment, and this guided tour may be prerecorded and made available to multiple evaluators. The instructor may grant the evaluator limited access to the online environment of the course so the evaluator may see how students encounter the course on a given occasion for accessing the online instructional environment (e.g. granting the evaluator "observer" status in Canvas for a mutually agreeable period sufficient for the observation).

2. Requirements for teaching observation

2.1. Probationary tenure-track faculty

- 2.1.1. Observation of instruction shall be a standard expectation for probationary tenure-track faculty undergoing annual periodic evaluations.
- 2.1.2. In light of disruptions from COVID-19, in AY 2020-21 observation of instruction for probationary tenure-track faculty undergoing performance evaluation for retention, promotion, or tenure may occur by request of the faculty member undergoing evaluation or at the discretion of the evaluator. Observation of instruction for the prior year's evaluation may suffice for performance evaluations.

2.2. Lecturer faculty

- 2.2.1. Observation of instruction shall be a standard expectation for lecturer faculty undergoing annual periodic evaluations.
- 2.2.2. In light of disruptions from COVID-19, in AY 2020-21 observation of instruction for lecturer faculty undergoing six-year cumulative evaluation for 12.12 appointment to a three-year contract may occur by request of the faculty member undergoing evaluation or at the discretion of the evaluator. Observation of instruction for the prior year's annual periodic evaluation may suffice for the six-year cumulative evaluation.
- 2.2.3. Observation of instruction shall be a standard expectation for lecturer faculty undergoing three-year cumulative evaluation for a 12.13 appointment.
- 2.2.4. Lecturer faculty undergoing range elevation evaluation should have had instruction observed within two years of the current evaluation cycle. In light of disruptions from COVID-19, in AY 2020-21 observation of instruction for lecturer faculty undergoing range elevation evaluation within two years of a prior cumulative evaluation may occur by request of the faculty member undergoing evaluation or at the discretion of the evaluator. Observation of instruction for the prior three-year cumulative evaluation may suffice for the range elevation evaluation.

2.3. Post-tenure periodic or promotion evaluation

- 2.3.1. Observation of instruction shall be a standard expectation for tenured faculty undergoing post-tenure evaluations.
- 2.3.2. Tenured faculty undergoing promotion evaluation should have had instruction observed within two years of the current evaluation cycle. In light of disruptions from COVID-19, in AY 2020-21 observation of instruction for tenured faculty undergoing promotion evaluation within two years of a prior cumulative evaluation may occur by request of the faculty member undergoing evaluation or at the discretion of the evaluator. Observation of instruction for the prior periodic post-tenure evaluation may suffice for the promotion evaluation.
- 2.3.3. Evaluators shall indicate in the AP-109 form whether evidence of teaching included a current observation of instruction during the current term of the evaluation cycle or an observation from a prior evaluation cycle.

3. Guidance

3.1. Guidance for faculty subject to evaluation

- 3.1.1. Faculty undergoing evaluation are strongly encouraged (though not required) to include in their Working Personnel Action File (WPAF) a 1-2 page narrative document to guide their evaluators through the examination of their virtual remote learning materials for their courses and aid evaluators in observing virtual remote instruction. Useful topics to cover in this narrative document include the following:
 - Description of the nature of virtual instruction evaluators would observe.

- Description of online/virtual course materials from prior or current terms included in WPAF among other appropriate teaching materials.
- Explanations of the nature of the instructor's preparation for virtual instruction.

3.2. Guidance for department level evaluators

- 3.2.1. Evaluators should evaluate instruction with the understanding that everyone at Cal Poly has been in disaster mitigation mode since the end of Winter 2020.
- 3.2.2. Evaluators should recognize the following when they evaluate instruction:
 - Mitigation of the spread of COVID-19 required a transition to virtual instruction regardless of prior preparation.
 - Faculty subject to evaluation may or may not be well prepared for virtual instruction.
 - Faculty had the option to withhold student evaluation data from their Personnel Action File in Spring 2020.
 - Faculty had an option to extend their tenure clock by one year.