

Report, Task Force on Teaching

Baruch College

Fall 2014

The Task Force on Teaching met 3 times in late spring 2014 to discuss possible new measures and observations of teaching that could contribute to its assessment in the reappointment and tenure and promotion processes. The contributing members of the task force were: Professors Stephan Dilchert (Department of Management), Ted Joyce (Department of Economics and Finance), Sandeep Sreekumar (Department of Philosophy) and Thomas Teufel (Department of Philosophy), and Associate Provost Erec R. Koch. Professor Ken Guest (Department of Sociology and Anthropology) was able to participate in the task force's first meeting but had to withdraw thereafter due to other service commitments.

The task force presents its findings as recommendations listed below.

Recommendation 1.

Beginning in the first year of appointment, the candidate should begin constructing a teaching portfolio (in a multi-ring binder) that contains evidence of teaching quality. The binder should contain:

- a candidate's statement on teaching (currently required);
- a complete list of courses taught at Baruch College;
- sample course syllabi, especially for new or significantly revised courses;
- examples that illustrate new or enhanced methods or techniques of instruction; - new instructional materials;
- examples of graded work from courses;
- a grid of appropriate student evaluation scores (currently required);
- peer observations and subsequent conference memos (currently required);
- evidence of teaching and advising effectiveness (e.g., performance of students in subsequent courses, tangible results and benefits);
- a list of honors and awards received for teaching;
- a list of undergraduate and graduate theses or research supervised.

In departments where comprehensive reappointment binders are prepared annually following the format of the College's P&B Guidelines

(<http://www.baruch.cuny.edu/facultyhandbook/documents/CollegePBGuidelinesRevFeb5-2008.pdf>), and the Handbook on Reappointment, Tenure, Promotion, and Certification

(http://www.baruch.cuny.edu/facultyhandbook/documents/ReappointmentTenurePromotionHandbook_091714.pdf), those sections from the above list not already included in those guidelines should also be included in the teaching section of the reappointment binder.

Recommendation 2.

The candidate's statement on teaching should address not only teaching philosophy, but that document should also address the following questions and assess success in doing so.

- 1) How does the area, level, breadth, and extent of your teaching fit the mission and goals of the department, school, and college?
- 2) Discuss growth in your teaching, especially as concerns the development of new courses, innovative or enhanced instructional techniques and methods, and significantly revised courses. Have you learned new skills related to teaching? Have you set and met goals for instructional improvement?
- 3) Optional measures of teaching quality
 - a. Have you contributed to the quality of instruction beyond your own teaching, such as assisting newer faculty members with their teaching programs, coordinating a large multi-section course for the department, supervising graduate teaching assistants, or participating in a graduate teaching assistant seminar?
 - b. Do you effectively reflect on, assess, and improve teaching practices?
 - c. Do you effectively integrate teaching and learning with student research, scholarship, and creative activities?
 - d. Do you use teaching methodologies and strategies that effectively engage students?
 - e. Do you set and achieve appropriate learning goals for students? Do you effectively assess student learning?
 - f. Have you participated in seminars and workshops on teaching?

This statement should be updated as appropriate.

Recommendation 3.

The task force strongly recommends the Department of Management's peer evaluation form, developed by Professor Stephan Dilchert, as a model for other departments. (See the sample at the end of this document.) Departments may adapt that form as they deem appropriate. The task force also endorses that we maintain the distinction between evaluative and formative portions of the form. The former is to be used in candidate evaluation; the latter for referral to CTL and enhancement of teaching.

Recommendation 4.

The task force recommends that, at a department's discretion and with the candidate's approval, at least one additional peer evaluation be done by a faculty member from a department other than the candidate's. This would be intended to enrich the evaluative perspectives and to ensure broad consistency in standards of teaching across schools and across the College. We recommend the creation of a panel of 6-8 faculty who would participate.

Recommendation 5.

The chair's annual evaluation and annual report should use information gathered from recommendations (1- (4 and from evidence in Digital Measures to address the following questions and substantiate responses to the following questions:

1. How do the area, level, breadth, and depth of the candidate's teaching fit the needs, mission, and goals of the department, school, and college?
2. Characterize the quality of the candidate's teaching based on data from student and peer teaching evaluations. Compare candidate's teaching to that of departmental faculty based on departmental averages for teaching evaluations, comparison with other sections of multi-section courses, and other comparative measures of quality, including interdepartmental comparisons.
3. Has there been growth in the candidate's teaching, such as the teaching of new courses; development and use of innovative or enhanced instructional techniques, methodologies, or course materials; learning new skills related to teaching; or setting and meeting goals for instructional improvement?
4. Characterize the quality of the candidate's advising. What evidence of quality is there from students? From peers? From alumni? From the candidate?
5. Optional measures of teaching quality
 - a. Has the candidate contributed to the quality of instruction beyond their own teaching, such as assisting newer faculty members with their teaching programs, coordinating a large multi-section course for the department, supervising graduate teaching assistants, or participating in the graduate teaching assistant seminar?
 - b. Does the candidate effectively reflect on, assess, and improve teaching practices?
 - c. Does the candidate effectively integrate teaching and learning with student research, scholarship, and creative activities?
 - d. Does the candidate use teaching methodologies and strategies that effectively engage students?
 - e. Does the candidate set and achieve appropriate learning goals for students? Does the candidate effectively assess student learning?
 - f. Has the candidate participated in seminars and workshops on teaching?

Moreover, we recommend that the chair work from and revise the previous year's evaluation and report in order to maintain a continuous narrative and assessment of the faculty member's contributions.

The task force recognizes that answering some of the above questions requires information currently not available to department chairs (e.g., normative information on student evaluations, peer-observation benchmarks, etc.). However, we anticipate that changes to tools currently in use (e.g., online student evaluations) as well as the introduction of new tools (e.g., standardized peer observation forms) will enable assessment of teaching effectiveness in such a manner in the future. The task force recommends that processes be developed to collect, prepare, and distribute the appropriate data to department chairs by the respective offices (e.g., Institutional Research) or newly formed committees.

Recommendation 6.

The task force recommends the appointment of an ad hoc committee that would craft a statement on teaching for Baruch College, principles that would be included in the Faculty Handbook, in the College P&B Guidelines, and in all documents pertaining to reappointment, tenure, and promotion. One model for this document is SUNY Binghamton's eight principles of teaching (<http://www2.binghamton.edu/academics/provost/faculty-staff-handbook/handbook-iv.html#C1>)

Teaching Observation Form

Instructor: _____ Date: _____

Class & section: _____ Time (start – end): _____

Subjects covered: _____

Observer: _____ If online course: online only hybrid
Online activity reviewed? yes no

Evaluation of Teaching Effectiveness

Please evaluate the degree of teaching effectiveness displayed by the instructor during the session you observed. The examples underneath each option serve as *illustrative* examples of teaching effectiveness at each level. You do not have to observe each behavior to assign a rating in that respective category.

Knowledge of Subject Matter

<input type="checkbox"/> <i>unsatisfactory</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> <i>needs improvement</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> <i>satisfactory</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> <i>above average</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> <i>exceptional</i>
displays weak knowledge of subject matter; makes frequent errors; conveys inaccuracies that contribute to making the content incomprehensible to students; does not correct student content errors	displays only basic knowledge of subject matter; sometimes demonstrates minor content inaccuracies; fails to address students' content related misconceptions	displays solid knowledge of subject matter; does not demonstrate content inaccuracies; addresses some common content-related misconceptions as they arise	displays very good knowledge of subject matter and sometimes makes connections to other parts of the discipline; addresses all of students' content-related misconceptions as they arise	displays excellent knowledge of subject matter and frequently makes connections across disciplines; links theory to applied examples; anticipates and addresses students' content-related misconceptions

Organization of Class Session

<input type="checkbox"/> <i>unsatisfactory</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> <i>needs improvement</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> <i>satisfactory</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> <i>above average</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> <i>exceptional</i>
does not communicate structure or objectives of class session; instructional materials or activities are poorly designed or absent; poor time-management or punctuality, pacing significantly too fast or too slow for most students	communicates unclear structure or objectives for class session; some instructional materials or activities are not aligned with instructional goals; time allocation is unrealistic and pacing too fast or too slow for many students	communicates appropriate structure and objectives for class session; pacing is sensitive to most students' capabilities	communicates coherent structure and clear objectives for class session; provides instructional materials and activities are aligned with objectives; pacing is sensitive to majority of students' capabilities	communicates coherent structure and clear objectives and provides direction throughout class session; instructional materials and activities are highly relevant to objectives; pacing is appropriate and allows for reflection

Instructional Delivery

<input type="checkbox"/> <i>unsatisfactory</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> <i>needs improvement</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> <i>satisfactory</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> <i>above average</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> <i>exceptional</i>
lacks skills necessary to teach effectively; uses inappropriate instructional strategies; fails to adjust delivery to students' needs; oral communication is inaudible, incorrect, or otherwise inappropriate	displays only basic teaching skills; uses only one instructional strategy that is not entirely appropriate to class content; has difficulties adjusting delivery to students' needs; oral communication is sometimes not professional or appropriate, could be clearer or more effective	displays effective teaching skills; uses an instructional strategy that is appropriate to class content; occasionally adjust delivery to students' needs; oral communication is always audible and appropriate, usually effective	displays very good teaching skills; uses a range of effective instructional strategies appropriate to class content; adjusts delivery to students' needs; oral communication is always audible, appropriate, and professional, always clear and effective	displays extraordinary teaching skills; uses broad repertoire of instructional strategies that are effective and appropriate to class content, including classroom technology; anticipates students' needs in delivery of content; oral communication is expressive and clear, well-chosen vocabulary enriches communication

Learning Environment

<input type="checkbox"/> <i>unsatisfactory</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> <i>needs improvement</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> <i>satisfactory</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> <i>above average</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> <i>exceptional</i>
shows little awareness of students' progress or understanding; interactions with students are negative, demeaning, and/or inappropriate; tolerates frequent inappropriate and/or disrespectful interaction among students	sets low standards or rarely checks for student understanding; rarely provides feedback to students regarding their contributions; some interactions with students are unprofessional; occasionally tolerates inappropriate and/or disrespectful interaction among students	sets appropriate standards and occasionally checks for student understanding; typically provides feedback to students regarding their contributions; interactions with students are generally appropriate and friendly; interaction among students is generally respectful	sets high standards for student learning and sometimes checks for student understanding; routinely provides feedback to students regarding their contribution; interaction with students are always appropriate and demonstrate positive rapport; interaction among students is always respectful	sets high standards for student learning and routinely checks for student understanding; always provides substantive feedback to students regarding their contributions; interaction with students demonstrate positive rapport, mutual respect, and care for all individuals; interaction among students is always respectful

Classroom Management

<input type="checkbox"/> <i>unsatisfactory</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> <i>needs improvement</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> <i>satisfactory</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> <i>above average</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> <i>exceptional</i>
the majority of students display disruptive behaviors; does not monitor student behavior; does not respond appropriately to student misbehavior; loses significant proportion of class time by dealing with student misbehavior	standards of conduct are lax and a significant number of students display disruptive behavior; rarely monitors student behavior; responds inconsistently to student misbehavior; loses some proportion of class time by dealing with student misbehavior	standards of conduct appear to have been established and most students seem to follow them; monitors student behavior appropriately; responds consistently to student misbehavior	standards of conduct are clearly established and followed by the majority of students; monitors student behavior proactively; responds consistently and appropriately to student misbehavior	high and appropriate standards of conduct are being followed by nearly all students; monitors student behavior in a manner that anticipates and prevents problems; responds consistently and appropriately to student misbehavior and in doing so considers need of student and rest of class

Student Engagement

<input type="checkbox"/> <i>unsatisfactory</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> <i>needs improvement</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> <i>satisfactory</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> <i>above average</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> <i>exceptional</i>
does not invite student interaction; does not elicit student responses to questions; conveys a negative attitude toward the content, suggesting it is not important or mandated by the curriculum	invites interaction but does not pursue the active participation of all students; discussions are limited to question and answer sessions;	stimulates active participation of many students, but not discussion among students; discussions between instructor and students go beyond clarifications	successfully engages students, also in discussions among themselves; creates situations that challenge students to think about the content being taught;	successfully engages a majority of students in discussions, frequently among themselves; creates situations that challenge students to think independently, creatively, or critically about the content being taught; conveys genuine enthusiasm for the subject

Syllabus

The observer should request and review the syllabus for completeness (instructor's contact info, course description, learning goals, grading system, schedule of topics, attendance/ academic integrity policies, etc.).

Syllabus was reviewed and complete or Suggestions for revision indicated on feedback form

Post-Observation Conference

Date: _____ Representatives present (if any): _____

I have read this memorandum and understand that I may attach any comment I wish:

Signature of Instructor: _____

Signature of Observer: _____ Date filed with Department: _____

Developmental Feedback

Name of Instructor _____

Semester _____

Please list some specific areas of the instructor's performance which might be further developed.

Check those behaviors you think might result in the most significant improvement in the instructor's teaching.

Note: This feedback will be available to the instructor and department chair for developmental purposes, but will not be placed into the instructor's personnel file.

COURSE CONTENT

- occasionally use material beyond the textbook (e.g., journals, relevant news articles)
- try to draw parallels to other areas or disciplines when explaining content
- make sure to review difficult content in more detail to be better prepared
- consider updating your teaching material with more current examples or cases
- think about common student errors and mistakes and address them more explicitly when you lecture
- include more challenging course content and more difficult learning goals
- current assignments | exams seem too light/easy | numerous/hard for this course – consider revision (potentially consult others teaching this section)

ORGANIZATION OF CLASS SESSION

- set stricter standards for student punctuality to begin class on time
- communicate structure and objectives for the session at the beginning
- throughout session, provide direction by reviewing session goals & structure
- think about the capabilities of the majority of your students in setting the pace for your lecture
- establish realistic time estimates for each part of your outline (and leave time for discussions) to improve your pacing
- allow more time for interactive parts of the session (versus lecture)
- tie-in content to past sessions
- end class punctually to allow students to make it to the next class on time

INSTRUCTIONAL DELIVERY

- when possible, vary the techniques and strategies you use (e.g., lecture, discussion, group-exercise, role-play)
- reconsider which teaching technique is suited for a given topic
- if your writing on the board is difficult to read, consider preparing slides of important topics
- try to simplify your visual aids (slides and handouts)
- rely less on your slides – they should contain talking points, but should not be read verbatim

- provide more hands-on practice for skills-based content
- try to enunciate more clearly when presenting
- try to improve the professional vocabulary with which you communicate (appropriate terms, rather than colloquial speech)
- try to be more expressive (vary tone, volume) when lecturing to engage students
- order a lapel microphone from media-services to amplify your voice while allowing you to move in the classroom
- consider participating in one of the communication courses offered to instructors at the College

LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

- hold students accountable for class preparation by starting with a mini-quiz
- check for student understanding more frequently by asking specific questions
- provide timely and specific feedback to students regarding their contributions and participation
- when calling on students, try not to favor strong students who have already mastered the material
- make sure to include examples of your professional experience if they are pertinent, to balance scholarly and applied learning
- hold students accountable for respectful behavior towards you and other students
- try to increase the professionalism with which you interact with students, and with which students interact with you and one another
- try to convey that you are interested in students doing well to encourage them to do their best
- try to better manage your disappointment about lack of progress, and rather provide concrete directions to students to avoid it in the future

CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT

- set clear expectations regarding what constitutes unacceptable behavior in class
- develop clear guidelines regarding penalties for unacceptable behavior
- try to be more consistent in identifying unacceptable behavior and how you react to it

- eliminate distractions such as cell-phones by setting and enforcing proper class policy (include rules on your syllabus)
- monitor student behavior more closely to prevent disruptive behavior
- move away from the podium and use the entire classroom if students are showing signs of disengagement

STUDENT ENGAGEMENT

- engage a larger number of students – chose systematic ways of asking students to contribute if you feel uncomfortable calling on individuals
- more explicitly invite student participation; reconsider your instructional technique (e.g., lecture versus exercises and group work) if participation does not improve
- challenge students to think more critically by asking for their opinion on a matter, rather than only the “correct” answer
- experiment with techniques that force students to argue a point regardless of opinion, to increase critical thinking
- ask more open-ended questions
- seek elaboration from students who provide short or unclear answers
- increase the complexity of your questions – difficult questions stimulate more complex processing
- illustrate ties to current events (business, politics) where possible, to highlight relevance of class content
- during group-work, try assigning groups (rather than letting students choose) to mix student capabilities and backgrounds
- try to learn most of your students' names
- try to depart from a question-and-answer format and encourage discussions among students
- ask students to address the class, rather than the instructor, to nurture discussion
- do not convey a negative attitude about the course material – be constructive when you criticize the text or other sources
- better manage inattentive students (texting, sleeping) – openly identify problem behavior and correct it
- commend active students, encourage inactive students

SYLLABUS

THE FOLLOWING ELEMENTS SHOULD BE INCLUDED OR REVISED:

- instructor contact information
- course description
- learning goals
- grading system
- schedule of topics
- attendance policy
- academic integrity policy
- special needs statement
- review other elements included in the Zicklin template for Course Information Sheets and integrate them into your syllabus.

For undergraduate courses:

<http://blsciblogs.baruch.cuny.edu/millhiser/files/2010/05/Syllabus-Template-for-Zicklin-Course-Information-Sheet.doc>

For graduate courses:

<http://zicklin.baruch.cuny.edu/zk/resources/teaching/course-resources/course-resources/syllabi>

ONLINE TEACHING

[Please request “Guest” access for the Blackboard site from the instructor of the course you are observing.]

- reorganize categories on Blackboard to make material easier to find
- describe more clearly how to access course material (on Blackboard, through links, purchase, etc.)
- organize weekly material in corresponding folders, or structure material by module/ unit
- each week, post messages that explain what needs to be done and how to proceed
- clearly state assignments and due date for each module. Consider using the calendar tool if necessary
- design more complex assignments that require students to add, integrate, and synthesize knowledge
- incorporate assignments that require students to interact with one another, including blogs, wikis, threaded discussions, or group/team projects

- regularly participate in discussions during the week
- monitor students’ postings and keep discussions relevant and on topic
- provide structured opportunities for students to give feedback on other students’ work (with clear guidelines)
- include more “low-stakes” assessment opportunities, such as self-assessments, reflection exercises, and the like
- all components of students’ grade should be set up in Grade Center.
- in Grade Center, consider using a “running total” of components that are already graded, so students get early feedback on their performance

ADDITIONAL DEVELOPMENTAL FEEDBACK FOR THE INSTRUCTOR

This should not be a summary of the session; please focus on specific opportunities for improvement, rather than general critique or praise.

UPON COMPLETION, PLEASE HAND COPIES OF THE ENTIRE FORM TO THE INSTRUCTOR AND ASSISTANT TO THE CHAIR.