



GUIDELINES FOR USE AND ADMINISTRATION OF THE STUDENT RATING OF TEACHING EFFECTIVENESS (SRTE) FORMS*

Introduction

The following guidelines are provided for use and administration of the Student Rating of Teaching Effectiveness (SRTE) forms. While the SRTE was developed primarily for use in determinations about tenure and rank, which require evidence of teaching effectiveness, it is also to be used in other academic personnel decisions which require student opinion about the effectiveness of teaching as part of the information used in making the decision. For example, annual performance evaluations (see HR-40, “Evaluation of Faculty Performance”) are based on the same criteria as are used in tenure and promotion decisions and information about the teaching effectiveness criterion. These academic personnel decisions also require peer evaluations of teaching effectiveness. Finally, it should be noted that the SRTE is not specifically designed to provide information about improving the effectiveness of instruction—that can be accomplished by using procedures such as the mid-semester evaluation form and consultation services provided by the Schreyer Institute for Teaching Excellence (teachinglearning@psu.edu or 814-865-9784).

Guidelines

1. Frequency of Reviews

The specific procedures for determining the frequency of reviews for the faculty members within a unit shall be determined by the unit college. These procedures must be developed in consultation with the faculty of the college. In addition to policy, courses may be reviewed at the request of the faculty member. The following principles about the frequency of reviews apply:

- a. Where possible, evaluations should be conducted over a period of years and in a variety of courses.
- b. For provisional faculty (i.e. tenure track faculty who do not yet have tenure) all sections of all courses shall be evaluated by the SRTE every time it is taught. The results from each of these evaluations must be included in the candidate’s tenure dossier. (If there is some reason to explain the results or the absence of results in a particular case, the appropriate academic administrator shall make a note to that effect in the

dossier. For example, in advance of a course being taught for the first time in an experimental way, an administrator and a faculty member might agree not to include SRTE results in tenure or promotion dossiers. Such agreements should be in writing.)

- b. For all other faculty, each college must develop clear and specific guidelines for the frequency of the use of SRTEs, whether the college requires all courses to be reviewed or not. These guidelines shall be developed in consultation with the faculty of the college. The guidelines must require frequent enough reviews to accomplish the purpose outlined in the principles as stated above in item 1. Since students now expect to have the opportunity to evaluate their instructors and their courses and since such evaluations continue to have value for many purposes, it is recommended that all sections of all courses shall be evaluated. College Guidelines will be reviewed by the Office of the Provost to ensure that they are consistent with these principles.
- c. Faculty being reviewed for promotion, even when it is not coupled with a tenure review, should be able to demonstrate their teaching achievements in part through student evaluations that have been done over time and in a variety of courses.

2. Administration of the SRTE

Administration guidelines for the SRTE are published with the survey form and are based on the guidelines listed below. Specific procedures for the administration and collection of surveys are developed by the faculty of each unit.

- a. Responses to survey items must remain anonymous.
- b. Directions to the students are uniform across administrations.
- c. The candidate shall not participate in the administration, collection, or compilation of the survey results.
- d. At least two-thirds of the students should be present for the evaluation to be administered.
- e. The candidate shall not be present during the administration of the evaluation.
- f. The responses shall be collected and returned to the appropriate unit office by the person administering the evaluation.

- g. The SRTE should be administered during the last two weeks of a course, but not in the same class period in which a test is given.

* These guidelines were developed in consultation with a subcommittee of the Senate Committee on Faculty Affairs and issued in 1987. They were revised in December 1997, and revised again, effective July 1, 2004.