MEMO

Date: 10 April 2020

To: All faculty (tenure track and lecturer-track)

From: Bob Jones, Executive Vice President of Academic Affairs and Provost   *Robert N Jones*
               Amy Lawton-Rauh, Associate Provost for Faculty Affairs   *Amy Lawton-Rauh*

Subject: Course evaluation surveys for Spring 2020 courses

Dear faculty,

We understand that the COVID-19 pandemic continues to create unprecedented challenges, disruptions, and adjustments personally and professionally on all fronts. As such, we are adjusting the course evaluation process (student evaluation surveys for specific courses) as described below.

Course evaluations from student surveys will not be used in instructor evaluations for the Spring 2020 semester. Furthermore, instructors are not required to launch student evaluations of courses this semester. Faculty may choose to collect student evaluations, for their own purposes, but the student feedback will not be shared with administrators. All results are private to the instructor. Department chairs may not request student evaluation of courses for instructors in their department. Colleges may survey students as a whole to determine how to improve emergency remote teaching practices.

Discussions with Faculty Senate, Associate Deans, OTEI, and others have indicated that some faculty want consistency between this spring semester's and previous semesters' metrics. Therefore, Clemson University will provide faculty access to both the old system and the new one, EvalKit. In both systems, results will be returned only to the instructional faculty member, not to colleagues or administrators. Again, this means that should a faculty member turn on course surveys from students, nothing will be shared, and all results are private to the instructor.

Evaluation of teaching will still be part of this academic year's annual evaluation of faculty. However, student evaluations of spring semester 2020 will not be part of the materials to be included in the evaluation. Furthermore, any materials created after COVID-19 prompted emergency remote teaching (e.g., revised syllabi and revised assignments) will also be excluded from the annual evaluation of teaching. Instead of course surveys and artifacts created in response to emergency remote teaching, instructors under annual or regular review will be asked to provide a short document reflecting on their instructional experiences during the Spring 2020 semester. More details regarding a template for this reflection will be provided on a later date. This decision follows what literature suggests as a productive way to pursue course improvement and instructional evaluation under challenging circumstances.

How to use the available course evaluation systems:

Old/existing course evaluation system
When someone logs into the old system, the following message pops up:
"Traditional course evaluation surveys are optional for spring 2020 and will NOT be published to administrators for spring 2020. Faculty can let them continue as planned, can turn them off, as well as opt for feedback through EvalKit."

EvalKit (EvaluationKit)
Clemson instructors have an alternative evaluation option, with built-in flexibility, that will go online by Monday 13 April. EvalKit will be open and offer a short survey that will also release results only to faculty. Faculty can choose which system to use. When launched, EvalKit will be pre-populated with best-practice for remote-learning questions provided by OTEI as options, as well as a mechanism for faculty to change / add their own questions if they want. In all cases, course evaluations will NOT be provided to administrators and evaluators and launching course evaluations are optional. If you have logistics questions, please email EKAdmin@clemson.edu.

Pre-populated optional course feedback questions auto-provided in EvalKit:

The recommendation is to use open-ended questions to receive feedback. The questions below were provided by OTEI as potential questions that faculty may want to use if they launch evaluations of their course (or courses).

1. What aspect(s) of this course supported your learning ***prior** to the emergency and going online for remote teaching?

2. What aspect(s) of this course supported your learning ***once** the course moved online for remote teaching?

3. What aspect(s) of this course did not support your learning ***prior** to the emergency and going online for remote teaching?

4. What aspect(s) of this course did not support your learning ***once** the course moved online for remote teaching?

5. Please describe the most valuable aspect(s) of this course:

6. Please describe the least valuable aspect(s) of this course:

Primary reference used:
A University Overhauled Its Course Evaluation to Get Better Feedback. Here's What Changed. *Chronicle of Higher Ed*. Beckie Supiano June 29, 2018

Thank you all for your extraordinary efforts, engagement, and collaboration during this difficult time.