March 13, 2009

UNIVERSITY CURRICULUM COMMITTEE – 2008-2009
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Social Work - Dr. Patricia M. Reeves
Veterinary Medicine - Dr. K. Paige Carmichael
Graduate School - Dr. Malcolm R. Adams
Undergraduate Student Representative – Ms. Jamie Beggerly
Graduate Student Representative – Ms. Amrita Veliyath

Dear Colleagues:

The attached proposal to adopt Standard Course Evaluations will be an agenda item for the March 20, 2009, Full University Curriculum Committee meeting.

Sincerely,

David E. Shipley, Chair
University Curriculum Committee

cc: Dr. Arnett C. Mace, Jr.
Professor Jere W. Morehead
MIDTERM COURSE EVALUATIONS

Recommendation:
Instructors are encouraged to administer midterm evaluations in their courses each semester. Questions for that evaluation might be as follows:
- What’s working?
- What’s not working?
- How can we make it better?

Procedure:
The midterm course evaluation:
- Will be administered by the instructor (proctors are not necessary)
- Will be used only by the instructor to improve the course
- Will not be used to evaluate the instructor during the promotion and tenure process or annual evaluations
- Will not be kept as a record

Rationale:
The midterm evaluation can provide instructors with feedback on how to improve their courses and allow students an opportunity to provide input before the academic period is complete. This process may have a positive effect on the end-of-term course evaluation.

COMMON COURSE EVALUATIONS AND USE OF COMMON SCALE

Recommendation:
Instructors will include the following items in their end-of-term course evaluations and use a common scale:

1. Was this course required for your degree?
   - (1) No, not required
   - (2) Yes, required

2. On average, how many hours per week did you devote to this course outside of class?
   - (1) 0-1 hours
   - (2) 2-3 hours
   - (3) 4-5 hours
   - (4) 6-7 hours
   - (5) 8 hours or more

3. Assignments and activities were useful for helping me learn.
   - Strongly Disagree
   - Disagree
   - Neutral
   - Agree
   - Strongly Agree

4. This course challenged me to think and learn.
   - Strongly Disagree
   - Disagree
   - Neutral
   - Agree
   - Strongly Agree

Procedure:
- Instructors may include additional items designed to measure teaching effectiveness in their discipline
- All items will use a common scale from 1 to 5, 5 being highest
- Items on the questionnaire should be positive statements
Rationale:
One of the Task Force for General Education and Student Learning recommendations (II.2.4) was to establish an online course evaluation system and a uniform set of questions for all University undergraduate courses. The Task Force expressed concern over the lack of uniformity among different departments’ end-of-course evaluations and the lack of questions on academic rigor. Establishing comprehensive and uniform end-of-course evaluations, but allowing for course-specific questions, would provide an effective tool to assess undergraduate courses and the degree of academic rigor. A common scale will prevent confusion for faculty undergoing the promotion and tenure process.

PUBLISH THE NUMERICAL RESULTS OF THE END-OF-COURSE EVALUATIONS

Recommendation:
The numerical results for only the common questions in end-of-course evaluations will be published online. Course evaluation comments will not be published online.

Procedure:
The numerical results for only the common questions will be posted online. Course evaluation comments will not be published online.

Rationale:
Students want to be able to see the course evaluation results.