

## Revisiting Student Evaluations of Teaching (SETs): Supplemental Material

This supplemental material offers helpful background information and implementation guidance for those looking for additional support.

There is a role for student evaluations of teaching (SETs), but the Toolkit suggests that work needs to be done in (1) learning how to make best use of existing SETs (for instance, learning how to use and interpret them correctly) and (2) redesigning SETs to make them more useful and reduce bias.

The workshops in this part of the Toolkit are appropriate for campuses at any stage of the adoption process, as long as a significant number of campus stakeholders are dissatisfied with the existing procedure (i.e., have not undertaken a comprehensive review and redesign of existing SETs). This section addresses the core need as interrupting bias.

We suggest that **three different stakeholders** be engaged in the project of creating awareness and urgency around change concerning these issues: (1) CAO or other executive academic leadership; (2) DEI office, to highlight the problem of bias in SETs; (3) faculty, who will be tasked with implementation. *Reminder to include the registrar* (or others from the registrar's office) early and often in the process of designing changes to the evaluation approach.

**Step 1: Choosing a workshop:** Campuses need to decide whether it would be more appropriate to refine their existing student evaluations of teaching (SETs) with the [Using Existing SETs: Uses, Issues and Best Practices workshop](#), or to overhaul existing evaluations with the [Developing New SETs](#) workshop. Here are some forums in which that decision could be reached:

- A. Academic leadership (such as the CAO in conversation with departmental chairs and program directors)
- B. Director of Teaching and Learning Center in conversation with early career (junior) faculty
- C. Faculty on Promotion and Tenure Committee in conversation with departmental chairs and program directors

**Step 2: Planning for long term change:** Create/Include a coordination and implementation team to anticipate challenges and guide the communication and roll out activity, to gather and integrate emergent feedback, to informally counter disinformation as it arises, and to connect effective faculty with those struggling to implement the desired change. Consider including someone from the registrar's office as an integral or ancillary member of this team.

**Step 3: Motivating change:** Academic leaders can either encourage or require changes. This will depend on how much faculty buy-in and energy exists around changing practices. Since a driver for change is the bias inherent in faulty SETs, academic leaders might work in conjunction with diversity offices and promotion and tenure committees to determine the degree of urgency around the changes. Resources in the Toolkit include ready to implement workshops on [reviewing their existing SETs](#) and [developing new instruments for SETs](#).

**Step 4: Running the workshops:** Most campuses have some sort of Teaching and Learning Center, which would be an appropriate venue for these workshops. The workshop could be run by:

- A. An interested faculty member, identified by the Faculty Senate, Teaching and Learning Center, or Academic leadership
- B. A faculty expert in evaluation
- C. An outside consultant

The purpose of the workshop is to remind faculty of evidence-based reality of bias, to inform faculty of the process for change, and to deliver workshop content that teaches the best practices.

**Step 5: Attending the workshop:** Executive-level academic leadership (such as the CAO) could sponsor a series of workshops for different groups of faculty with an interest or stake in changing the SETs:

- A. A workshop for interested faculty
- B. A workshop for members of the Promotion and Tenure Committee
- C. A workshop for Departmental Chairs or invested departmental representatives (perhaps each department could select a representative to report back on how to implement changes)
- D. A workshop for staff such as registrars who need to implement these changes
- E. Sequence these as parts of your rollout plan and then communicate (extensively!) about the rationale for change, and about the content involved in the change. Both matter as you build buy-in.

**Step 6: Accountability for change:** After the workshop, each department will need to implement the necessary changes. This could take place:

- A. Through departmental meetings or other departmental-level decision making process
- B. Through another university body (such as the teaching center) which develops a new or alters the old SET and offers it to the department for adoption.

Rely on the coordination team to be in close contact with each department chair in order to track progress, help with each department chair to track progress, help with early identification of emerging challenges, and to connect effective faculty and departments with ones struggling to implement.

#### **Resources needed:**

- Trusted and efficient coordination of team members and appropriate levels of service or stipend reward for engaging.
- Funds to compensate someone to run the workshop (see section 10 below with comments about identifying good facilitation candidates)
- Stipends to encourage faculty to attend the workshop if rewards are needed.
- Stipends for departments to adopt these changes if rewards are appropriate.
- Functional and available gathering space for the workshop.

#### **Potential obstacles:**

- Uncooperative registrar's office
- Insufficient compensation for faculty involvement
- Insufficient acknowledgement of the workload involved for faculty

**Assessment:** Consider a basic survey (see the [Sample Workshop Survey](#)).