

Senate Statement on Faculty Evaluations for Academic Year 2020/2021

Overwhelming evidence demonstrates that student evaluations of teaching in general – and particularly questionnaires such as the one currently used at UIC – are imbued with bias and poorly correlate with educational outcomes. A committee has been constituted by the Vice Provost for Faculty Affairs Nancy Freitag to devise a better solution, a process that will require time for careful consideration of methodology and implementation. It is clear that the inaccuracies associated with the current evaluations have been exacerbated by the dramatic changes in the educational process brought on by the struggle for social and racial justice in the past year and the COVID-19 pandemic. Further, the expected freedom that faculty can choose how they delivering the curriculum was abridged by campus policies instituted for Fall 2020. Student distress in coping with and adjusting to online learning environments will undoubtedly also impact the evaluation process. While these evaluations still provide useful insight into the student experience, it is unfair to use these evaluations in the faculty review process. Therefore, the Senate asserts, as a matter of fairness and equity, that student evaluations of teaching collected during Spring 2020, Fall 2020, and Spring 2021 be precluded from any promotion and tenure deliberations unless a faculty candidate explicitly requests these evaluations be included in the P&T dossier.