

Memorandum of Understanding  
Regarding Online Student Course Evaluations

WHEREAS, in spring 2016 the Faculty Senate and Academic Affairs were charged with collaborating to explore the development and utilization of a student course evaluation at BGSU that includes a set of common University questions and provides flexibility for colleges and academic units to add specific questions;

WHEREAS, in fall 2016 the Faculty Senate Committee on Professional Affairs was asked to explore the development and utilization of a student course evaluation at BGSU that includes a set of common University questions, and members of the committee voted unanimously not to undertake the charge because it was outside the purview of the committee;

WHEREAS, a Working Group with representation from Faculty Senate Committee on Academic affairs, the BGSU-Faculty Association, Academic Affairs, and undergraduate and graduate students solicited and received more than 60 course evaluation instruments from academic units throughout the University and content analyzed and categorized questions by categories and themes;

WHEREAS, a survey to evaluate the helpfulness of 33 questions representing eight areas was distributed to all full-time faculty in spring 2016 with a 36% completion rate, and survey analysis identified six questions based on the totality for goodness of fit with the goal of the project, representation of highly ranked/categorized questions, and associated with expectations for teaching outlined in the collective bargaining agreement (Article 25, Section 2.4.2; Article 9, Section 2.6), and the four pillars to support student success at BGSU, and, following a presentation to Faculty Senate on October 4, 2016, open forums were held in November 2016 for faculty to review and provide feedback, which resulted in an additional item being added to the instrument;

WHEREAS, in November 2016, 69 of 190 faculty who participated in the survey and indicated interest in participating in a December 2016 pilot where the questions for the University-wide evaluation of teaching and learning would be distributed to their classes at the end of the fall 2016 semester, in addition to their regular course evaluations, participated in the pilot and provided student responses from 117 course sections, and analyses of the pilot data, as well as feedback from faculty and students in campus forums and working group discussions, resulted in modifications to the final instrument, which was presented in the Working Group's Final Report to the Faculty Senate on March 14, 2017;

WHEREAS, the Working Group reviewed software options for an online course evaluation systems, holding three open forums during the spring 2017 semester, and on the basis of software selection goals, recommended the use of EvaluationKIT, and which was successfully piloted during the fall 2017 semester, and was discussed at the January 16, 2018 meeting of the Faculty Senate, and in subsequent open forums for faculty were held during January – February, 2018;

WHEREAS, the University plans to proceed with further piloting of EvaluationKIT in spring 2018 and summer 2018 before full implementation of EvaluationKIT in fall 2018, and

which allows academic units and colleges to add their own course evaluation questions, and will continue to monitor, assess, and improve the quality of the assessment data collected;

WHEREAS, Article 14, Sections 5.2.2, 5.4.2.2, 6.2.2, and 6.4.2 of the collective bargaining agreement (“CBA”) states that the responsibility for establishing criteria, standards, and procedures for evaluation of teaching performance lies with the BUFMs of the academic unit and the Chair/Director, subject to endorsement of the Dean and Provost; and

WHEREAS, Article 17, Section 11.2.1 of the CBA states that the faculty of the academic unit shall establish a merit document that delineates specific performance evaluation criteria for teaching and the procedure for faculty evaluation, subject to the approval of the Dean and Provost;

WHEREAS, The AAUP Statement on Teaching Evaluation states, “institutions, departments and faculty members should ensure that the evaluations of teaching promote and sustain excellence of teaching and education, that faculty be primarily responsible for devising systems of evaluation and monitoring their use, and that the development and implementation of teaching evaluation methods be consistent with principles of academic freedom and shared governance.”

WHEREAS, Article 3 of the Collective Bargaining Agreement includes management rights to “Maintain and improve the efficiency and effectiveness of governmental operations” and “Determine the overall methods, processes, means, or personnel by which governmental operations are to be conducted;”

NOW, THEREFORE, the Bowling Green State University and the Bowling Green State University Faculty Association – AAUP (the “Parties”) agree as follows:

1. The University’s collection and use of aggregated course evaluation data, as set forth herein, from the six core EvaluationKIT items to assess and improve the University’s success does not infringe on the contractual rights in Article 14, Sections 5.2.2, 5.4.2.2, 6.2.2, and 6.4.2 and Article 17, Section 11.2.1 to establish criteria, standards, and procedures for evaluation of teaching performance subject to endorsement of the Dean and Provost.
2. The Parties differ as to whether the activities described herein modify existing or past practices and are appropriately the subject of effects bargaining. While noting this disagreement, the Parties have negotiated the University’s collection and use of aggregated data from the six core EvaluationKIT items and resolved that issue as set forth herein. By this agreement, neither the Faculty Association nor the University waives its position regarding whether evaluation procedures are a mandatory subject of bargaining.
3. The University administration, including the Provost, Deans, Department Chairs, and School Directors, shall not use the data from the six core EvaluationKIT items in tenure, reappointment, promotion or merit policies or any other mandatory subject of bargaining. Academic units that may choose to revise their criteria, standards and procedures for RTP and merit purposes to use EvaluationKIT for evaluations of teaching performance must do so according to the procedures stated in the collective bargaining agreement (Article 14, Sections 5.2.2.3, 5.4.2.3, 6.2.2.3, and 6.4.3; Article 17, Section 11.2.4).

4. The University administration, including the Provost, Deans, Department Chairs, and School Directors, shall not use the data from the six core EvaluationKIT items to initiate Extraordinary Review of faculty members, for allocations in the Provost Market Pool or other similar committees, for discipline, for fitness of duty evaluations, or in the creation of workload policies or assignment of workload.

5. Students who dropped or withdrew from the course will not be given the opportunity to complete the evaluation. The Labor Management Committee, in collaboration with appropriate university institutions, shall determine the extent of, and propose solutions to, potential problems with online administration of the six core EvaluationKIT items, including but not limited to: students who stopped attending the class, but never dropped; students with ongoing academic honesty issues in the class; and response rates.

6. It remains the purview of the Faculty Senate to study the scholarship concerning the benefits and limitations of student course evaluations and issue reports to the university community as they choose to do on the appropriateness of university-wide student evaluations.

IN WITNESS THEREOF, the Parties have caused this Memorandum of Understanding to be made effective this 21 day of May, 2018.

Bowling Green State University

By: John M. Fischer  
Date: 5/22/18

Bowling Green State University Faculty  
Association – AAUP

By: David J. Fisher  
Date: 5-23-18