

– CEPP Recommendations for All-College Student Rating Form –

Skidmore College is a small liberal arts institution that values highly effective teaching. However, assessing teaching, is likely an equally challenging endeavor. Historically, Skidmore, and nearly every higher education institution, has relied on surveys of students as a primary mechanism of evaluating teaching effectiveness. Skidmore prides itself on teaching quality and on the hard work of assessing teaching effectiveness in a comprehensive manner.

Accordingly, in 2013 CEPP, with the work of many others, stewarded a new student ratings form. When Skidmore faculty voted to adopt the current college ratings form, the legislation stipulated CEPP review the form after a period of time. CEPP has taken up this work over the last two years and recently provided a report to the faculty in the Spring of 2014. Its findings: A number of concerns have arisen in reviewing the current college (student) rating of course and teaching form. These concerns are also taken in the context of academia at large. We are not alone in examining our approach and devising strategies to avoid the known pitfalls of assessing teaching effectiveness via student survey.

In addition to CEPP's own deliberations and consultation with Ginger Clark, Associate Vice Provost

(code, e.g. EN), and the College at large.

b. Related to above points, the

APPENDIX A

APPENDIX B
MOTION

RATIONALE: CEPP would like to put forth the motion to modify the language in the faculty handbook regarding the all college student ratings form. We are proposing the modifications below, in part, as a housekeeping action to ensure consistent use of language, but also in part to recognize the nature of the ratings form as feedback and not as a formal evaluation of teaching. Thus, where the term “student evaluations” is used currently, the suggested language is revised in multiple locations to “student ratings” to be in harmony with the name of the form, and “student feedback” when departmental/program forms are mentioned, or “Ratings and feedback” when a collective term is desired.

MOTION: to amend the 2019~~20~~20 Faculty Handbook as follows, with change highlighted in red:

Table of Contents,

page i, Part One, section VII.C.7,

7. Student **Ratings and Feedback**

page iv, Part Two, section III.F

F. Student **Ratings and Feedback**

1. All-College Student **Ratings**

2. Departmental Student **Feedback**

Part One, Section VII.A.4. pg. 111

4. Because **student ratings and feedback** are used in several decision making processes, faculty members have a right to receive fair and honest ratings and **feedback**

Part One, Section VII.C.7. pg. 112

7. Student **Ratings and Feedback** Faculty members are required to **obtain student ratings and feedback** in their courses (see Part Two, Article III [Academic Policies], Section F).

Part One, Section VIII.A.1. pg. 115

.... and careful readings of student course **ratings and feedback**

Part One, Section VIII.E.5.viii. pg. 127

viii. **Evaluation of Teaching**....., number 7 [Student **Ratings and Feedback**] and Section F [Student **Ratings and Feedback**]

Part One, Section VIII.F.2..a.vii.3 pg. 132

(3) the ten most recent consecutive semesters of teaching **ratings and feedback**

Part One, Section XIII.D.3 pg. 143

The Director has access to teaching faculty's curriculum vitae, syllabus, **student ratings and feedback** for courses in the program.

Part Two, Section III.F.3 pg. 219

F. Student **Ratings and Feedback**

1. All-College Student **Rating of Courses and Instructor**

a. All members of the Faculty will have their courses **rated** each term by students enrolled in their courses. The **rating forms** shall be administered in a uniform manner which protects confidentiality. The Dean of the Faculty/Vice President for Academic Affairs will provide the forms to each department.

b. Each term, Department Chairs shall return the completed **ratings** to the Dean of the Faculty/Vice President for Academic Affairs, who shall be responsible for **overseeing Institutional Research Office processing of the forms**. The Dean of the Faculty/Vice President for Academic Affairs shall **ensure the Institutional Research Office returns summaries of the ratings forms** to the Department Chair for retention in department files.

c. **Summaries of the ratings forms from Institutional Research** shall be made available each term to the faculty being **rated**.

d. The **summaries of the ratings forms** shall be **made** available to the Associate Dean of the Faculty (faculty affairs), to the Dean of the Faculty/Vice President for Academic Affairs, and to the President for their examination during consideration of reappointment, tenure, promotions, or salary advancement. In addition, the **summaries of the ratings forms** shall be available to ATC and PC for its examination during consideration for reappointment, promotions, or tenure.

e. Faculty members have a right to receive fair and honest **ratings**. Any faculty member who feels this right has been violated may pursue the matter through any of several channels (Department Chair, Dean of the Faculty/Vice President for Academic Affairs, CAFR, etc.) that seem appropriate to the particular case.

2. Departmental Student Evaluations

Student **feedback forms** administered by departments or programs are required for all lecture, discussion, laboratory, and studio courses. At the discretion of the instructor, departmental **feedback forms** may also be used to **get feedback** from independent studies, internships, and thesis or individual research courses. These **forms** should be administered in such a way as to ensure validity, responsibility, and where possible, confidentiality.

a. Validity shall mean that the methods each department may devise for its own needs be likely to produce nearly complete returns from each class.

b. Responsibility shall mean that students sign the **feedback forms** they fill out, and that no anonymous **forms** be accepted. Although signatures must be separated from the completed **forms** before

they are shown to the faculty member concerned, or kept confidential in some other fashion, some record of who completed a given form must be established.

c. Confidentiality shall mean that no faculty member shall learn the name of the student who completed a given form for one of their own courses. If, on the other hand, allegations suggesting unprofessional conduct appear in a student evaluation, the Department Chair or CAFR may seek to interview the student to determine whether further review is warranted.