

2019-2020 IUK Task Force on Student Evaluations Annual Report

Members

Ghadah Alshuwaiyer, Josephine Dibie, Tara Kingsley, Gin Morgan (chair), Julie Saam, and Natalie Schelling. Christina Romero-Ivanova was involved in early Spring 2020 but discontinued participation.

Activities and accomplishments

The IUK Task Force on Student Evaluations met once in January and once in February 2020, and discussed matters through email correspondence. The task force discussed the timing and format of student (course) evaluations, their usefulness in providing summative vs. formative feedback, and their use in annual review and promotion and tenure cases. The task force also discussed peer review of teaching: who is reviewed, who conducts the review, the format of the review, and the weight of the review in annual review and promotion and tenure cases.

The task force designed and conducted a faculty survey to gauge IUK faculty opinion on student evaluations, currently, namely, about the usefulness of qualitative vs. quantitative feedback, how end-of-term evaluations compared (in their usefulness) to informal mid-semester evaluations, and how faculty believed student feedback should be used in annual review and promotion and tenure cases.

Because of the changes made to course instruction due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the task force drafted a proposal that student course evaluations from Spring and Summer 2020 courses were optional for inclusion in annual review and promotion and tenure cases, and could not be used in renewal or reappointment decisions. This proposal was approved by Faculty Senate vote in April 2020. During this process, we worked with EVCAA Mark Canada, who drafted a letter on the matter for faculty to include in their annual reviews, promotion and tenure dossiers, etc.

Future activities

Although the task force was initially intended to only be active during the 2019-2020 academic year, there may be work to be done in the 2020-2021 academic year, either by this task force, or by a related faculty senate committee that wishes to include this task force's work under its purview. First, the UFC task force on course evaluations submitted a report to the UFC. Depending on what the UFC decides (regarding this report), there may or may not be a need for a campus-level task force.

A separate issue for 2020-2021 is that due to the plans for altered course delivery methods during the next academic year, and the uncertainty surrounding those plans, it may be reasonable to further consider student feedback and its role, as in Spring and Summer 2020.