

Kicking off our Teaching Effectiveness/Evaluation initiative

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Dear SLU Faculty,

We are excited to announce the official kickoff of a joint Faculty Senate/Provost's Office initiative on teaching effectiveness/evaluation. This work has been years in the making, and it is a direct result of persistent and growing requests from the SLU faculty. We've heard increasingly from faculty about the need for a more consistent and equitable approach to teaching evaluation, and we are thrilled that SLU is ready for meaningful change in this area.

Below, we share some general information about this effort, which will unfold over the next several years. In January, you can expect more details, including ways you can get involved.

It's a multi-year, multi-phased initiative to bring greater consistency and equity to the evaluation of teaching at SLU. It will focus on aligning our teaching evaluation practices with the literature on effective, responsible evaluation. It also will support us in better recognizing and rewarding teaching.

There are many reasons to do this work, but an important one is: Because you've asked us to. The Faculty Senate has recommended significant change in the annual evaluation of faculty performance, and in particular, in the area of teaching evaluation. The Provost-Faculty Senate Gender Equity Committee also has identified the need for meaningful change in this area. Throughout the process of developing our [new Academic Strategic Plan](#), faculty repeatedly identified teaching – its evaluation and valuing – as a significant focus area. And the faculty who have been engaged in our [NSF ADVANCE project](#) have echoed the calls for serious and substantive change in the evaluation of teaching. While the evaluation of teaching happens within academic units, it has become clear that we need more consistent, evidence-informed evaluation practices across the University.

Comprehensive, multi-faceted evaluation of teaching is essential to equitable faculty evaluation – and to truly valuing teaching. While the University has been in a period of tremendous growth in research/scholarship, we also continue to be a place that deeply values teaching, and our evaluation and reward practices have not always reflected this value.

In 2018, SLU adopted a [University Policy on End-of-Term Student Evaluation of Courses](#), which makes clear that evaluation of teaching should be “comprehensive” and should not rely solely on student feedback. But the adoption of more robust, multi-faceted evaluation practices has been uneven. At an institutional level, we have not devoted the attention to this effort that we should. Thankfully, both faculty and academic leaders have been asking for meaningful change in this area

new ASP; that is not an accident.