

## **Memorandum of Understanding: Course Evaluation Procedures & Committee**

This MOU is designed to implement, on a trial basis, several recommendations of the Ad Hoc Committee on Course Evaluations and renew that Committee, with slight modifications, for one additional year. Inclusion of these terms in the next contract shall not be automatic.

Sections 8.13 and 8.15 of the RIC/AFT Faculty Contract are amended as follows:

For the Fall 2024 semester and subsequent semesters until these terms are altered by a new contract, department course evaluations will include this set of five questions agreed to by the Council of Rhode Island College, the president of the RIC/AFT, and the Provost of the College.

1. The instructor was well prepared for class.
2. The instructor presented the course material in a way that helped me to understand it.
3. The instructor provided clear expectations on how I could be successful and productive in the course.
4. The instructor showed enthusiasm for student learning.
5. The instructor encouraged an academic environment that is open and welcoming.

All student evaluation questionnaires should include these five standard questions.

The five standard questions should appear first in the list of questions, before any department or program questions if any.

The rating scale for the five questions is a five-point scale using numbers, starting with 5 as the highest for = “strongly agree” and ending with 1 as the lowest for = “strongly disagree.”

For example:

The instructor was well prepared for class: 5-Strongly Agree, 4-Agree, 3-Neither Agree nor Disagree, 2-Disagree, 1-Strongly Disagree

Departments and programs are encouraged to use the same rating scale of 5 as highest and 1 as lowest, with 5 appearing first, in any additional questions that they use. This will help prevent confusion among students that could happen if the rating scale is not consistent throughout the questions.

Departments and programs that include open-ended questions that allow students to make comments shall be mandated to include a voluntary student signature option beginning in Fall 2024. They may use the following suggested language or construct their own statement ~~with~~ so long as the same meaning is maintained.

*Suggested Language:* Note: the signature is optional. Please write your name if you are willing to let the department chair use your comments for annual faculty reviews. Faculty members and department chairs will not see students’ comments until after final grades are submitted.

All fall and spring RIC courses shall be evaluated by students every semester. The only courses exempted from evaluation should be those with fewer than three students, such as independent

studies, in which the low number of students would jeopardize student anonymity and produce a response rate too low to provide reliable data.

Each department or program should construct a brief instruction note for their evaluation forms about the purpose of student evaluations and how they should be conducted, including that the instructor should leave the room and students should deliver hard copies to the appropriate office. Instructors are expected to read the instructions for the evaluation process and then leave the classroom while students complete the evaluation. In the case of hard copy student evaluations, instructors are expected to have a student deliver the envelope with completed questionnaires to the department administrative assistant's or department chair's office or mailbox after class. Instructors should not handle the completed evaluations.

Completed evaluation data should only be shared with the department or program administrative assistant, the department chair or program director, and the individual faculty member. In addition, some departments provide student evaluations to department advisory committees (DAC) to aid in the annual review process. Administrators, including the President, Provost, Deans, and Associate and Assistant Deans, should not have access to individual faculty members' student evaluation data unless the faculty member has received a below satisfactory annual evaluation score from their department chair and the department chair consents or the faculty member is being assessed in relation to a documented, formal complaint or disciplinary procedure.

Furthermore, the **Ad Hoc Course Evaluation Committee** shall be renewed for the year 2024-2025, with the revised powers and duties below.

**Powers and Duties:**

1. Continue to review the processes by which student course evaluations are collected and used to ensure the integrity of the evaluation process.
2. In consultation with the Committee on Online Learning, make recommendations regarding standard evaluation questions that should be included or excluded for courses taught entirely or substantially online.
3. Make recommendations to departments about how to construct their own questions for online courses.
4. Make recommendations about how to improve response rates for online course evaluations.
5. Work with the Provost's office to improve the Class Climate system and/or make recommendations for replacement systems.
6. Provide a process for voluntary feedback on departmental course evaluation forms.

**Membership:**

The committee shall consist of eleven members:

The Provost of the College or an academic Dean designated by the Provost.

The RIC/AFT President or the President's designee.

8 Faculty members to be chosen by agreement among the President of the RIC/AFT and the Executive Committee of Council, as follows:

4 from the Faculty of Arts and Sciences (14 departments) including one from a department in each of the following areas: Social Sciences, Natural and Mathematical Sciences, Arts, and Humanities.

1 from the Feinstein School of Education and Human Development (5 departments)

1 from the School of Business (3 departments)

1 from the School of Nursing (2 departments)

1 from the School of Social Work (2 departments)

1 student appointed by the Chair of Council in consultation with Student Community Government.

In composing the committee, the appointing bodies will ensure that there is adequate diversity, including representation of groups against whom there is frequently bias in such evaluations.

The committee may bring in as non-voting consultants such persons, including students, that it feels will aid it in its work.

The committee chair shall be elected by the committee from among its faculty members.

The Committee shall report on its work, along with any recommendations, to the College Administration, the Council of Rhode Island College, and the RIC/AFT no later than the May 2025 meeting of the Council of Rhode Island College.

The committee's charge will expire at the end of the academic year 2024-25 unless extended by a vote of the Council and the RIC/AFT Executive Committee at or before its final meeting of the 2024-25 academic year. In the case that the committee is extended, the faculty members shall be reappointed or replaced in the same manner as the original appointments.

Signed,



06/03/2024

RIC/AFT President Mikaila Mariel Lemonik Arthur

Date



6/3/24

Provost/VPAA Carolynn Masters

Date