

Resolution on the Appropriate Use of Student Course Evaluations

Morehead State University Faculty Senate

November 19, 2020

- Whereas: A significant body of work exists condemning the utility and efficacy of student course evaluations (see attached documentation);
- Whereas: Numerous studies show that student course evaluations are ineffective measures of teaching efficacy, and
- Whereas: Numerous studies show that student course evaluations are often both gender and racially discriminatory and
- Whereas: Student responses to these student course evaluations have been shown to illustrate negative racial and gender bias, and
- Whereas: Student course evaluations more readily address student emotions about the course and instructor, and
- Whereas: Student course evaluations serve as a platform for students to criticize instructors based on personality and appearance rather than to provide constructive feedback on how much they learned, and
- Whereas: The current method of surveying student satisfaction with their instructors is not equivalent to the evaluation of the quality of instruction, and
- Whereas: Academic administrators and tenure and promotion committees across campus inconsistently and many times erroneously utilize and/or interpret student course evaluations, and
- Whereas: Morehead State University's reliance on student course evaluations undermines our mission as an institution by inhibiting teaching effectiveness as faculty compete for positive student evaluations by catering to students rather than pushing them to become life-long learners, and
- Whereas: Student course evaluations can provide valuable feedback to the course instructor on pace, how course material is presented and their level of interest in a course, and
- Whereas: Nevertheless, Morehead State University, despite all the aforementioned studies and despite the myriad of other methods of evaluation, still relies on student course evaluations as a primary instrument to determine faculty teaching effectiveness and value, therefore,

Be it resolved: That Faculty, through the representative body, Faculty Senate as a whole, ask that student course evaluations be discontinued as the primary evaluative metric for annual review, tenure, and promotion decisions.

Be it also resolved: That individual faculty and programs are encouraged to use student course evaluations and other tools to assist in understanding student experiences and improving course delivery.

Be it also resolved: The faculty and academic administration shall collaborate to develop a more effective and equitable strategy for including the student voice in teaching evaluation.