

**SAN JOSÉ STATE UNIVERSITY
ONE WASHINGTON SQUARE
SAN JOSE, CA 95192**

Amendment C to University Policy F12-6, Evaluation of Effectiveness in Teaching for All Faculty

Legislative History:

At its meeting of October 7, 2019, the Academic Senate approved the following policy recommendation presented by Senator Peter for the Professional Standards Committee. Amendment C to University Policy F12-6 clarifies language regarding SOTES.

**Approved and signed by President
Mary A. Papazian on
December 2, 2019**

Resolved: That F12-6 be amended as shown in the strikeout and underline excerpts of policy.

Rationale: F12-6 is a lengthy and complex policy organizing all aspects of the evaluation of teaching by faculty. One portion of the policy concerns the administration of SOTES (surveys of student opinion of teaching effectiveness) and within that segment there is a provision that allows faculty to exclude one course per year from their evaluations.

The CBA mandates that SOTES will figure prominently in the evaluation of faculty. When policy moved SJSU from selective use of SOTES to their universal use, there was a legitimate concern that fear of receiving the occasional “low SOTE” would discourage faculty from taking necessary risks in their teaching. For example, faculty might avoid teaching experimental courses, developing new curriculum, take on last-minute assignments, or teaching unpopular courses as a risk-avoidance strategy. To reduce this perverse incentive, an “exclusionary rule” was included so faculty could exclude the occasional outlier SOTE from their evaluations, provided that there would still be a very large number of SOTES remaining in their personnel files.

The language in the original policy ran into technical ambiguities having to do with how much teaching a faculty member needed to do to be allowed exercise this annual exclusion. The Spring 2019 draft of this policy clarified that language, while leaving unchanged from the original policy the requirement that all courses (other than those with fewer than 5 students) are surveyed with SOTEs, and these results are available for review by department Chairs and become part of the personnel file. The “exclusionary rule” only concerns which results are subsequently placed in the “working personnel file” (known informally as dossiers) for formal evaluation purposes.

Unfortunately, the Spring 2019 amendment raised new issues with the CBA having to do with special session courses and the need to assure that evaluations of faculty teaching never rely solely on SOTEs. The Spring 2019 draft was therefore returned to Professional Standards unsigned by the President with instructions to consult with the Senior Associate Vice President, University Personnel, and the Senior Vice Provost Academic Affairs. Professional Standards has consulted with these officers, and has revised the amendment accordingly. PS has inserted language in several additional places in the policy making it an explicit requirement that any evaluation of faculty teaching must be “holistic,” which requires not only SOTEs but also direct observations and other teaching materials such as syllabi and input from the faculty member such as via an “Annual Summary of Achievements” form (ASA) pursuant to University Policy S10-7. We have further clarified that this requirement applies to both regular and special session courses.

Approved: September 26, 2019 by email vote following discussion on September 23, 2019.
Vote: 10-0-0
Present: He, Riley, Chin, Cargill, Peter, Monday, Kumar, Mahendra, Kemnitz, Birrer.
Absent: None.
Financial Impact: No direct impacts.
Workload Impact: No direct impacts.

Policy Recommendation Evaluation in Effectiveness in Teaching For all Faculty

Effectiveness in teaching is the primary consideration in evaluating most faculty members' performance. (In the case of faculty who do not teach, or who teach rarely, some or all of the provisions of this policy may be waived by the appropriate college dean.) When evaluating effectiveness in teaching, chairs, committees, and administrators are required to conduct a holistic evaluation. This means that teaching must be considered in context and must be evaluated using multiple sources of information, such as direct observations, surveys of student opinion of teaching effectiveness (SOTES), course syllabi, and other teaching materials. The requirement to conduct a holistic evaluation of teaching applies to tenure/tenure track faculty as well as to lecturer faculty, and it applies to teaching whether it is conducted in regular or special sessions. The factors to be considered include the following categories:

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C. Direct Observation by Peers. As one component of the evaluation of teaching, faculty will be observed by their peers. These direct observations are designed to evaluate teaching within the broad context of factors "A" and "B" cited above. Direct observations may consist of visits to the classroom, laboratory, or supervisory sessions. For courses with majority electronic or online content, direct observations will consist of peer observers experiencing the course content from the vantage-point of the students. Each faculty evaluation should include at least one direct observation, which may be made in either regular or special session classes.

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E. Student Opinion of Teaching Effectiveness Surveys (SOTES);
both Qualitative and Quantitative

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4. Other than those classes excluded in E3 (above), SOTES shall be administered in all classes with enrollments of 5 or more students. In courses with enrollments of 5-9 students, faculty may choose that SOTES not be administered in the course. Results of SOTE evaluations will be placed in the faculty personnel file. ~~Faculty, however, under some circumstances may exclude the results of an occasional course from their periodic evaluations.~~ Faculty may choose to exclude the survey results from one course per Academic year from their periodic evaluations, provided that they teach at least fifteen ~~units of courses~~ WTUs (equivalent of five typical three unit courses in either regular and/or special sessions) evaluated via the SOTE instrument during that ~~year~~ Academic Year. ~~Faculty who are credited with teaching double-sized courses will be credited with teaching twice the normal number of units.~~ (Issues in interpreting the 15 WTU requirement shall be resolved by the Provost or designee.) For this purpose, the "year" shall correspond to the review cycle of the faculty member; i.e., for tenured/tenure-track faculty beginning in Fall; for lecturer faculty beginning in Spring. When the periodic review covers multiple years, only one course in any year may be excluded, and the remaining SOTES shall be representative of the teaching assignment.

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