Policy on Peer Review of Teaching

Purpose: This policy outlines policy and procedures by which the Department collects and utilizes data on formative peer evaluation of teaching involving members of the faculty in PMB.

Background: Peer review of teaching involves evaluation and feedback to instructors about their teaching methods from the perspective of a faculty peer. Findings from peer review may be used to aid faculty members to improve teaching, known as a formative review; or it may be part of a formal evaluation system used in tenure and pay decisions, known as a summative review. The different purposes of the two types of evaluation require independent processes.

This policy addresses one technique of peer review for faculty teaching: observation of classroom presentation. Other methods such as consultation on course materials, comment on student evaluations, use of course portfolios or teaching portfolios, discussion of teaching philosophy, teacher self-assessments, and other activities which may be appropriate to a given discipline may be developed for departmental use in the future but are not considered here. This policy addresses the use of collected data and information only for formative (personal development) purposes. As noted, summative (judgmental/personnel decision) purposes are an entirely separate function and are not described or addressed by this policy.

For formative reviews of teaching, the peer reviewers may be colleagues of any rank but mutually agreed upon by the faculty member and his/her rating supervisor. Two peer reviewers are required; one should come from inside the reviewed faculty member’s division and one from outside the division.

Key features:

1. There will be two evaluations each year of each faculty member’s teaching; one by a colleague of the same discipline (and from inside the division), one by a faculty member from another discipline (and from outside the division).

2. The evaluation will be completed using a standard reporting form with a standard set of definitions and grading rubric.

3. The data from the review shall be the property of the individual reviewed.

4. The individual being reviewed shall have the responsibility to arrange for the review sessions and to record the fact of its completion in a Sakai database.

5. Division Directors shall have responsibility for seeing that requisite reviews are accomplished during the academic year.

6. The PES shall monitor completion rates and keep the GAC and the Graduate Program Director informed.

Responsibilities:
Policy formulation, review and re-issue – Chair, Preventive Medicine and Biometrics
Notification of faculty of responsibilities – Chair, Program Evaluation Subcommittee
Evaluation activity – members of PMB faculty
Tracking and reporting compliance – Program Evaluation Subcommittee
Procedures:

a) At the beginning of each academic year (e.g., July 5th), every active faculty member should be
b) notified of their responsibilities under this policy. Division Directors should be notified and
c) reminded of their responsibilities at that time, as well.
d) “Faculty members” means all teaching faculty. Faculty members whose teaching is being
e) reviewed are “lecturers”. Lecturers shall contact potential reviewers (one from inside their
f) division and one from outside) in consultation with their supervisor to set dates, times and
g) methods of evaluation. This contact may include a pre-evaluation meeting to discuss issues of
h) concern by the individual being reviewed and to set ground rules for the classroom interaction.
i) Prior to engaging in this evaluation activity for the first time, the designated reviewer will visit
j) the Sakai site to download several documents: a copy of this policy, a copy of the PMB
k) Standard Peer Evaluation Report Form, a copy of the Grading Rubric to be used and a copy of the 2004 Edition of “Improving Teaching and Learning: Peer Observation of Teaching” PDF from the University Teaching Development Centre Victoria University of Wellington. Faculty reviewers should be aware of their responsibilities and the expectations of the department before engaging in evaluation.
l) On the day of the evaluation, the observer will promptly complete the Standard Peer Evaluation Report Form, including making narrative comments about strengths of the teaching observed and areas where improvement could be made (Promptly means immediately in most instances; no later than by the following day). All comments are to be written in fact-based terms, including constructive critique that could be used for performance improvement. At the end of the observation (or no later than the next day) the observer should meet with the rated
m) faculty member and present the evaluation form and be prepared to clarify comments or answer questions about the process. Once this discussion has taken place, the observer’s responsibilities are discharged.
n) The lecturer will then be responsible for two further actions: documenting the fact of the review and using the evaluation for personal improvement.

i. Documenting the review: The faculty member will sign on to Sakai and into the Evaluation Course and will use the checklist to note the date of the evaluation, the name of the reviewer and the course and instructor who was evaluated.
ii. Using the evaluation: The faculty member will consider the evaluation information and write 1-3 statements about intent to make improvements in components of his teaching; these statements will constitute “commitment to change” and will be useful to the lecturer. Although the data from these formative evaluations shall not be used in Annual Evaluations, the content maybe summarized into goals for the succeeding year if the faculty member wishes to do so.
Date reviewed: 9/13/2012

Gerald V. Quinnan, MD
Chair, Preventive Medicine & Biometrics