Guidance for Faculty Undergoing Review

If you are a relatively new faculty member, pre-tenure if you are in the tenure track, undergoing a full performance reviews for non-tenure track faculty, or applying for promotion in either track, you are likely to be compiling a file documenting your service to Kent State University, including documentation of teaching efforts and effectiveness.

While you can’t include SSI data from Spring 2020-Summer 2021 in your files, you can and should document the ways in which you responded to teaching challenges presented by COVID. Specific items may include, but are not limited to:

a. Formal or informal training you received and any documentation of training you may have, along with a discussion of the key take-aways you implemented in your courses. For example, this may include participation in webinars, remote instruction workshops, the Online Teaching Orientation and Refresher course, or recognition through the Center for Teaching and Learning Teaching Development Program (https://www.kent.edu/ctl/teaching-recognition-awards).

b. Explain and document changes you made to your courses specifically to address the pandemic. This may have included the use of a broader range of tools (e.g., Teams, Zoom, Google Hangouts, Flipgrid), the type of projects or team assignments you used, use of technology to facilitate projects, and strategies for fostering interaction among students.

c. Modifications you made based on student or peer feedback/input.

d. Documentation of student learning in your courses such as pre-test/post-test comparisons, student success metrics, and feedback from students outside of formal SSIs.

e. Efforts that you made in your courses to address the university’s over-arching philosophy of being reasonable, flexible, and equitable.

SSIs provide a student perspective and, while incredibly valuable, SSIs are only one perspective. Further, SSIs have been demonstrated to exhibit bias based on race, gender, and country of origin. That means SSI results must be used with great care and only as input to a broader evaluation. Because of potential for bias, it is also never appropriate to compare one person’s SSIs against those of another person. Rather, a reflection on your SSIs and your responses to them are most important.

The Center for Teaching and Learning (CTL) will be offering a virtual workshop called “No SSIs? No Problem: Strategies for Writing Your Teaching Narrative.” They will record the workshops for later viewing for those unable to attend. The times and dates, and links are:

- August 6, 10-11:30 a.m. Teams link: Click here to join the meeting
- August 23, 12:00-1:30 p.m. Teams link: Click here to join the meeting

Peer reviews offer an additional perspective on your teaching performance. If applicable, ask your Department Chair/School Director whether your academic unit has a specific process, criteria or individuals designated as peer reviewers. If not, you and your unit may wish to consult with the Center for Teaching and Learning to learn more.

Helping your colleagues understand the approaches you took to teaching during the pandemic is important to fill the gap in SSI data. You may wish to consult with your Department Chair/School Director as you prepare your files for more suggestions. As always, Full Time faculty who are members of a bargaining unit should refer to their Collective Bargaining Agreement to find information about materials required for all Performance Reviews and Promotion Applications.