

Teaching evaluation: Can we measure what really matters?

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The Concern

The faculty reward structure does not align with our teaching values. Teaching evaluations still heavily rely on Student Ratings of Instruction (SRI).

2014 Survey to Academic Chairs....
What percentage of the teaching evaluation do you base on student evaluations of teaching?
Average = 65%, median = 70% (n=30)

2013 Faculty Senate Survey...
Are you satisfied with the present student teaching evaluation process?
Yes = 32%, No = 68% (n=239)

Our newly created Teaching Professorial Line raises further concern about how best to evaluate teaching when it can account for 90% of a job requirement.

Questions for Discussion

- Should SRIs be focused on improving the learning process, or evaluating the instructor? Are those purposes at odds or can SRIs do both?
- Are some SRI questions in fact undermining the kind of teaching we are trying to promote?
- What are the best forms of evidence to measure significant, learning centered, inclusive and reflective teaching practices?
- What evidence or analysis would be useful to stakeholders at your institution?

Promising SRI Questions

Examples of questions that directly or strongly relate to our teaching aspirations

Inclusive, Inviting, Empathetic

- The course experience provided an inclusive environment for learning.
- The course experience enhanced my respect for multiple perspectives.
- The instructor fostered a classroom climate of respect and participation.

Learning-centered, Meaningful, Active

- The course provided opportunities for me to be actively involved in my learning.
- The instructor promotes an active and collaborative learning environment.
- This course helped me to think about myself in new and helpful ways.

What kind of teaching do we value?

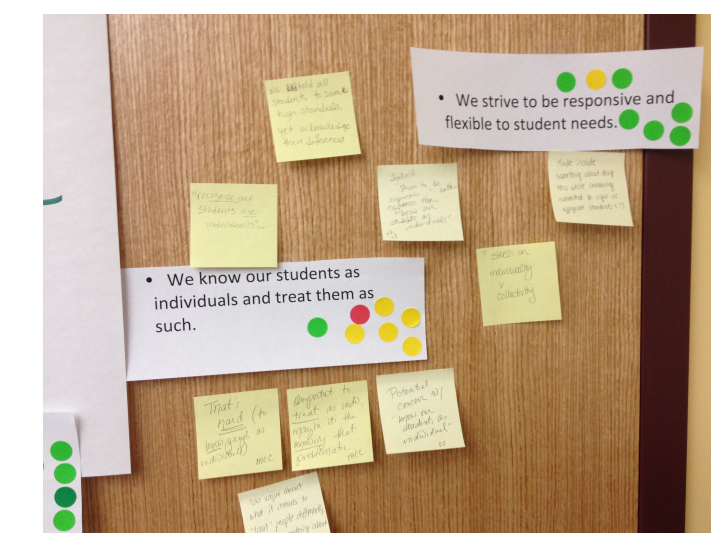
As a first step in any evaluation process, we should have a common sense of what we are trying to measure. What kind of teaching are we trying to promote and reward?

TEACHING ASPIRATIONS

In 2015-16 our office led an effort to address the question, *What kind of teaching do we aspire to at DU?* Thirty statements emerged and were grouped into four categories. These aspirations closely align with recent university-wide strategic plans.

We aspire to teach in a way that is...

- Significant and Impactful**
- Learning-Centered, Meaningful and Active**
- Inclusive, Inviting and Empathetic**
- Reflective and Evidence-Based**



What do we currently measure?

Goal: Explore current practices across a very decentralized institution to determine general patterns, highlight local promising practice and inform recommendations. Compare our current practices to our espoused values for teaching.

Overarching Question: Are we measuring the kind of teaching that we value?

Multi-year plan:

- Review of SRIs and pilot new process and questions (*in process*)
- Collection and qualitative analysis of P&T guidelines (*Spring/Summer 2018*)
- Interviews with members of P&T committees and faculty who recently completed P&T process (*Summer 2018*)
- Use results to inform the development of new practices at both the university and unit levels.

What do our student ratings of instruction measure?

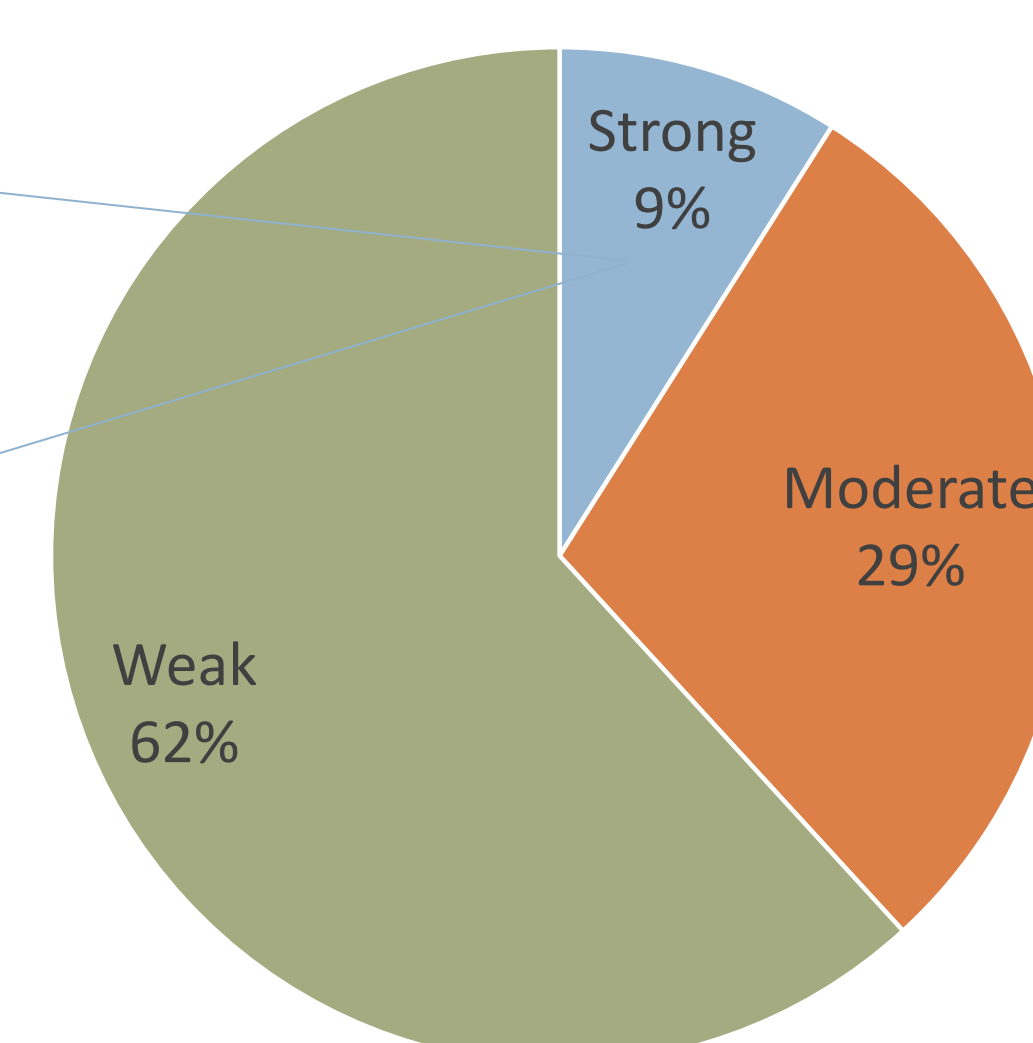
Goal: Explore SRIs through the lens of significant, learning-centered, inclusive, and reflective teaching practices.

Method: Three rounds of inductive and deductive coding by Director of University Teaching to uncover general observations.

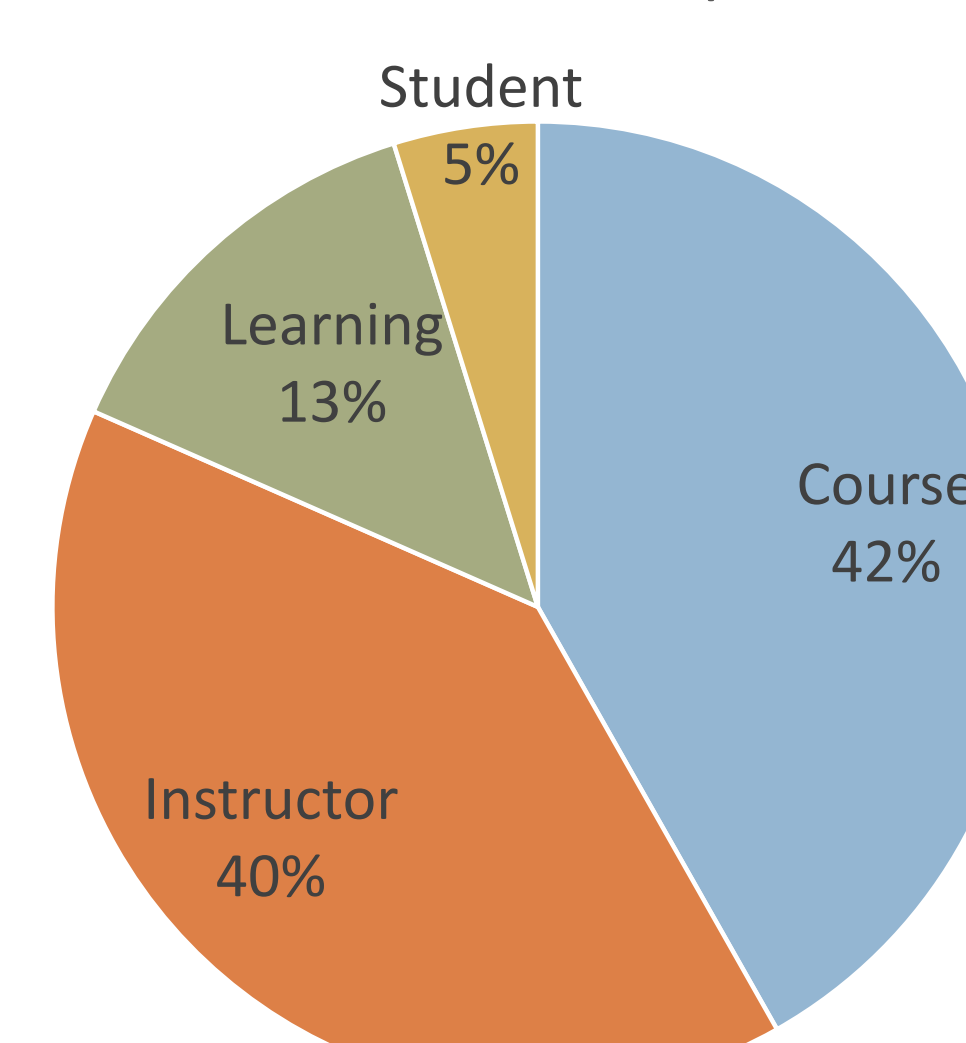
Preliminary Findings:

- Over 50 different SRI forms are used for 17+ units/programs, containing 501 questions. (243 unique questions)
- The vast majority of our SRI questions are focused on instructor traits and course format.
- Less than 10% of the questions have a strong/direct connection to the type of teaching described in our aspirations.
- The more abstract the question, the more difficult it is to determine what is being measured ("challenging," "organized")

SRI question connection to teaching aspirations



Main focus of SRI question



Please see handouts for reference list. Special thanks for sharing examples and wisdom:
Nancy Turner, University of Saskatchewan, Erika Kustra, University of Windsor, Katarina Mårtensson, Lund University

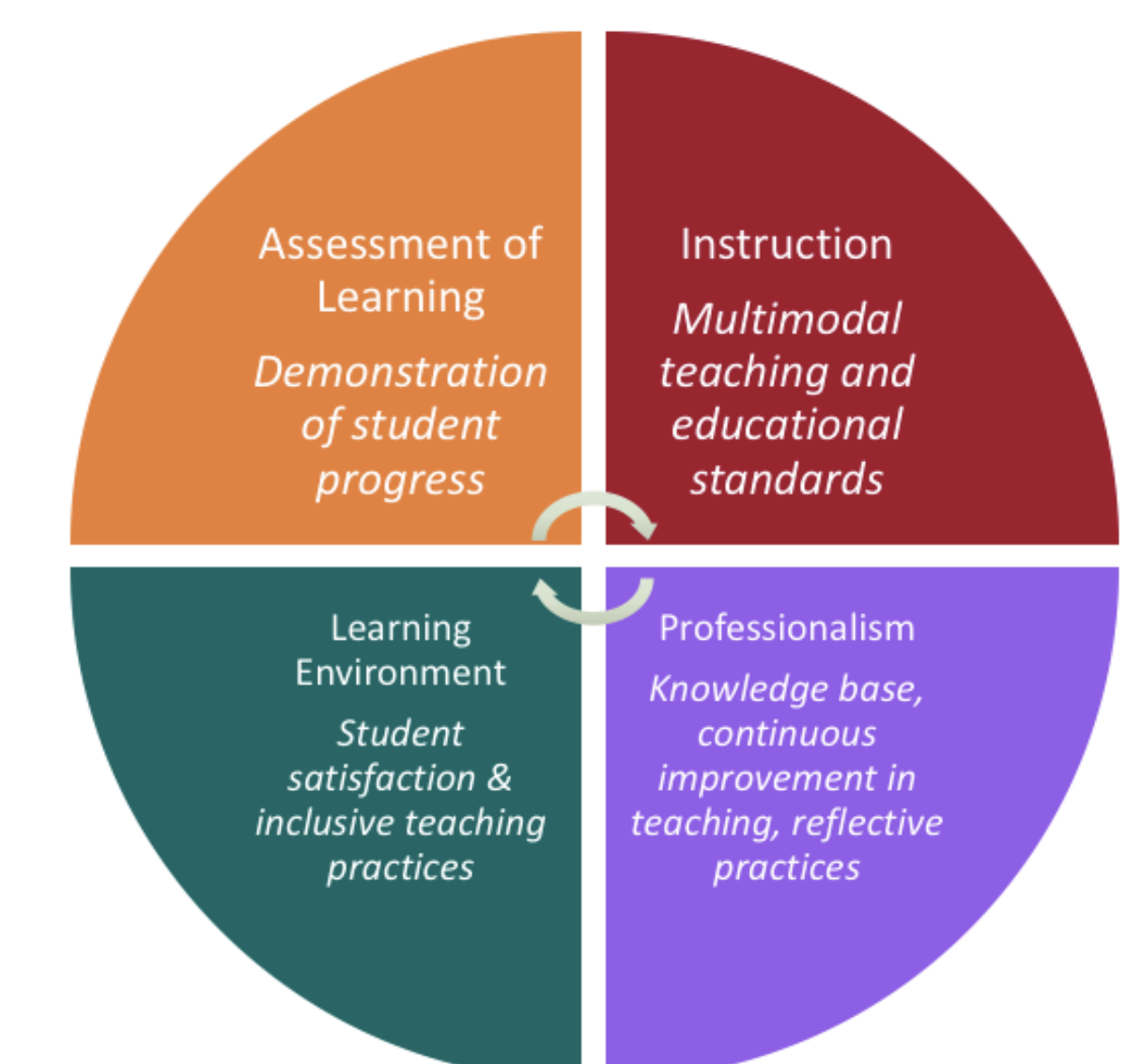
Emerging Frameworks

Three units have created teaching evaluation frameworks unique to their particular culture and disciplinary norms. All are variations of these general categories of teaching evidence.

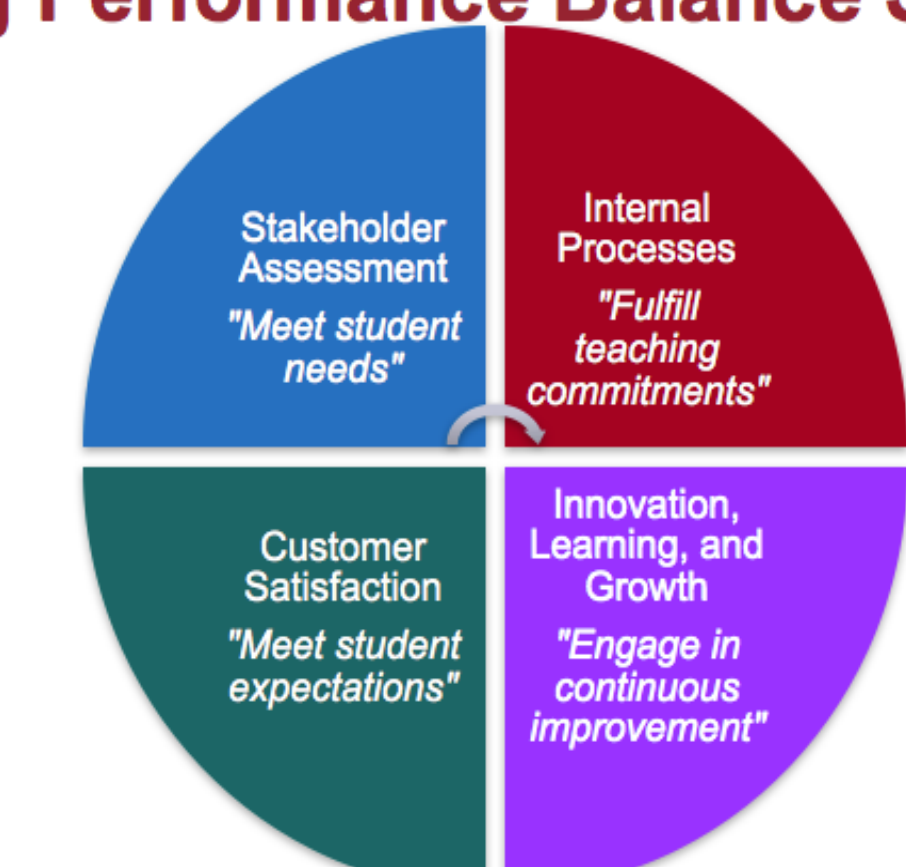
Teaching Evaluation Categories

Course design
Instruction/Facilitation
Student experience/Satisfaction
Student learning
Ongoing teaching development
Teaching commitments

Morgridge College of Education



Teaching Performance Balance Scorecard



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