THE UNIVERSITY OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA

Recognizing and rewarding teaching: Standards and criteria for excellence in teaching

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How many of your academics proudly proclaim this as their job?

Context and impetus

"supporting staff by rewarding and recognising teaching activities is **central** to obtaining an **excellent student experience**" (Cashmore et al, 2013, p 5)

Progress on development of teaching criteria and ways in which they are measured and presented **BUT**

- limited embedding in systems and policies
- substantial variation in different types of universities and within the disciplinary communities

Increasing numbers of 'teaching focused' academic appointments (eg 125% increase in Australia pa)

Not being reflected in promotions outcomes, particularly at the higher levels, contributing to persistent scepticism from staff

Typical reward & recognition for teaching

- **Teaching awards, Fellowships**
  - Within institution
  - National eg Ako Aoteroa, OLT, HEA
- **Grants for teaching initiatives**
  - Within institution
  - National eg Ako Aoteroa, HEA (Was OLT)
- **Professional development**
  - Within institution
  - National eg Ako Aoteroa, HEA (Was OLT)
- **Promotion**
  - Within institution (research, teaching, engagement)

Challenges for R & R of teaching in STEM disciplines

- Prestige is conferred on disciplinary researchers, not teachers of the discipline
- Greater teaching loads are often assigned to ‘less successful’ researchers – teaching is for ‘failed’ researchers
- Promotion based on teaching excellence is less likely in STEM disciplines
- Salaries and appointment levels are lower for those who do more teaching. Females are disproportionally represented in the lower levels and on limited term contracts
- Pedagogical research is not regarded on the same level as disciplinary research (in many STEM disciplines not included in ERA)
- Professional and personal identity strongly tied to being a researcher in discipline
- Leadership responses are typically focused on ‘improving’ individuals’ teaching practice

Institutional strategy for R & R of teaching

- Determine academic and professional profile models eg teaching-research, teaching-focused, teaching-only, teaching professional, other?
- Review and clarify institutional policy, practices and processes for appointment, performance review, promotion.
- Clarify criteria, evidence and standards
- Develop capacity for peer review and promotion panels
- Monitor and report on progress and outcomes

Example: The ***Australian University Teaching Criteria and Standards Project***

Over **25** universities in Australia have done or are in the process of doing this

Science and Institutional strategy?

How are Deans and Heads of Schools engaging with your institutional strategies to better reward and recognise teaching in Science?

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Challenges for status of teaching in STEM

"Enhancing the value of teaching in STEM fields requires much more than empirical evidence of instructional effectiveness.

- It requires **active intervention** by **academic leaders** at the departmental, college, and institutional level.
- It requires efforts to encourage a culture within academic programs that values teaching. Whether through intervention in promotion and tenure decisions, salary structures, or provision of additional resources, **active engagement by institutional leaders** is a **prerequisite** to teaching reform efforts to succeed.
- In the end, faculty members take their cues about what their **institutions value** by looking at **salary and promotion and tenure** decisions rather than the rhetoric about or evidence in support of good teaching." (Fairweather, 2008, p 24)

Linking Evidence and Promising Practices in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) Undergraduate Education. A Status Report for The National Academies National Research Council Board of Science Education

AUTCAS Indicative teaching criteria

1. Design and planning of learning activities, unit/subjects and degree programs
2. Teaching and supporting student learning
3. Assessment and giving feedback to students
4. Developing effective learning environments, student support and guidance
5. Integration of scholarship, research and professional activities with teaching and in support of student learning
6. Evaluation of practice and continuing professional development
7. Professional and personal effectiveness

AUTCAS and Evidence based practice

AUTCAS criteria	STEM evidence based practice
1. Design and planning of learning activities, unit/subjects and degree programs	1. Avoid cognitive overload 5. Embrace flipping 8. Consider the implications of technology
2. Assessment and giving feedback to students	2. Be careful what you measure 7. Make it authentic
3. Teaching and supporting student learning	4. Prepare students to learn in lectures 6. Ensure active learning 5. Embrace flipping
4. Developing effective learning environments, student support and guidance	3. Ensure students are prepared for lab & field 4. Prepare students to learn in lectures
5. Integration of scholarship, research and professional activities with teaching and in support of student learning	
6. Evaluation of practice and continuing professional development	
7. Professional and personal effectiveness	

Sources of evidence used to assess and improve teaching

1 Peers & colleagues	2 Self assessment
3 Student input	4 Student achievement

Smith, 2008; Chalmers & Hunt, 2016

The Framework

Criterion 1: Design and planning of learning activities				
Planning, development and preparation of learning activities, learning resources and materials, for a unit, course or degree program; including coordination, involvement or leadership in curriculum design and development.				
Lecturer (A)	**Lecturer (B)**	**Senior Lecturer (C)**	**Associate Professor (D)**	**Professor (E)**

• **Planned learning activities designed to develop the students' learning**
• **Sound knowledge of the unit content and material**
• Unit outline that clearly details learning outcomes, teaching and learning activities and assessment
• Preparation of unit materials
• **Peer review of unit materials by unit/course coordinator**
• For relevant items in the student survey, average or above average scores for all units taught e.g.
  • Appropriate teaching techniques are used by the teacher to enhance my learning.
  • The teacher is well prepared.
  • The teacher effectively used learning technologies to support my learning
	• Deep knowledge of the discipline area
	• **Well planned learning activities designed to develop the students learning**
	• **Scholarly/informed approach to learning design**
	• **Thorough knowledge of the unit material and its contribution in the course**
	• **Effective and appropriate use of learning technologies**
	• **Effective unit/ course coordination**
	• Effective preparation of tutors and management of teaching teams
	• **Peer review of unit materials by course coordinator**
	• **For relevant items in the student survey, average or above average scores for two consecutive years and in all units taught**
		Meets the requirements for Level B and
		
		• **Deep knowledge of the discipline area**
		• **Innovation in the design of teaching, including use of learning technologies**
		• **Effective preparation and management of tutors and teaching teams**
		• Leadership in curriculum development and design.
		• Development of significant curriculum materials
		• Benchmarking of a unit or course against similar units/courses
			Meets the requirements for Level C and
			
			• Leadership in effective curriculum development at a program level
			• **Contribution to the teaching or curriculum and/or discipline at a national level**
			• External expert peer review of unit/course materials /curriculum/initiative
			• curriculum
			• Adoption of learning materials by other universities
			• Nomination for a teaching award for curriculum contribution
				Meets the requirements for Level D and
				
				• **Leadership role and impact in curriculum design and review, planning and/or development at a (inter) national level**
				• Significant curriculum or disciplinary contribution through published student learning materials/textbooks
				• **Leadership in mentoring and supporting colleagues in planning and designing learning activities and curriculum**

Indicative Evidence • Unit/course outline and materials				

The AUTCAS website

http://uniteachingcriteria.edu.au

Why not have this clarity of criteria and standards for **research** and **engagement**?

Indicative research criteria

1. Expertise in research area, relevant methodologies and ethical project management
2. Discovery, innovation and creative work culminating in original contribution to discipline
3. Effective research income generation strategies and strategies for capacity building through collaborations and shared infrastructure
4. Communication through high quality publications and networking that enhances research reputation and esteem
5. Knowledge transfer and partnerships that build economic, social or environmental sustainable development
6. Effective leadership, mentoring and supervision
7. Influence and impact on the academic and broader national/international community

Indicative Service criteria

1. High standards of professional behaviour and contribution to the development of a collegial and supportive working environment
2. Professional leadership through contribution to university governance and policy development
3. Service to the discipline/profession/community

Benefits for teachers

- Clarify expectations for different levels of appointment (teachers and supervisors)
- Plan for career development – identify gaps and opportunities
- Guide performance review and professional development planning
- Apply for positions in other universities, overseas universities
- Prepare an application for promotion
- Identify a broader range and sources of evidence to inform on student learning and engagement
- Evaluate personal effectiveness
- Other….

Importance for faculties

- **Critical to align HR, appointment, review and promotion expectations policies and processes**
- A tool to clarify expectations and set indicative standards for teaching criteria for teachers AND their supervisors
- Setting standards and evidence requires consultation within each university and discipline
- Training in its application by supervisors, Heads of Schools and promotion panels is critical
- Needs to be a long term strategy with consistent message from leadership
- Teaching achievements need to be recognised and celebrated publically and on aa par with research

Support for Institutions (Fellowship)

THE UNIVERSITY OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA

A “College of Peers” for the external review of promotion applications/teaching portfolios

- Identify individuals who have expertise in a range of different aspects of teaching and learning - teaching and learning methodologies, strategies, scholarship, elearning, curriculum, leadership, from range of disciplines
- Exploring ideas to establish a “College of Peers” to form a network of external peer reviewers of teaching who are **trained** to review against institutional and/or external criteria.
- Establish a trial for proof of concept

Contact

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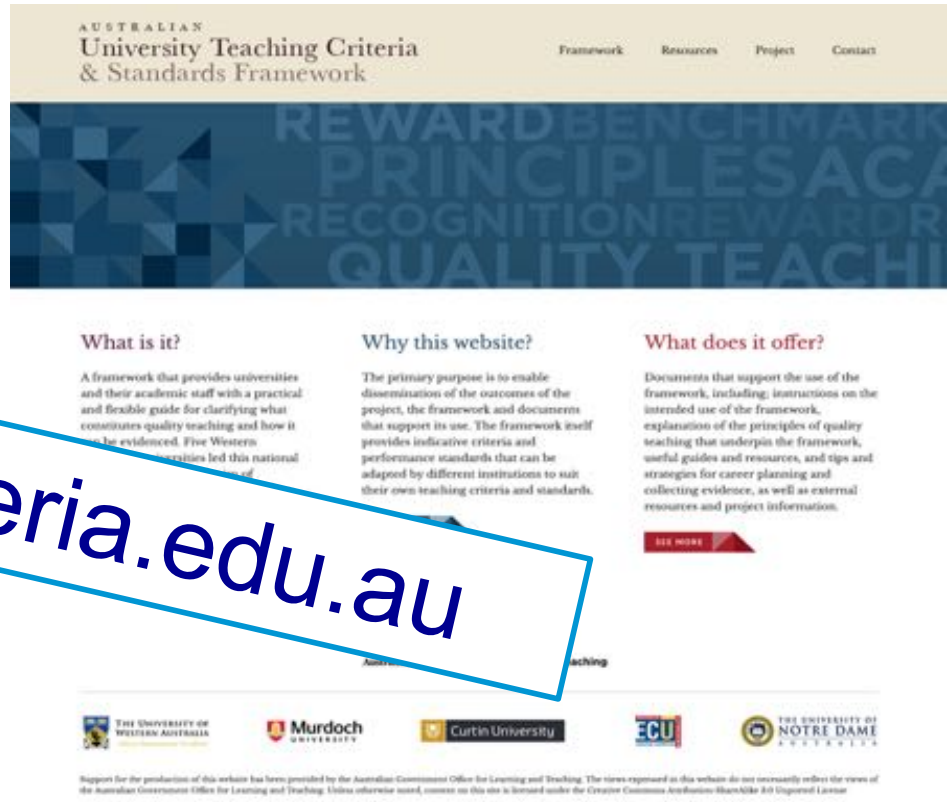
http://uniteachingcriteria.edu.au



AUTCAS Project team

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