

To: UFC

From: Harold Olivey and Steve Sanders
Co-chairs, Faculty Affairs Committee

Date: April 5, 2022

Re: Student teaching evaluations

In April 2020, a joint task force of the UFC and the Academic Leadership Council issued a report that examined alternatives to the current student course evaluation system. It summarized research showing that numerical ratings often reflect gender, ethnic, and other cultural biases, and recommended that policies on teaching be amended to encourage a shift away from the use of quantitative evaluations and toward greater use of qualitative student input and peer review.

The UFC Faculty Affairs Committee has considered how best to implement the recommendations of the task force with three guiding principles:

1. Student course evaluations are an important source of input on teaching.
2. Numerical ratings often reflect biases, and also tend to have poor response rates, and thus their use should be minimized.
3. Each campus and unit should have the autonomy to create their own policy and procedure for reducing the bias associated with numerical ratings and facilitating the evaluation of teaching through qualitative student feedback, teaching reflection, and peer review.

Accordingly, the Faculty Affairs Committee moves that the UFC approve the accompanying set of policy amendments (proposed new language indicated in red) and the accompanying resolution transmitting the Task Force report to academic units and campus governance bodies.