

Senate Committee on Teaching Evaluation

Progress Report – Activities to Date

November – May 2026 & September 2026

The Senate Committee on Teaching Evaluation was established to explore alternative holistic approaches to teaching evaluation that could be implemented at UPEI. The committee's mandate is to identify and recommend approaches that support a more comprehensive and equitable assessment of teaching effectiveness. As part of this work, the committee is gathering feedback from members of the campus community, including students, faculty, and academic administrators. Since its formation in November 2025, the committee has met six times.

Activities Completed

Activity	Timeline / Date
Advertised and hired a graduate student to support the work of the committee.	Nov. – Dec. 2025
Student consultation (Phase 1): Focus group discussions with students to understand experiences with the current SOT process, including its strengths and limitations, meaningfulness and use of feedback, timing, fairness and bias, and alternative forms of student voice.	Phase 1 – Jan to April 2026
Qualitative analysis: The student FGD data were thematically analyzed to identify recurring perspectives and potential implications for the design of a future teaching-evaluation system.	Phase 1 – April to May 2026
Environmental scan: Review of teaching-evaluation approaches and relevant literature/institutional practices, including formative feedback, peer review/observation, self-reflection, teaching dossiers/portfolios and other sources of evidence.	Phase 1 – April 2026
Some committee activities were paused when a new chair needed to be appointed. This meant the window for phase two activities passed, and these activities had to be pushed to the fall semester.	March – April 2026
Knowledge dissemination: Let's Talk Teaching for Fall 2026 on Sept 17 was led by Dr. Natasha Kenny, Executive Director of the Taylor Institute for Teaching and Learning, University of Calgary. She introduced a research-informed framework for conceptualizing, assessing and developing teaching expertise and considering its application at UPEI. A recording of Dr. Kenny's keynote is available through the TLC's SharePoint site Let's-Talk-Teaching-with-Dr.-Natasha-Kenny(1).aspx Students, faculty and administrators interested in participating in one of the focus groups can indicate their interest here Senate Committee on Teaching Evaluation - Interest in Focus Group Participation – Fill out form	September 17, 2026

Phase 1 - Key Emerging Findings

- Student feedback remains an important component of teaching evaluation, but students identified limitations to relying on end-of-course SOTs alone.
- The perceived usefulness of feedback is strongly linked to whether students see it being used. Timing, feedback loops and opportunities for formative/ongoing feedback were recurring considerations.

- Students identified potential bias and contextual influences on evaluations, including factors related to identity, language, course difficulty, grading and instructor–student relationships. Anonymity and power dynamics were also important considerations.
- The environmental scan indicates that institutions and the broader literature are considering multiple sources and forms of evidence from students, peers, and colleagues’ reflections on their own teaching practice, rather than treating student ratings as a stand-alone measure of teaching effectiveness.
- The knowledge-dissemination session broadened the discussion from evaluating teaching to understanding and developing teaching expertise over time, including the role of institutional and faculty cultures, supports and processes.

Current Phase 2 Activities / Next Steps

- Share the recording from the Let’s Talk Teaching keynote with colleagues, students and administrators interested in learning more about ideas the committee is considering.
- Develop and conduct focus groups with faculty & administrators, including representation from different appointment types and teaching contexts, to explore instructor perspectives on teaching effectiveness, student feedback, bias/fairness, and potential holistic approaches.
- Develop a complementary student questionnaire for Phase 2 focus groups that builds on the Phase 1 findings and explores the role undergraduate and graduate students should play within a future holistic system.
- Integrate findings from the student consultations, environmental scan, knowledge-dissemination session and subsequent stakeholder focus group consultations to identify common principles, areas of divergence and potential models for UPEI.
- Use the combined evidence to inform recommendations for a holistic, fair, context-sensitive and feasible approach to teaching evaluation that retains meaningful student voice.

The committee is aiming to have some recommendations ready early in 2027.

Progress report submitted by:

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