

Memorandum of Agreement
William Paterson University (“The University”)
and
AFT Local 1796 (“the Union“)

Fall 2020 Peer Teaching Evaluations

In order to promote amicable employer-employee relations, the University and AFT Local 1796 agree to the procedures below regarding fall 2020 peer evaluations.

Under normal conditions, peer teaching evaluations are important, can help faculty in a formative manner, and are by policy, an integral part of the evaluation of faculty in terms of retention, tenure, and promotion opportunities. Given the pandemic, peer teaching observations present unique candidate equity and process deployment challenges in the following ways:

For some faculty, teaching online was not by choice, but a matter of circumstance, and with limited training.

For departments tasked with conducting peer teaching observations, the pool of faculty with substantive experience teaching online, and thus optimally positioned to conduct such observation, may be limited. Furthermore, faculty accommodations to teach remotely may preclude sufficient faculty to conduct on-campus peer teaching observations. The unevenness of this circumstance across departments creates varied burdens for deployment in an already challenging instructional circumstance.

Therefore, in order to address evaluative and observation load fairness, and to promote amicable employer-employee relations during the unique moment of the pandemic, the University and the Union agree to the following for the fall 2020 semester:

- Peer teaching evaluations are required for all first and second year faculty, as well as any adjunct faculty who have no prior peer teaching observations. The Administration also reserves the right to require peer evaluations of any pre-tenure or adjunct faculty member based on concerns raised in recent prior teaching evaluations.
- All other faculty have the option to seek a peer teaching observation for formative purposes, although not to be included in a portfolio for any summative evaluation. Accommodating a request for a formative peer teaching observation, however, may not be possible for the reasons noted above in the indented section.
- The Union agrees that they will propose a plan to the Administration on how peer teaching evaluation might deploy for all faculty for the spring 2020 semester in anticipation of the continuation of the pandemic and that addresses issues of equity and load burden. The plan that is ultimately adopted by mutual agreement would be communicated to all faculty and departments, anticipated by November 1, prior to the end of the fall semester.

Procedures for Deployment of Required Peer Teaching Evaluation – Fall 2020

1. Faculty who teach a regular face-to-face class will follow the regular in-person peer teaching observation process.
2. Faculty who were scheduled to teach online fall 2020 will follow the regular on-line peer teaching observation process associated with online courses.
3. Faculty teaching a mixed delivery course (i.e., some FTF and some online) will follow the regular peer teaching observation process but have the flexibility to decide which modality of their class they wish to have observed.
4. IRT will assist faculty in gaining access to conduct peer observations of online classes subsequent to approval by the faculty member being evaluated.