

Adopted: May 25, 2021

**ACADEMIC SENATE
Of
CALIFORNIA POLYTECHNIC STATE UNIVERSITY
San Luis Obispo, CA**

AS-920-21

RESOLUTION ON UFPP 8.2: OBSERVATION OF INSTRUCTION

Impact on Existing Policy: The policies in UFPP 8.2 supersede all prior university policies on observation of instruction.ⁱ

- 1 WHEREAS, University academic personnel policies are established by shared
2 governance and included in “University Faculty Personnel Policies”
3 (UFPP); and
4
- 5 WHEREAS, Various forms of virtual instruction will be among the standard modes
6 of instruction in academic year course offerings; therefore be it
7
- 8 RESOLVED: The policies included in the report “UFPP 8.2: Observation of
9 Instruction” be included in UFPP, and be it further
10
- 11 RESOLVED: Colleges and the Library revise their personnel policy documents as
12 and if necessary by Fall 2021 to include their implementation of the
13 policies in UFPP 8.2 in chapter 8 of their personnel policy documents.

Proposed by: Academic Senate Faculty Affairs Committee
Date: May 11, 2021

ⁱ (1) Describe how this resolution impacts existing policy on educational matters that affect the faculty. Examples include curricula, academic personnel policies, and academic standards.
(2) Indicate if this resolution supersedes or rescinds current resolutions.
(3) If there is no impact on existing policy, please indicate NONE.

8.2. Observation of instruction

- 8.2.1. As part of faculty evaluation processes faculty subject to evaluation shall have their instruction of their students observed by evaluators including department peer review committee (DPRC) members and/or department chairs/heads.
- 8.2.2. Observation of classes is an unobtrusive observation of the instructional environment for the class, which may include any of the following:
 - Classrooms, laboratories, studios or any location where classes are normally scheduled.
 - Online meetings of the class.
 - The current state of online instructional materials as students would encounter them.
- 8.2.3. Course materials rendered into items included in a faculty member's Working Personnel Action File (WPAF) are not equivalent to the instructional environment. Such materials in the WPAF should be carefully reviewed by evaluators, but such review is not an alternative to observation of the instructional environment.
- 8.2.4. Per CBA 15.14, class observation requires at least five (5) calendar-day notice of observation coordinated between candidate and evaluator.
- 8.2.5. Observation of synchronous virtual distance learning conducted in regularly scheduled virtual class sessions may be conducted by attendance of the evaluator of the virtual class session, or, if mutually agreeable between the instructor and evaluator, by the viewing of a recording of a virtual class session.
- 8.2.6. Observation of Asynchronous Online Instruction**
- 8.2.6.1. Observation of asynchronous online instruction should be conducted within a predetermined timeframe established by consultation between the instructor and the evaluator.
- 8.2.6.2. The evaluator should observe the current instructional environment as students would see it. Evaluators should be granted access to the instructional environment in a mode equivalent to the way students encounter the class and not as the instructor encounters the instructional environment.
- 8.2.6.3. The instructor may provide the evaluator a guided tour of the instructional environment, and this guided tour may be prerecorded and made available to multiple evaluators. The instructor may grant the evaluator limited access to the online environment of the course so the evaluator may see how students encounter the course on a given occasion for accessing the online instructional environment (e.g. granting the evaluator "observer" status in the learning management system for a mutually agreeable period sufficient for the observation).
- 8.2.6.4. Other reasonable means of observing the online instructional environment may be negotiated by the instructor and evaluator.
- 8.2.7. Observation of classes taught in hybrid modalities may include observation of any number of the modalities of instruction.
- 8.2.8. Colleges shall specify in their personnel policy documents any further requirements or allowances about observation of teaching.

**Proposed University Faculty Personnel Policies:
UFPP 8.2: Observation of Instruction**

The Academic Senate Faculty Affairs Committee (FAC) is a standing Senate committee with representation from each college, the library and professional consultative services, Academic Affairs, and a student representative. FAC employs a streamlined process for Academic Senate approval of personnel policies including consultation with faculty affected by proposed changes and clear identification of which policy documents have been superseded by a proposed change. Using this process, FAC updates UFPP on an as-needed basis.

FAC proposes to the Senate individual chapters or subchapters of UFPP, each covered by its own Senate resolution. FAC may also recommend that the Senate Executive Committee place non-controversial updates to personnel policies on the Senate consent agenda.

FAC is proposing policies pertaining to observation of instruction as a subchapter of UFPP 8: Evaluation of Teaching and Professional Services. These policies concern observation of instruction in general with a specific focus of observation of classes conducted in whole or in part in various virtual online modalities.

Summary of 8.2: Observation of Instruction

The policies proposed here are derived from ad hoc policies applied to evaluations in AY 2020-21. Those policies addressed the need for guidance about evaluation of instruction given the forced shift to emergency virtual distance learning. Those ad hoc policies included various exceptions for observation of teaching and minimal expectations for quality of virtual instruction. Those ad hoc policies were only in effect through AY 2020-21, and now we need appropriately revised permanent policies about the observation of instruction including various virtual online instructional modalities.

The policies provided here are more forward looking given the inevitable place of various forms of virtual instruction in normal operations in the coming academic years. These policies provide accommodations for observation of instruction for the full scope of instructional modalities, all conforming with contract requirements for observation of classes.

These policies define classroom observation and distinguish it from collections of class materials included in the WPAF. The requirements and recommendations concerning observation of virtual online instruction are easily adaptable to the current use of Canvas as our campus-supported learning management system. The various requirements and allowances for observation of instruction are adaptable to the variety of in-person and virtual instructional modalities and any hybrid of them.

Impact on Existing Policy

Policies in UFPP supersede any conflicting college or department policies. Colleges and departments wishing to implement additional policies on observation of instruction need to place those policies in chapter 8 of their personnel policy documents.

**Proposed University Faculty Personnel Policies:
UFPP 8.2: Observation of Instruction**

Implementation

The establishment of UFPP by the Academic Senate obliges the Colleges and Library to restructure their faculty personnel policy documents into the same chapter division as UFPP. When the Academic Senate approves changes to UFPP and when those changes are ratified by the President, the Colleges and the Library will now have a focused area of revised policy that they must consult and, if necessary, use to revise their documents accordingly.

If approved in Spring these policies would go into effect for evaluations in the AY 2021-22 cycle. Colleges and departments would need to update their personnel policies with any citations of UFPP policies or statements of additional policies in conformity with UFPP 8.2 ahead of AY 2021-22.

Consultation with Faculty Units about UFPP

When proposing personnel policies, FAC consults with faculty units about the proposed change so the faculty units may offer feedback on the proposal. FAC then considers this feedback when revising the proposed policy and sending it to the Senate.

For these proposals feedback from the colleges will be gathered as the proposal also enters the Senate workflow. Feedback from the colleges can be directed to FAC or channeled through Senators as the policy undergoes standard Senate review.

The policies proposed under this resolution have been revised based on feedback from Senators and the CFA leadership while these policies have been in the Senate workflow. Additional policies about guidance in the evaluation of virtual instruction that were in the first draft of this proposal needed additional development, and also needed to be implemented in Fall 2022 instead of Fall 2021 when the requirement of curricular review of online modalities is again required by the Senate as per AS-903-20, and so they have been deleted from this proposal.

What follows is the proposed text of the policy...



OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

MEMORANDUM

To: Thomas Gutierrez
Chair, Academic Senate

Date: June 7, 2021

From: Jeffery D. Armstrong
President

Copies: Cynthia Jackson-Elmoore
Al Liddicoat
Amy Fleischer
Andy Thulin
Christine Theodoropoulos
Dean Wendt
Philip Williams
Adriana Popescu
Kathryn Rummell
Bruno Giberti
Ken Brown

Subject: Response to AS-920-21 Resolution on University Faculty Personnel Policies (UFPP)
8.2: Observation of Instruction

I am pleased to endorse the above-entitled Academic Senate resolution. Colleges as well as the library are encouraged to revise their personnel policy documents to align with subchapter 8.2, of the University Faculty Personnel Policies (UFPP) as outlined in this resolution and supporting documentation with a minor caveat to the last resolved clause:

Although this university policy is effective fall 2021, and it governs college and department policies, the colleges and the library should be allowed additional time to comply as needed given the timing of the resolution's passage.

Please express my appreciation to the Academic Senate members and the Academic Senate Faculty Affairs Committee for their attention to this important matter.