**Faculty Senate Executive Committee Recommendation for Spring 2020 Faculty Teaching Evaluations**

The University of Arkansas-Fayetteville Faculty Senate Executive Committee in partnership with Administration officials have expressed concerns about how the current COVID-19 pandemic may affect the faculty personnel review process, including how Spring 2020 student teaching evaluations will be used to evaluate faculty instructors, especially pre-tenure or pre-promotion faculty.

Presently, many faculty and their students are experiencing emotional and psychological stress related to the rapid and unexpected transition to online teaching beginning in March. Moreover, successful online teaching requires considerable experience and training and cannot be mastered in the extremely limited time frame faculty were required to transition their courses to fully online platforms. Even prior to the COVID 19 crisis, the Faculty Senate issued an earlier statement citing increasing evidence of the lack of any direct correlation between student teaching evaluation ratings and student learning outcomes. In fact, the new version APS 1405.11, although requiring student evaluations in the annual review process, also requires that evaluation of teaching effectiveness include another indicator beyond student evaluations.

Although we recognize that campus policy 1405.11, Board of Trustees policy 405.1 section v.a.6 and AHEB policy requires student evaluations to be part of a faculty member’s annual evaluations and that Arkansas State Law requires that students be asked to evaluate the English Fluency of the instructor, we also recognize that this is an extraordinary time.

The University needs to implement a student teaching evaluation process in Spring 2020 that satisfies existing university policy, Board of Trustees policy, ADHE policy and Arkansas state law, and we also need to give our students the opportunity to provide faculty with transparent and useful feedback, especially as it relates to the transition of the faculty member’s course to a fully-online platform.

Due to the extraordinary circumstances of the Spring 2020 semester, ***we strongly recommend that the Spring 2020 student teaching evaluations be used exclusively to provide instructive/developmental feedback to a faculty member for a course that was abruptly changed to a fully online delivery mode.*** **And, we also strongly recommended that Spring 2020 student teaching evaluations not be used punitively to negatively influence faculty employment decisions, including advancement, promotion, or tenure.**  The Spring 2020 student feedback derived from course evaluations will further assist faculty instructors in identifying what was effective as well as aspects of the course that need or could benefit from additional improvement.