

# Recommendations of the Task Team for the Promotion and Recognition of Teaching

15 April 2015

## Executive summary

This report was produced by a task team appointed by the Vice-Rector (Teaching and Learning [T&L]) and convened by Prof Anton Basson with the overall purpose of developing institutional guidelines for the promotion, recognition and reward of good teaching at SU. The report makes broad recommendations and offers some examples of what environments can do to promote teaching and learning; however, it remains the prerogative of each environment to decide on options for implementation and to identify the ways in which the institution can support them in their endeavours.

**Objectives:** The recommendations aim to contribute to an institutional culture that:

- Encourages good teaching, which is teaching that facilitates effective, active learning and, at the same time, requires an affordable level of resources, also taking the requirements of research and community interaction into account.
- Encourages all teaching staff to practise good teaching.
- Promotes the recognition of excellent teaching and the achievements of those staff members who choose to specialise (to various extents) in research in T&L.

**Contextual differences:** Due to the varied contexts of the different faculties, and even within some faculties, the recommendations given in this document have to leave sufficient scope for adaptation in each context.

**The task team recommends:**

- **Peer review and 360° evaluation:** The scope of a 360° evaluation of a staff member's teaching, and therefore also peer review of teaching, should be tailored to the particular review objective (e.g. formative feedback, annual performance appraisals, promotions or awards).
- **Career pathways:** Teaching staff can choose, within the constraints of their faculty context, to what extent they wish to focus their research and career development on the teaching of their discipline.
- **T&L hubs:** Each faculty should form a T&L hub as a central focus on teaching that generates interest, energy, guidance and leadership.
- **Professional development of teaching:** Teaching research opportunities (as a specific category within existing research opportunities) should be introduced. Teaching fellowships and teaching research funding (FIRLT)

should be maintained. The judicious use of teaching portfolios should be supported and teaching portfolios should be used as submissions for university-wide recognition and as contributors to professional development nationally.

- **Annual performance appraisal:** Teaching should form part of annual performance appraisal processes of all academic staff who are involved in teaching. Each faculty should develop its own methods of appraising staff members' teaching in accordance with the principles given in this document, but also with due regard for the variety of contexts in the faculty.
- **Promotions and appointments:** A summary of all activities, including teaching, should be submitted to the Appointments Committee of Senate as part of the person's abbreviated CV, since staff members' whole range of duties have to be considered when assessing their performance and suitability for promotion. A set of tables for summarising teaching is proposed.
- **Recognising teaching excellence:** A number of dedicated internal institutional and external awards should be used that specifically acknowledge teaching achievements, with the HELTASA awards as an important point of reference.

The task team finally recommends that, if the Senate supports the task team's recommendations:

- Faculties and support services should present plans at the winter Institutional Planning Forum (IBF), as part of their Environment Plans (*Omgewingsplanne*), to implement the recommendations of the task team, within the context of the University's vision and faculty-specific requirements.
- Faculties should submit proposals to the Senate's Committee for Learning and Teaching (CLT; Afrikaans: KLO), where additional university-wide support to implement the recommendations should be considered.
- The Senate's Committee for Learning and Teaching (KLO) should periodically monitor the implementation of the recommendations.

To aid in the implementation of the recommendations, the entities responsible for implementing the recommendations are summarised here (the number of the relevant section is given first; where support services should initiate actions, the appropriate entity is indicated):

### **Faculties**

- 5.3 consider how best to promote teaching in its context by providing for a range of suitable pathways
- 5.4 form a T&L hub
- 5.5.1 include teaching research within the scope of research opportunity, with the usual application process and the usual conditions

- 5.5.3 consider using teaching portfolios as part of staff development processes
- 5.6 develop own methods of appraising staff members' teaching in accordance with the given principles, but also with due regard for the variety of contexts in the faculty
- 5.7.1 adapt the revised procedures of the Senate Appointments Committee for promotions and appointments, as needed for junior levels
- 5.7.2 for promotions and appointments, develop faculty-specific criteria related to teaching
- 5.8.1 make winners (individuals or teams) of teaching excellence awards known widely and invite them to present their work at faculty events
- 6 submit proposals to the Senate Committee for Learning and Teaching (KLO), where additional university-wide support to implement the recommendations should be considered

### **Support services**

- 5.5.2 CTL: continuation of teaching fellowships, managed by a committee set up for this purpose by the Vice-Rector: Teaching and Learning
- 5.5.3 CTL: support the judicious use of teaching portfolios through workshops, the development of examples, etc.
- 5.5.4 CTL: ring-fence current FIRLT (*FINLO*) funding to support research into T&L; the allocation of such funding should be linked to research outputs
- 5.7.1 HR: Revise templates for Senate Appointments Committee, ASK(S), to include a summary of all activities, including teaching, as part of the person's abbreviated CV
- 5.7.2 HR: Revise AP0045 – Guidelines for appointment and promotion of lecturers
- 5.8.1 CTL: make winners (individuals or teams) of teaching excellence awards known widely and invite them to present their work at institutional events
- 5.8.2 CTL: develop a guideline for the format and contents of submissions for institution-wide teaching awards
- 6 VR(T&L): Senate's Committee for Learning and Teaching (KLO) should periodically monitor the implementation of the recommendations
- 6 VR(T&L): copies of these recommendations should be distributed to all teaching staff and the relevant support services

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## Preface

This report is informed by the Stellenbosch University *Strategy for Teaching and Learning 2014-2018* and aligns particularly with Section 3.2, which states that:

*For the University to support graduates to becoming enquiring, engaged, dynamic and well-rounded, the teaching and learning arrangements of the University, as well as the arrangements governing all aspects of the student experience, need to be aligned to such a vision. The following is required to achieve this:*

### 3.2.1 Critical and scholarly lecturers

*For SU to provide the maximum in opportunities for students to engage appropriately in a research-infused and enquiry-based learning experience, requires lecturers who are role models, leaders, experts, partners and facilitators. They are critical scholars, enquiring into their own disciplines and into the scholarship of teaching and learning. They are reflective and open to critique about their practice. The education context needs to provide conditions in which lecturers may flourish, and share their curiosity with their students.*

...

This document aims to contribute to realising this vision. The proposals are aligned with the action plan for "The professionalisation of the scholarly teaching role" in Addendum A of the Strategy.

## 1 Introduction

### 1.1 Task team

These recommendations were produced by the following task team, appointed by the Vice-Rector (Teaching and Learning): Prof Anton Basson (convenor), Prof Arnold Schoonwinkel, Prof Christine Anthonissen, Prof Marietjie de Villiers, Prof Ronel du Preez, Prof Geo Quinot, Dr Cecilia Jacobs, Ms Almene Potgieter, Ms Melanie Petersen (in 2014) and Ms Liezl Rabie (in 2015).

- The terms of reference of the task team included the following:
- Provide the faculties with the output document from the previous task team and solicit their comments.
- Devise a refined and practical institutional document on promotions and appraisals of good teaching at SU.
- In particular, develop institutional guidelines for the promotion, recognition and reward of good teaching at SU.
- Develop a new system to measure teaching quality and improvement across faculties.

- Consider which key principles in the CHE-HELTASA rubric for assessing excellence in teaching can be incorporated in the SU guideline.

## 1.2 Process followed

A previous task team compiled a report titled "Report of the Task Team for the Promotion and Recognition of Good Teaching", dated 12 December 2013. The members of the previous task team were Prof B Leibowitz (convenor), Prof E Bitzer, Prof J de Swardt, Prof M de Villiers, Dr C Jacobs and Prof L Opara. Using the report of the previous task team as a point of departure, the new task team formulated the recommendations contained in this report. These recommendations comprise broad suggestions and some examples of what environments can do to promote teaching and learning; however, it remains the prerogative of each environment to decide on options for implementation.

The Task Team met on 22 May, 29 July, 1 September, 17 September and 26 September 2014, and on 12 March 2015. Faculties were invited on 6 June 2014 to comment on the report produced by the previous task team, and comments were received from all faculties. The faculty comments and the report of the previous task team were consolidated by the Task Team, leading to a set of recommendations that were tabled at a meeting of the Senate Committee for Learning and Teaching on 9 October 2014. The Committee approved that the faculties and the Senate Appointments Committee be asked to comment on the recommendations and provide feedback by 29 November 2014. Feedback was received from all faculties and the task team accordingly revised the recommendations, which resulted in the present set of recommendations.

## 2 Background

### 2.1 Context

In order to promote scholarly teaching, a process of change management needs to be undertaken. From research<sup>1</sup> undertaken at Stellenbosch University it was evident that academics generally felt that there are enough opportunities to enhance their teaching practice. Overall they expressed satisfaction with the quality of these opportunities; however, they raised some concerns about relevance, which suggests the need for more targeted activities, e.g. of a faculty/discipline-specific nature.

By far the overriding concerns, however, were related to time, and the (lack of) stature for teaching and learning (T&L). If the university is serious about enhancing scholarly teaching, it needs to create the necessary *structures* (e.g. ring-fenced time for people to complete short courses in T&L) AND shift the university *culture* around how teaching is valued. The latter is probably more difficult than the former, but implementing the recommendations of this task team can go a long way overall in addressing these concerns.

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<sup>1</sup> *Opportunities for professional development at Stellenbosch University: an institutional case study report* – Susan van Schalkwyk, Brenda Leibowitz, Nicoline Herman and Jean Farmer.

We need to have a shift both at the *structural level* (for example policies, strategies and task teams to support the recognition of good teaching), and the *cultural level* (where we start changing the nature of the discourse – which is much more difficult) by 'living' the policies and strategies. This requires that an appreciation of teaching is articulated at the senior level (for example, in the study it was interesting that senior managers seemed to really appreciate the challenges that university teachers experience, but that the perception of staff was that they do not care because there is no platform where these perspectives are being articulated). A VERY important space, however, is at the level of the departmental chairpersons. The study clearly showed that they are the people who really influence thinking in the faculties, and there needs to be a focus on engaging with people at this level on the stature of teaching.

## **2.2 Resources allocated to teaching**

Widespread concern was expressed in the faculties' comments about insufficient resources (such as teaching staff, support staff and classroom infrastructure) allocated to teaching. These concerns were evident in the perceptions of teaching staff that the high (and apparently ever-increasing) workload experienced by teaching staff:

- prevents effective teaching in some contexts;
- impedes innovation and renewal of teaching;
- will not be relieved by acknowledging good teaching;
- is incompatible with the simultaneous requirement for remedial education (due to shortcomings of the school system) and world-class education; and
- creates the impression amongst some staff that the University management does not give sufficient priority to the quality and status of teaching.

In addition to human resources, the provision and maintenance of physical infrastructure (such as sufficient classrooms and reliably functioning data projectors) has a direct impact on the quality and effectiveness of teaching.

The high workload experienced by staff should, however, be considered in the context of the reduction (in real terms) of government subsidies per student and the increase in costs external to the University.

Therefore, the University as a whole (management and teaching staff) must strive to balance its endeavours to improve T&L, with the challenges of allocating its limited resources in an equitable and sustainable way.



### 3 Objectives

The recommendations aim to contribute to an institutional culture that:

- a) Encourages good teaching, which is teaching that
  - facilitates effective, active learning, i.e. learning that leads to high student success<sup>2</sup> rates and achieving outcomes (of modules and programmes) at a high standard;

and, at the same time,

  - requires an affordable level of resources (such as staff time, student time and physical infrastructure), also taking the requirements of research and community interaction into account.
- b) Encourages all teaching staff to practise good teaching
  - by drawing on their own and/or previously published teaching research; and
  - by using an appropriate range of personal development opportunities (e.g. faculty-based workshops, seminars and/or formal qualifications)
  - aimed at both effective learning and affordable resource requirements.
- c) Promotes and rewards the recognition of excellent teaching and the achievements of those staff members who choose to specialise in research in T&L, from scholarly teaching through to becoming a teaching scholar<sup>3</sup>. Excellent teaching is teaching that:
  - Includes all the elements of good teaching;
  - Has an influence beyond the classroom, providing a role model for others in teaching at departmental, faculty, institutional and even broader levels ;
  - Is grounded in a deep reflection on the theories and philosophies that underpin T&L practices;
  - Draws on and contributes to research on teaching in particular disciplines;
  - Provides clear and meaningful access to knowledge;

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<sup>2</sup> Student success has been defined as: “not only whether students have earned a degree, but also whether graduates are in fact achieving the level of preparation—in terms of knowledge, capabilities, and personal qualities—that will enable them to both thrive and contribute in a fast-changing economy and in turbulent, highly demanding global, societal and often personal contexts” (Kuh 2008, cited in *Framework for Institutional Quality Enhancement in the Second Period of Quality Assurance*, January 2013).

<sup>3</sup> Van Schalkwyk, S., Cilliers, F., Adendorff, H., Cattell, K. and Herman, N. 2013 "Journeys of growth towards the professional learning of academics: understanding the role of educational development". *International Journal for Academic Development*, Vol 18 (2) pp 139-151.

- Demonstrates an awareness of the connect of – and need to connect – the knowledge base with the world diverse students come from and the world with which diverse students will interact; and
- Makes a demonstrated contribution to effective learning in a local, national and/or international context.

## 4 Principles

Two broad understandings of teaching (and learning) underpin educational discourse in South Africa, viz. individual and social:

- Individualised views of teaching (and learning), which appear to be the dominant view in South Africa, see teaching (and learning) as an autonomous endeavour, a set of skills, independent of the social context in which it takes place.
- Social views of teaching (and learning), by contrast, see teaching (and learning) as being shaped by the very contexts in which such teaching (and learning) takes place.

In formulating the recommendations, the task team adopted the following principles as point of departure:

### 4.1 A social view of teaching

Teaching is a practice that is deeply embedded in and shaped by the contexts in which it takes place. Good teaching is not merely a set of skills, tips or strategies decontextualised from the social spaces in which they occur.

### 4.2 Promotion and recognition of teaching

- a) Good teaching is the responsibility of every academic who teaches at SU, while teaching excellence is the object of recognition and reward (see Section 3c for criteria to identify excellent teaching).
- b) The recognition of excellent teaching inspires other academics and should lead to the mentorship of other academics by excellent teachers.
- c) The recognition and reward of good teaching must be done in ways that are transparent, consistent and fair.
- d) The promotion of good and excellent teaching requires
  - academic leadership in teaching (this typically includes assigning this role to a senior academic in each faculty); and
  - the allocation of resources (including management time, staff time and funding) at various levels.

### 4.3 Teaching, research and other roles in balance

- a) The promotion of good teaching should be pursued in balance with other roles, including research and community service.

- b) Both teaching and research should be evaluated during performance reviews and promotions. The importance given to each should be aligned with the person's work allocation in the period under review.
- c) Good teaching, particularly in the later years of educational programmes, is built on discipline-related expertise, which is developed in discipline-related research. Therefore, the teaching undertaken by members of staff should be in disciplinary areas related to their research, and all teaching staff should be involved in some level of disciplinary research. Appointments and promotion to associate professor and higher levels normally require a research track record, such as evidenced by peer-reviewed publications. At least some of the research should be in the person's discipline, but it can also include research related to the scholarly teaching of the particular discipline.
- d) There should be a continuum of career pathways for lecturers, with varying degrees of focus on disciplinary research and research into the scholarly teaching of the discipline.

#### **4.4 Criteria for evaluating teaching**

- a) Criteria for evaluating teaching should
  - be clear, transparent and widely communicated;
  - allow for contextual differences, such as an applied approach, diverse and specialised fields, class sizes, etc.;
  - take account of the various instances where teaching is evaluated (such as during performance appraisals, appointments, promotions, university-wide awards and external awards);
  - be aligned (to produce consistent results), but also tailored to the particular context (an evaluation that is appropriate in one context may be too cumbersome in another); and
  - incorporate both quantitative (e.g. the scope of teaching activities) and qualitative measures (e.g. peer review and student feedback).
- b) The evaluation of a complex activity such as teaching cannot be reduced to the simplistic use of quantitative data (such as using an average score from student feedback as the primary means of evaluating teaching quality).

#### **4.5 Support services**

Although the focus in the recommendations is on teaching staff, the principle that the support services also play a key role in developing good teaching practices is important. For example, good teaching relies on

- the provision of well-maintained and appropriate facilities;
- collaboration with support services in order to facilitate student learning in a holistic sense;

- professional learning opportunities and mentoring provided by support services; and
- efficient teaching-related administration.

## **5 Recommendations**

### **5.1 Contextual differences**

Due to the varied contexts of the different faculties, and even within some faculties, which strongly influence the application of the above principles, the recommendations given in this document have to leave sufficient scope for adaptation in each context. Even though the task team endeavoured to formulate recommendations that can be applied consistently in all faculties, the necessity to allow for contextual differences prevents providing highly detailed recommendations. Where examples are given in the recommendations, they should be considered to be illustrative and not prescriptive.

### **5.2 Peer review and 360° evaluation**

The old adage “what you measure is what you get” also applies to the promotion and recognition of teaching. It therefore is important to formulate evaluations for teaching that will encourage good teaching (as defined in Section 3) in general and excellent teaching where possible. However, the complexity (and corresponding resources required) involved in evaluating a complex activity like teaching has to be balanced with the value derived from the evaluation.

As with research, the purpose of peer review is to provide input when evaluating teaching quality. Ideally, peer review should be used with student feedback and evaluations by line managers, departmental chairpersons and even support staff in the department to provide a 360° evaluation of a staff member's teaching.

The scope of a 360° evaluation, and therefore also of peer review, should be tailored to the particular evaluation objective (e.g. formative feedback, annual performance appraisals, promotions or awards). For example, peer review for evaluating teaching as part of regular performance reviews will typically involve much less effort than when considering a staff member's suitability for promotion or when student representatives have lodged significant complaints about a staff member's teaching. A faculty may even decide to limit peer review for regular performance reviews to the normal internal and external moderation processes, unless there are specific reasons for using a more comprehensive process for a particular staff member (e.g. for newly appointed staff).

External peer review can form part of a 360° evaluation of a staff member or of a whole department's teaching. Feedback from external moderators and examiners is a readily available form of external peer review and could be considered even for regular performance appraisals.

Due to the wide range of teaching contexts encountered in the University, the task team cannot prescribe any particular format for 360° evaluation or peer review. The task team recommends, however, that the format used in the faculty be developed in consultation with the teaching staff (to ensure the maximum

level of “buy in”), employing the advice of the Centre for Teaching and Learning and the experience of other faculties. In most faculties, 360° evaluation and peer review of teaching will be new and it therefore can be expected that the practical implementation will evolve as experience is gained.

As mentioned in Section 4, on principles, evaluating teaching should always take the circumstances of the particular staff member into account, in addition to the faculty context. For example, the scope of teaching duties assigned to the staff member in relation to the scope of other responsibilities (e.g. research, programme coordination, management duties, etc.) should always be taken into account when evaluating teaching.

Student feedback is normally one of the important inputs in a 360° evaluation, but the feedback must always be subjected to critical interpretation. For example, highly positive feedback from students will in some cases indicate poor teaching, such as “spoon feeding” students or spending excessive resources on teaching, while in other cases it will be an indication of excellent teaching. Considering student feedback should therefore not be reduced to a single number.

The formative value of peer review and other aspects of 360° evaluation is significant. The task team recommends that faculties provide staff members with opportunities to obtain such feedback on a voluntary basis to the extent that is affordable.

### **5.3 Career pathways**

Teaching staff can choose, within the constraints of their faculty's context, to what extent they wish to focus their research and career development on the teaching of their discipline. The following examples illustrate the spectrum of career pathways (note that the examples are not exhaustive, nor prescriptive):

In all faculties there is scope for staff members to make a considerable contribution to researching the teaching of their disciplines, but in most cases their research focus is on the disciplinary knowledge base. These staff members are expected to develop their teaching by attending at least the year-long PREDAC programme, as well as faculty-based teaching development opportunities, but they are also encouraged to participate in other events such as University-wide development opportunities and regional university seminars.

For staff members who wish to pursue a pathway beyond the aforementioned and devote an increasing part of their research to the teaching of their discipline, there is FIRTL (FINLO) funding for small-scale T&L research projects, and the opportunity to present papers at teaching-related conferences (such as the in-house SoTL conference and the national HELTASA conference), or to publish research papers in journals on discipline-related teaching.

Staff members who wish to focus a large part, and even all, of their research on the teaching of the discipline would typically be candidates for teaching fellowships (institutional and national), and teaching-related research may form part of their plans for research leave, even leading to formal qualifications in teaching and learning, such as the regionally offered Postgraduate Diploma in

T&L in HE, or the MPhil in Health Sciences Education. In some cases, such a staff member may hold a position as a teaching specialist and supervise postgraduate students' research in aspects of teaching and learning. In the latter cases, the level of appointment typically would be indicative of their stature, with persons appointed at the professor level having the stature of a national leader in teaching the discipline and playing a significant faculty-wide, or even University-wide, role.

It should be noted that the availability of positions, where teaching the discipline is the primary research focus, depends on the faculty context.

The task team recommends that each faculty considers how best to promote teaching in its context by providing for a range of suitable pathways. The task team also recommends that staff interested in following a research career predominantly focusing on teaching should discuss these interests with members of the faculty management responsible for teaching.

#### **5.4 Developing teaching and learning hubs in every faculty**

The development and support of T&L hubs (Afrikaans "L&O-spil") is seen as an important mechanism to promote good teaching and to create a critical mass of academics with a particular focus on the issue of T&L. Some, but not all, faculties already have such hubs.

A hub is understood as a central focus on teaching that generates interest, energy, guidance and leadership. The hub could take various forms, depending on the context of the particular faculty. Hubs could also be clustered across faculties that have common T&L environments, and across smaller faculties.

The task team recommends that each faculty should form a hub consisting of the following:

- a leadership position in faculty management (such as a deputy dean for teaching, but could also be in other forms);
- a champion/expert in teaching in each organisational unit (departments, divisions, centres or programmes);
- a CTL advisor partially dedicated to each faculty; and
- a faculty structure dedicated to teaching matters.

The task team recommends that the hub should initiate, coordinate and promote:

- regular activities that foster interest and faculty development in scholarly teaching, such as teaching fora, journal clubs, academic meetings, workshops and seminars, short courses, sharing-of-practice sessions, etc.;
- participation in University-wide or inter-university conferences and workshops focusing on T&L; and
- the monitoring and implementation of the faculty's T&L action plans.

## 5.5 Professional development related to the scholarship of teaching

### 5.5.1 Teaching research opportunity

There is strong support from faculties to include teaching research opportunities (sabbaticals) as a way of promoting good T&L. These should not be in addition to the existing research opportunities, but comprise a specific category within it, and with the usual application process and the usual conditions applicable (e.g. based on merit, subject to deliverables, etc.). The awarding of a teaching research opportunity should be based on an agreement between the dean, the line manager and the applicant.

The T&L outputs for teaching research opportunities should be agreed upon upfront. Examples are:

- a completed postgraduate qualification, such as a PGDip in HE or a Master's degree in HE;
- a renewed, research-informed blended learning curriculum; or
- a set of T&L materials that incorporate innovative, research-informed teaching practices, etc.

### 5.5.2 Teaching fellowships

A University teaching fellowship is a prestigious scheme intended to provide the opportunity for excellent teachers, as well as scholars of T&L, to spend more consistent periods of time, with various forms of support, focusing on aspects of renewal, exploration and dissemination of good practice within departments and faculties. The successful candidate/s, who should have a proven track record of participation in T&L development opportunities, will remain in his/her/their department, but will focus on aspects of T&L that will enhance his/her/their teaching and contribute to the development of the scholarship of T&L in the department and faculty. The teaching fellowship will fund replacement staff for the teaching fellow.

Since the scheme is intended to enhance capacity across the University, the number of fellowship granted to any particular faculty at a given time will be limited. The project will be managed by a committee set up for this purpose by the Vice-Rector: Teaching and Learning.

The fellowships could focus on any aspect of learning and teaching, including macro-aspects such as the reconceptualisation of a programme, or more micro-aspects, such as how to reconceptualise assessment or the use of technology in a module, the development of innovative teaching materials, the embedding of graduate outcomes, investigative research into a T&L problem, programme evaluation, longitudinal tracking, etc.

The scope of the work or period planned for a teaching fellowship exceeds what can be accommodated in a teaching research opportunity.

### 5.5.3 Teaching portfolios

Within the context of promoting good teaching, a teaching portfolio is:

- a concise document presenting a teaching staff member's reflection and self-critical evaluation of his/her teaching, including **selected** samples of evidence; and
- a useful tool in the process of academic staff development that engages deep reflection on the philosophies that underpin their T&L practices.

A teaching portfolio, as considered here, is not a voluminous collection of module frameworks, lecture notes and assessment materials, but rather a selection of innovative practices and evidence of reflection on teaching.

The task team recommends that:

- the judicious use of teaching portfolios be encouraged and supported at an institutional level through, inter alia, workshops on the compilation and evaluation of teaching portfolios, and the development of examples, templates and e-portfolios;
- teaching portfolios be used when evaluating candidates for University-wide and national awards; and
- faculties consider using teaching portfolios as part of their staff development processes.

#### 5.5.4 Funding research on teaching

Building the scholarship of T&L is essential for advancing good teaching. Research into teaching therefore is of great importance, but traditionally this type of research is underfunded.

The task team recommends that dedicated funding, such as the current FIRLT (FINLO) funding, is ring-fenced by the university to support research into T&L, as a specific strategic measure to develop the status of T&L at SU.

The task team recommends that the allocation of such funding should be linked to research outputs.

### **5.6 Considering teaching during annual performance appraisal**

The task team recommends that:

- Teaching should form part of the annual performance appraisal processes of all academic staff who are involved in teaching.
- Encouraging staff to practise good teaching (as defined in the objectives) should be an important element of performance appraisals.
- Each faculty should develop its own methods of appraising staff members' teaching in accordance with the principles given below, but also with due regard for the variety of contexts in the faculty. Faculties should share experiences in this regard, since some faculties, such as Education and Engineering, already have developed appraisal methods that include many of the aspects mentioned here.
- A procedure to set weightings for teaching and other areas of performance for each staff member (taking into account the staff member's work allocation) should be determined by each faculty according to its context. It



must be clear how the appraisal of different aspects of teaching will be integrated to arrive at an overall appraisal, such as:

- the minimum number of functional areas in which a lecturer must report and on which s/he will be assessed;
- the minimum performance required in some areas (e.g. module administration);
- whether certain categories can be omitted (with prior agreement) for a specific person in a specific year; and
- how the staff member is “contracted” in advance for the outputs that will be assessed.

It should be noted that simple averaging of evaluation scores for the different functional areas normally will not give a reliable measure of the lecturer's teaching performance.

- To achieve consistency and transparency, departments (or corresponding organisational units) should adhere to their faculty's process and criteria.
- Each faculty, as it sees fit, should develop the ability of line managers to conduct performance appraisals (including teaching aspects) in a manner that is fair and consistent with the faculty's processes and criteria.

The task team further recommends that each faculty develop a customised set of appraisal criteria and means of collecting inputs for the appraisal. The following general principles should be adhered to:

- The criteria and inputs used for performance appraisals should be aligned with those for promotions and appointments. However, the scope and level of detail will be reduced significantly compared to that used for promotions to keep the administrative and management effort required to acceptable levels.
- Both quality of teaching (e.g. moderators' feedback) and quantity of teaching (e.g. number of lectures taught and assessments performed) should be taken into account when appraising a staff member's performance. The scope of a staff member's teaching responsibilities should also be taken into account when appraising other areas of performance (e.g. the number of research outputs).
- The considerations used to appraise teaching ideally should be comparable to those used in other areas of performance appraisal, such as research. For example, both quantity and quality of work should be considered for all areas.
- A 360° view of teaching performance (as outlined in Section 5.2) should be adopted in the performance appraisal process, to the extent that it is practicable in the particular faculty or department's context.

## 5.7 Considering teaching during promotions and appointments

### 5.7.1 Information presented for each candidate

In the proposals below, the process followed by the Senate Appointments Committee, ASK(S), was used as point of reference, i.e. the process that will be required for appointments of associate professors and higher levels. Faculties should adapt the procedures as needed for more junior levels, although the recommendations submitted by the ASK(S) subcommittee should contain at least similar considerations.

The task team recommends that a summary of all activities, including teaching, be submitted to the ASK(S) as part of the person's abbreviated CV, since a staff member's whole range of duties has to be considered when assessing their performance and suitability for promotion. Both the quantity and quality of the various elements of their work have to be considered.

The task team recommends that the following information be included in the abbreviated CVs presented to the ASK(S):

#### Qualifications

- Experience
- Academic management experience
- Teaching (in the format given in Appendix A)
- Research outputs (journals and conferences, reviewer for journals and conferences)
- Postgraduate supervision
  - Master's
  - Doctoral
- Community service
- Miscellaneous

### 5.7.2 Levels required for promotion

Since promotions and appointments must take the staff member's context into account, and contexts differ widely between faculties and even within faculties, it is not possible to set quantitative University-wide target values for performance measures. For example, the balance between a staff member's teaching and research duties will strongly influence what level of performance is expected in each of these areas when that person is considered for promotion. The Appointments Committee and its subcommittees will have to balance all the considerations. This section therefore gives only broad guidelines.

The teaching-related considerations typically should include the following minimum requirements (it should be noted that faculties could impose more stringent requirements or, in the case of staff members who would not be involved in teaching, could disregard teaching requirements):

- All levels:
  - Exhibits good communication and interpersonal skills;
  - Always delivers module administration on time and of high quality; and
  - Can maintain an effective teaching atmosphere in contact sessions.
- Junior lecturer:
  - Can teach a class group under direct supervision of a more senior staff member.
- Lecturer:
  - Can effectively and independently teach modules in undergraduate programmes; and
  - Has demonstrated professional development in T&L.
- Senior lecturer:
  - Can lead a team of lecturers for large class groups;
  - Can effectively and independently teach a class group at any level;
  - Can show interconnections between the module's subject matter and discipline-related research; and
  - Has demonstrated significant professional development in T&L.
- Associate professor (in addition to what is required at lower levels):
  - Can effectively and independently coordinate and manage an undergraduate or graduate programme;
  - Has an established research profile, with elements of national recognition, related to the faculty's disciplines and/or to scholarly teaching (a certain minimum level of disciplinary research may be required for most positions); and
  - Can make a contribution to leading and managing teaching in an organisational unit such as a research centre or department.
- Professor (in addition to what is required at lower levels):
  - Is a research leader, at national level, related to the faculty's disciplines and/or to teaching at an institutional level); and
  - Has made a substantial contribution to leading and managing teaching in an organisational unit such as a research centre or department, as well as at a national level.

The task team recommends that the impact of the above be taken into account when the following guideline is revised:

- AP0045 – Guidelines for appointment and promotion of lecturers

## 5.8 Other forms of recognising teaching excellence and related alignment

### 5.8.1 Forms of recognising and promoting teaching excellence

Excellence in teaching is institutionally recognised in a number of ways. Recognition during annual performance appraisal and recognition through promotions are set out above. Besides such embedded forms of rewarding excellent teaching, the task team recommends that a number of other, dedicated internal institutional and external awards that specifically acknowledge teaching achievements should be used. Examples at an institutional level include:

- Department- and faculty-specific awards (such as the annual Media24 awards in the Faculty of Economic and Management Sciences);
- Rector's Awards for First-year Lecturers nominated by top-performing students; and
- Newly instituted Vice-Chancellor's awards for teaching (as from 2014).

In addition, from time to time lecturers can be nominated for other awards that recognise higher education teaching excellence, such as the annual HELTASA (Higher Education Learning and Teaching Association of Southern Africa) National Excellence in Teaching and Learning Awards.

The task team further recommends that:

- The winners of teaching excellence awards should be made known widely to serve as encouragement and role models.
- The winners of teaching excellence awards should be invited to present their work at faculty and institutional events, where the quality of the teaching of individuals or teams can be showcased.

### 5.8.2 General guidelines

The task team recommends that:

- As a rule of thumb, a person who has been rewarded for excellence in teaching should not be eligible for the same award unless there has been significant further development in the person's teaching research and/or practice.
- Wherever possible, teams of teaching staff also should be considered when recognising teaching excellence, although the recommendations here are phrased in terms of individuals.
- There should be alignment between the different awards in terms of the criteria used to evaluate persons, and that the HELTASA National Excellence in Teaching and Learning Awards be used as a point of reference for internal awards.
- A guideline (ideally including examples and templates) should be compiled for the format and content of submissions for institution-wide teaching

awards and the HELTASA National Excellence in Teaching and Learning Awards.

The various kinds of evidence that a candidate for an award can present include (neither exclusively nor in every instance):

- a) the candidate's own exposition of his/her approach to teaching, underlying philosophy/ways of thinking about teaching, ideas and ideals to be materialised in his/her teaching activities (2-3 pages);
- b) the teaching and assessment methods, and how they are suited to and aligned with the particular course content and outcomes;
- c) evidence that the teaching and assessment methods resulted in good teaching (as defined in Section 3), for example
  - student success, i.e. measurable throughput at undergraduate and postgraduate level;
  - internal and external moderators' feedback;
  - peer review, e.g. confirming that the candidate set high, but realistic, expectations for students;
  - formal student feedback (noting, e.g., not only satisfaction, but also whether the students were challenged and engaged);
  - feedback by senior students or graduates who were previously taught by the staff member;
- d) an illustrative selection of the candidate's course outlines, course content, teaching support materials, forms of assessment, alignment between outcomes, activities and assessment, etc.;
- e) significant contributions to teaching materials, curriculum development (if allowed by the discipline), teaching methods or assessment in the candidate's discipline (within the department/faculty or at another institution);
- f) the candidate assuming responsibilities in departmental and/or institutional teaching-related committees;
- g) peer reviews in the form of reports from the departmental chairperson (or his/her representative), and/or an invited colleague in the same or a related discipline, and/or an expert in the field of tertiary teaching (e.g. a CTL representative, a designated colleague from the Education Faculty);
- h) teaching-related research, i.e. published or otherwise reported work that demonstrates scholarly engagement with the teaching of the lecturer's area(s) of specialisation.

## 6 Final recommendations

The task team considered the following issues to be outside its brief, but registers that:

- The direct linking of remuneration to performance appraisal should be reconsidered. Performance appraisal of teaching to a large extent relies on subjective measures and the cost of implementing more reliable measures (e.g. by combining extensive 360° evaluations over an extended period and by numerous participants) is prohibitive. Current perceptions amongst many teaching staff members, namely that one or two overall average numbers from student feedback have a strong influence when assessing their teaching, leads to teaching practices that please students, rather than effective learning.
- Promotion and recognition of good postgraduate student supervision should be pursued.
- Reflection on a common understanding of teaching at faculty and/or institutional level should be considered.

The task team finally recommends that, if Senate supports the task team's recommendations:

- Faculties and support services be asked to present plans at the winter Institutional Planning Forum (IBF) as part of their Environment Plans (*Omgewingsplanne*) to implement the recommendations of the task team
  - within the context of faculty-specific requirements,
  - within the context of the University's T&L strategy and other teaching-related policies and strategies (such as the Language Plan and the ICT strategy) and
  - while forming partnerships with the relevant support services.
- Faculties should submit proposals to Senate's Committee for Learning and Teaching (KLO), where additional University-wide support to implement the recommendations should be considered.
- The Senate's Committee for Learning and Teaching (KLO) should periodically monitor the implementation of the recommendations.
- The Vice-Rector (Learning and Teaching) should distribute copies of these recommendations to all teaching staff and the relevant support services.

## Appendix A: Summary of teaching for consideration by Senate Appointments Committee

Note: The aspects that are not relevant to a particular candidate should be left blank

<b>Contribution to academic management, programme coordination and development (if relevant for applicant)</b>
Assessment by departmental chair (or delegate):
Assessment by ..... (peer reviewer appointed by the Dean):
<b>Contribution to mentoring other teaching staff (if relevant for applicant)</b>
Assessment by departmental chair (or delegate):
Assessment by ..... (peer reviewer appointed by the Dean):

Qualitative aspects: Peer reviewers' assessments, taking the applicant's context (e.g. work allocation, seniority, available resources and budget) into account (where an item is not relevant or applicable, enter "n/a")								
Teaching effectiveness: Integrated student feedback	Teaching effectiveness: Achieving programme outcomes	Teaching effectiveness: Utilisation of lectures, tutorials, practicals	Teaching administration accuracy and timeliness	Curriculum development (aligned with programme outcomes; integrated discipline research)	Arranging student support, e.g. through student assistants, tutors, other resources	Teaching innovation with evaluation of effect on learning	Teaching-related research outputs	Own teaching skill development (e.g. attending workshops, obtaining qualifications in teaching)
For promotions: Assessment by departmental chair (or delegate): For appointments: Assessment by the appointments subcommittee*:								
Assessment by ..... (peer reviewer appointed by the Dean) after interview with staff member:								

\* For appointments, the applicant should be asked to report his/her relevant experience before the interview. The subcommittee uses this report, the interview and other available information (e.g. referee reports and talks presented by the applicant at or before the interview) to assess the applicant.



<b>Quantitative aspects*<sup>+</sup>: list all teaching for most recent 5 years (where an item is not relevant or applicable, enter "n/a")</b>									
<b>Module name</b>	<b>Year</b>	<b>Total class size</b>	<b>Group size taught by staff member</b>	<b>Responsibilities for management and/or coordination of module and other staff involved</b>	<b>Number of lectures presented</b>	<b>Number of tutorials/practicals prepared</b>	<b>Hours typically required to set and/or perform major assessments<sup>#</sup></b>	<b>Hours typically required to moderate assessments</b>	<b>Other contributions</b>

\* For appointments, the applicant should be asked to report his/her relevant experience before the interview.

<sup>+</sup> This information, giving the teaching context of the applicant in terms of scope and level of responsibility, should be taken into account when considering the peer assessment of teaching, as well as the quality and quantity of research and other performance areas.

<sup>#</sup> Major assessments can include examinations, tests, final year or honours project reports, workplace-based assessment, etc.