



William & Mary Arts & Sciences

OFFICE OF THE DEAN

MEMORANDUM

Date: October 7, 2024

To: Working group on effective and equitable evaluation of teaching

From: Suzanne Raitt, Dean of the Faculty of Arts & Sciences

Subj: Charge to the working group

CC: Josh Burk, Provost's Faculty Fellow

Adam Barger, Executive Director, Studio for Teaching & Learning Innovation

This working group is charged with exploring the recommendations made by Sue Peterson, Professor Emerita of Government, in a report, *Assessing Teaching in Arts & Sciences*, requested by Dean Maria Donoghue Velleca and delivered in August, 2024. *Assessing Teaching* builds on a report by the Academic Affairs Committee of Faculty Assembly, *Assessing Teaching and Learning at W&M*, issued on January 6, 2021. Both reports are attached here. In addition, the working group is charged with exploring the recommendation by the 330th W&M Student Assembly, Senate Resolution 330-004, *Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Course Evaluation Resolution* (also attached).

This working group will work in parallel with a new Faculty Assembly working group and a working group at the Studio for Teaching & Learning Innovation, with at least one Arts & Sciences (A&S) working group member simultaneously appointed to each of these groups.

Assessing Teaching in Arts & Sciences makes recommendations for more effective and equitable practices in the evaluation of teaching in A&S. These recommendations are designed to support A&S faculty in improving their performance as teachers and mentors, and also to suggest better and fairer ways of assessing teaching for merit, interim review, tenure and promotion. They include specific advice on how to use student evaluations, peer review of course materials and classroom observations, self-assessment, assessment of non-traditional teaching activities, and teaching portfolios. Central concerns are minimizing the bias effect of student evaluations, exploring the specific issues arising in the classroom for international faculty, and giving instructors effective feedback to assess and improve the inclusiveness of classroom practices. Students need to know how their evaluations are being used (who will see them and in what contexts) in order to offer the most effective feedback.

The working group will engage stakeholder communities around campus – students and faculty – to assess the desirability and practicability of the recommendations in the Peterson report and Senate Resolution 330-004, and develop an action plan for implementation based on the feedback they receive and on their own judgment. A report will be due to the Dean by April 30, 2025.