



TO: Senate Agenda Committee
FROM: TRACE Ad Hoc Committee
DATE: 25 March 2026
SUBJECT: Final report for Faculty Senate

The TRACE Ad Hoc Committee carried out the specific charges assigned by SAC.

- The committee had 12 committee and 8 auxiliary meetings during the academic year.
- The committee met with Provost David Madigan on 28 April 2025.
- The committee met with Provost Beth Winkelstein on 10 November 2025, 23 February 2026, 4 March 2026, and is scheduled to meet again on 6 April 2026.
- The committee chair interviewed Jeff Anderson, Senior Account Manager, Explorance, the current vendor executing TRACE surveys at Northeastern University.
- The committee posed and analyzed questions in the Fall 2025 Faculty Senate survey sent to all faculty at all campuses to gain global faculty feedback on the revised TRACE survey questions.
- The committee had multiple meetings and email conversations with student leadership from the global Student Government Association (SGA): Madelynne Murray, Faculty Senate Representative; Dave Veer, Assistant Vice President; and Molly Culot, Vice President of Academic Affairs. The committee and SGA executed the identical draft TRACE survey queries to the SGA as executed in the Fall 2025 Faculty Senate survey.
- The committee posed and analyzed questions to all unit, department, and college leadership associated with academic affairs to survey the methods used to assess teaching effectiveness for annual merit, tenure, and promotion processes.

The charges were addressed as follows with recommendations.

Charge 1: Review the approved Senate Resolutions of TRACE Committee (from 2024-25) including TRACE survey and revise it based on feedback from the broader faculty community (using surveys and other means), with the aim of producing a version that effectively evaluates instructional quality. Prepare additional senate resolutions as needed.

Methodology

The committee surveyed both the global university faculty and the Student Government Association to seek feedback from both groups of stakeholders on the revised TRACE survey. All faculty were engaged during the 2025 fall Faculty Senate survey. The SGA members were engaged in first quarter of 2026. Both groups evaluated the identical draft TRACE survey instrument and responded to the same Likert and open-ended queries. Likert assessments (very dissatisfied, dissatisfied, neither, satisfied, very satisfied) were queried for the preamble, instructions, and each of the individual queries; open ended responses were collected for each of the following queries.

1. What do you believe are the overall strengths of this revised version of the TRACE survey?
2. What do you believe are the overall weaknesses of this revised version of TRACE?

3. What specific changes would you like to see to this draft of the updated TRACE?

The survey is provided in Appendix A. The faculty data and comments are provided in Appendix B, and the SGA data and comments are provided in Appendix C.

The committee evaluated the revised TRACE instrument empirically, using faculty and SGA stakeholder feedback as its primary evidence base. Rather than applying predefined criteria for what constitutes an effective evaluation of instructional quality, the committee identified items and design features that both stakeholder groups found clear, relevant, and within the instructor's sphere of influence, and flagged items where satisfaction was low or concerns were convergent across groups. This stakeholder-driven approach ensures that the committee's recommendations respond to demonstrated concerns rather than theoretical assumptions about survey design.

Findings from Faculty Data

The committee received feedback from 577 faculty (16%), spanning all status and rank levels for tenure and faculty, spanning all colleges, all campuses, and six gender identities. Not all respondents answered every item; per-question response counts ranged from 417 to 435. According to University Decision Support data there were 3,610 total faculty during this period. This 16% response rate is slightly higher than the 14% response rate from this committee's 2024 survey. The mode for each item = satisfied; mean scores ranged from 3.06-4.05. The overall mean score is 3.76. Respondents submitted 413 comments. Specific, noteworthy findings from this data are highlighted below:

1. **Faculty strongly supported replacing the single instructor's teaching effectiveness rating with multiple specific questions.** Among the replacement items, instructor-focused questions received the highest satisfaction (means 3.53–4.05), while some learning-outcomes items received lower ratings (means 3.06–3.29), informing the committee's recommendations below. Support for removing the old single-item question is well documented in faculty comments, with approximately 20 respondents explicitly endorsing its removal (e.g., comments #1, 14, 38, 46, 67, 70, 71, 90).
 - a. The most frequently occurring criticism of the proposed revision, raised by approximately 29 respondents, was that students lack the expertise to evaluate their own mastery of learning outcomes or to assess course rigor (comments #140, 144, 157, 164, 167, 171, 172, 189, 191, 199, 204, 209, 213, 216, 220, 224, 226, 230, 235, 241, 244, 248, 254, 255, 265, 276, 388, 392, among others).
 - b. Administration's argument for retaining the single item is that it provides a comparable metric across university and external evaluations. This position was echoed by approximately 8 faculty respondents who explicitly advocated retaining the overall teaching effectiveness question (comments #35, 55, 103, 190, 218, 232, 315, 329). However, there is no evidence that the single item is used by a significant number of other institutions.

Representative quotes from faculty:

- "The fact that TRACE is no longer the sole measure of teaching effectiveness and 'effectiveness' is now expanded upon."
 - "Replacing the 'overall rating of teaching effectiveness' question is a significant improvement."
 - "So happy about #1, which was ridiculous." [#1 refers to the 2024-2025 Faculty Senate Resolution 23 that removes the single effectiveness question from TRACE.]
2. A high frequency of respondents appreciated the shift toward objective assessment of learning achievement. Approximately 15 comments explicitly endorsed the focus on learning outcomes and specific instructor behaviors over generalized effectiveness ratings (comments #12, 14, 67, 74, 114, 119, 120, 128, 130, among others). The second most frequently raised criticism, appearing in approximately 18 comments, was that the revisions do not eliminate documented biases based on gender, race, and grading, that such biases are inherent to student evaluation, and that TRACE results correlate with the grade received by the respondent (comments #13, 107, 139, 149, 165, 180, 182, 183, 186, 223, 226, 242, 247, 252, 265, 268, 270, 305).

Representative quotes from faculty:

- "The new revised questions, the focus is on meeting learning objectives rather than the instructor themselves."
 - "I like that it [the new TRACE] emphasizes learning outcomes rather than entertainment values."
 - "More concrete, specific, and directed."
3. Faculty valued the opportunity to provide context for student comments. Approximately 12 respondents explicitly endorsed the faculty response statement provision (comments #2, 15, 38, 41, 59, 113, 115, 130, 383, among others). Multiple respondents were unaware that TRACE reports were public; approximately 6 respondents expressed concern about privacy and the potential for bias amplification through public availability of uncontextualized student comments (comments #88, 91, 102, 229, 251, 253).

Representative quotes from faculty:

- "Having an opportunity to correct the record for future students is very important."
 - "This would be a vast improvement — instructors need robust ways to speak back to these results."
 - "#5 [TRACE item] will give faculty an opportunity to not let comments that aren't necessarily reflective of their teaching influence student perspectives so much."
4. Faculty did not support the new item #10 regarding classroom conditions. Approximately 12 respondents objected to including factors outside instructor control (comments #138, 145, 187, 219, 260, 262, 277, 316, 328, 364, 396, 400). The Likert data corroborated this concern, with the classroom conditions item receiving a mean of 3.25 and the highest combined dissatisfaction rate (13.8% very dissatisfied + 14.5% dissatisfied = 28.3%).

5. Faculty supported removing the online questions and suggested a branching option for faculty who teach online, or the option of adding 2–3 questions of their own to the TRACE for this purpose, perhaps from a bank of pre-written items. Approximately 8 comments addressed this directly (comments #30, 136, 174, 175, 274, 309, among others).
6. There was concern that the survey as written is too long. Approximately 10 respondents raised survey length as a problem (comments #145, 162, 173, 181, 195, 196, 263, 273, 307, 331). This concern intersects with recognition that the current system has problematically low participation rates, which allows for:
 - a. Sample bias
 - b. Statistical issues, like unreliable results and invalid results
7. Approximately 18 faculty respondents raised documented biases related to gender, race, and grade correlation. The committee notes that the new preamble of the revised TRACE instrument is designed, in part, to mitigate these biases — for example, by priming respondents to focus on specific instructor behaviors and course experiences rather than global impressions, which are more susceptible to demographic bias.

The committee acknowledges that its own faculty survey response rate of 16%, while slightly improved over the prior year's 14%, is subject to similar limitations. The findings reported here should be interpreted as reflecting the views of engaged respondents rather than as a statistically representative sample of all university faculty.

Findings from Student Government Association Data

The revised TRACE instrument received strong overall approval from SGA respondents. Individual item means ranged from 3.44 to 4.71, with 16 of 18 items scoring above 4.0. The two lowest-rated items — Question 8 (3.44) and Question 4 (3.76) — were clear outliers, accounting for the bulk of dissatisfaction. Ten of 34 respondents (29%) gave uniformly positive ratings across all items, and no respondent was uniformly negative. Respondents submitted 90 comments. The overall mean score is 4.34, or 4.43 removing the two lowest ranked questions. Specific, noteworthy findings from this data are highlighted below:

1. Overall Satisfaction

The revised TRACE instrument received strong overall approval, with a mean Likert score of 4.34 out of 5.0 across all 612 responses (34 respondents × 18 questions). Ten of 34 respondents (29%) gave uniformly positive ratings (all "Satisfied" or "Very Satisfied"), and no respondent was uniformly negative. Removing the two weakest questions (4 and 8) raises the overall average to 4.43, indicating that dissatisfaction is concentrated rather than diffuse.

2. Strongest Items

Questions 17 (4.71), 7 (4.62), and 18 (4.62) received the highest marks, followed by questions 5 (4.56), 2 and 12 (both 4.50). Students broadly endorsed the survey's quantitative structure, conciseness, and focus on course-level experience.

3. Weakest Items

Questions 8 (3.44) and 4 (3.76) were clear outliers. These two items accounted for the bulk of dissatisfaction and warrant revision or removal.

4. Themes from Open-Ended Comments

What students valued:

Approximately 6 respondents praised the revised TRACE for being shorter, more focused, and written in plainer language (rows 1, 6, 10, 13, 15, 17). Row 1 called it "better design, shorter than original TRACE." Row 6 noted the language was simpler and written in plain language that covers the full course experience. Row 10 observed that the wording has significantly improved from prior TRACE surveys. Two respondents specifically appreciated the removal of questions about the online learning environment (rows 4, 30); row 30 stated that removing the Canvas-related questions was a welcome change. The shift toward experience-based questions was endorsed by approximately 3 respondents (rows 8, 15, 22), with row 22 noting that the survey focuses on course attributes rather than personal biases against the professor, and row 15 adding that the questions are more specific to student experiences and metrics that matter.

"Learning outcomes" is poorly understood.

This was the most frequently raised criticism among SGA respondents, noted by approximately 5 respondents (rows 5, 7, 11, 31, 34). Row 7 observed that the term is vague and that professors often do not explicitly lay out or quantify learning outcomes, making related questions highly subjective. Row 5 urged the committee to explain what the term entails. Row 11 asked where students can find the outcomes being referenced. Row 31 agreed that the question could be worded differently. Row 7 further recommended that the university find another way to define success in a course or standardize learning outcomes among faculty.

The self-reflection question is unpopular.

Two respondents objected to this item (rows 9, 15). Row 15 stated that the question shifts responsibility onto students rather than addressing instructor performance. Row 9 dismissed the self-reflection items as irrelevant.

Grading questions need more specificity.

Row 6 argued that the grading question should be reframed to emphasize consistency and reiteration of expectations throughout the semester rather than simply whether the instructor explained grading on the first day. Row 6 recommended language along the lines of the instructor being consistent and clear with grading expectations over the course of the semester.

Questions 13–15 are too vague.

Approximately 3 respondents flagged these items (rows 6, 8, 34). Row 6 asked what "created opportunities" means in the context of Question 13. Row 34 noted that some questions are not clear in their desired type of response. Row 8 called for more concreteness.

Students want a question about instructor weaknesses.

Approximately 3 respondents identified this gap (rows 3, 15, 28). Row 28 noted that one question asks what the professor did well but there is no parallel question about what could be improved, arguing that both are needed for constructive criticism. Row 3 similarly noted that the last question should focus more specifically on instructor improvements.

The satisfied/dissatisfied scale doesn't fit all questions.

Two respondents raised this concern (rows 23, 33). Row 23 observed that some questions don't work well with the satisfied–dissatisfied scale and called for more dynamic questions. Row 33 noted that emphasis on terms like "being engaged" and "enabling learning" captures personal opinion more than instructor performance, suggesting the scale may not measure what is intended.

Students also use TRACE and want it designed for them too.

Two respondents raised this point (rows 2, 4). Row 4 noted that TRACE results are used by students as a complement to other rating platforms and urged the committee to ensure questions are helpful to students as well. Row 2 noted that the new interface is harder to work with and is missing data from the old version, and urged the committee to incorporate old responses and improve filtering with student input.

Optional text boxes would enrich responses.

Two respondents endorsed this idea (rows 16, 28). Row 28 argued that a text box under each objective question would allow students to elaborate when the answer options do not capture how they feel. Row 16 reinforced this, noting that most students will not elaborate unless they hold an extreme view.

Additional suggestions that appeared in one or two responses included: adding a question about syllabus quality (row 12), accounting for whether the course was required or elective (row 20), scheduling and section availability (row 33), distinguishing rigor from hours spent (rows 4, 32), and asking about learning types (row 16).

Convergence and Divergence Between Faculty and SGA Findings

The faculty and SGA datasets on the same queries of the same TRACE instrument, collected independently through different surveys and at different times, converge on several key points. Both groups endorsed the shift away from the single teaching effectiveness rating toward more specific, experience-based questions. Both groups independently identified "learning outcomes" as language that is vague or poorly understood — raised by approximately 29 faculty

respondents and 5 SGA respondents. Both groups objected to the classroom conditions item as measuring factors outside instructor control. Both groups raised concerns about survey length and its potential impact on response rates. And both groups valued the open-ended questions, with faculty rating "What did the instructor do well?" and "What could be improved about the course?" as the two highest-scoring Likert items (means 4.04 and 3.99) and SGA respondents rating the corresponding items at 4.71 and 4.62.

The two groups diverged in notable ways as well. SGA respondents were substantially more positive overall, with 16 of 18 item means exceeding 4.0, compared to faculty item means ranging from 3.06 to 4.05. This gap likely reflects differences in stakeholder perspective — faculty evaluate the instrument in terms of how it will be used to assess their performance, while students evaluate it in terms of whether it captures their course experience. SGA respondents identified a gap the faculty data did not surface prominently: the absence of a question inviting constructive criticism of the instructor, as distinct from the course improvement question. Conversely, faculty were far more concerned with documented biases related to gender, race, and grade correlation (approximately 18 comments), and with the high-stakes use of TRACE in merit, tenure, and promotion decisions — concerns that did not appear in the SGA data, consistent with the different institutional positions of the two groups.

These convergences strengthen the evidentiary basis for the committee's recommendations, particularly where both stakeholder groups independently support the same change. Where the groups diverge, the differences are largely explicable by their distinct relationships to the instrument and do not present contradictory guidance for revision.

Recommendations:

1. Shorten the revised TRACE survey by removing the following items that do not measure instructor behavior. The committee recommends removing the following items from the core TRACE survey:

- a. "My grades in this course reflect my mastery of the course learning outcomes" — This item received the lowest faculty satisfaction mean (3.06) and was the second-lowest SGA item (3.44). Both groups raised concerns that students lack the frame of reference to evaluate this relationship, and the item conflates grading satisfaction with assessment of teaching. It does not measure an instructor action.
- b. "This course had the expected amount of rigor in relation to the learning outcomes" — This item received a faculty mean of 3.29 and drew criticism from both groups for vagueness. Students cannot reliably benchmark "expected rigor," and the item does not identify a specific instructor behavior that can be improved.
- c. "The classroom conditions negatively impacted my learning and achievement of learning outcomes" — This item received combined faculty dissatisfaction of 28.3% and was independently criticized by both groups as measuring factors outside instructor control. The committee recommends moving this item to a separate facilities-feedback section of the

TRACE so that the data still reaches the appropriate university offices without appearing in the instructor's teaching evaluation.

2. Retain course learning outcomes as a core element of the survey, and address the vagueness concern through plain-language reframing to instructor's observable actions and institutional guidance.

The most frequently raised criticism across both stakeholder groups — approximately 29 faculty and 5 SGA respondents — was that students do not understand the term "learning outcomes." The committee considered this concern carefully and concludes that these items should be retained, not removed. Course learning outcomes are a foundational element of effective teaching, and communicating them clearly and repeatedly throughout the semester is a concrete, define-able instructor action that students are well positioned to evaluate.

To address the legitimate comprehension concern, the committee recommends two coordinated actions:

A. Make the following query replacements to the revised TRACE survey:

Replacement 1

Original: "The syllabus was accurate and helpful in delineating expectations and course outcomes." (Strongly Agree / Agree / Neutral / Disagree / Strongly Disagree)

Replacement: "The syllabus clearly described what I was expected to learn and how the course would be conducted." (Strongly Agree / Agree / Neutral / Disagree / Strongly Disagree)

Replacement 2

Original: "Required and additional course materials were helpful in achieving course outcomes." (Strongly Agree / Agree / Neutral / Disagree / Strongly Disagree)

Replacement: "Required and additional course materials were helpful for my learning in this course." (Strongly Agree / Agree / Neutral / Disagree / Strongly Disagree)

Replacement 3

Original: "Indicate whether you met all/most/some/few/none of the learning outcomes for the course." (Met all / Met most / Met some / Met few / Met none)

Replacement: "The instructor clearly communicated what I should learn from the course" (Strongly Agree / Agree / Neutral / Disagree / Strongly Disagree)

Replacement 4

Original: "The instructor helped the students identify ways to master the learning outcomes." (Strongly Agree / Agree / Neutral / Disagree / Strongly Disagree)

Replacement: "The instructor helped the students identify ways to learn the course material." (Strongly Agree / Agree / Neutral / Disagree / Strongly Disagree)

The committee agrees with the approximately 29 faculty respondents who noted that students lack the expertise to evaluate their own mastery of learning outcomes or to benchmark expected rigor. The replacement items are designed to respond to precisely this concern. Students are not asked to judge whether they achieved the outcomes; they are asked to report whether the instructor took specific, observable actions — communicating what the course was designed to teach, providing materials that supported learning, and helping students identify ways to learn the material. The distinction is between asking students to serve as evaluators of their own competence, which is unreliable, and asking them to serve as reporters of instructor behavior, which they are uniquely positioned to do. *This is consistent with the committee's broader shift, endorsed independently by both faculty and SGA stakeholder groups, from global effectiveness ratings to specific, behaviorally anchored questions that focus on what the instructor did rather than what the student achieved.* The revised items preserve the pedagogical construct — whether instructors are communicating and supporting course learning goals — while grounding the evidence in direct student experience rather than self-assessment.

These replacements rephrase items that reference "learning outcomes" using plain language that preserves the pedagogical intent. This is behaviorally specific, uses the same Likert scale as the other instructor-focused items, and directly incentivizes the effective teaching practice — instructors articulating and reinforcing learning goals throughout the semester. It also sidesteps the self-assessment problem entirely.

- B. The provost's office, in coordination with the Center for Advancing Teaching and Learning through Research, should issue guidance to all instructors communicating that the revised TRACE survey evaluates whether students were made aware of what the course is designed to teach them and whether the instructor took specific actions to support that learning. The guidance should emphasize the expectation that instructors communicate course learning goals clearly at the outset and reinforce them throughout the semester, so that students are equipped to respond to these items meaningfully. This makes the teaching expectation institutional and explicit rather than leaving it embedded implicitly in the survey instrument.

The committee recognizes that Replacements 1 through 4 remove explicit references to "course outcomes" and "learning outcomes" from the student-facing survey language. This may appear to be in tension with the committee's stated position that course learning outcomes should remain a core element of the revised TRACE. The committee's view is that this tension is resolved by distinguishing between two levels of the instrument's design. At the student-facing level, the plain-language rewordings ask students to report on observable experiences — whether the syllabus

described what they were expected to learn, whether materials supported their learning, whether the instructor communicated course goals, and whether the instructor helped them learn the material. These are experiences students can report on reliably without needing to recall or interpret formal outcome statements. At the institutional level, these items remain anchored to course learning outcomes through the guidance described in Recommendation 2B: instructors are expected to communicate learning goals clearly and reinforce them throughout the semester, and the revised items are designed to measure whether that communication occurred. The pedagogical construct is preserved; only the jargon has been removed from the student's line of sight.

Charge 2: Work with SVP for AA, Registrar's office and the new University TRACE vendor to explore feasibility of committee's resolutions and implement new version of TRACE survey.

The committee received direct guidance from Senior Vice Provost for Academic Affairs (SVP for AA) Deb Franko that a meeting will be scheduled by the SVP for AA to enable the committee to work with SVP for AA, the Registrar's office and the new university TRACE vendor to fulfill the charge. Delays occurred throughout the 2025-2026 year. The committee was informed most recently, "We expect that spring 2026 TRACE process will go smoothly and by then all glitches will be fixed, and so a meeting in early summer makes most sense." It makes sense to the committee that changes to TRACE occur over the summer months between academic years.

Changes to the TRACE survey were ratified in resolutions 23, 24, 26, 27, 28 by the 2024-2025 Faculty Senate either unanimously or near-unanimously. However, Provost David Madigan placed these resolutions on hold for review in the fall of 2025 by the new provost. Since November 2025, the committee has met with Provost Beth Winkelstein four times to provide the context and grounding needed for her independent review of these resolutions, and these meetings are ongoing. The committee believes these discussions are truly productive and helpful toward resolving final action by the provost.

Recommendations

1. We recommend the current TRACE Committee persist through the 2026 summer to continue on-going discussions on the 2024-2025 resolutions 23, 24, 26, 27, 28 on behalf of the Faculty Senate with Provost Winkelstein.
2. We recommend the current TRACE Committee persist through the 2026 summer to work with the SVP for AA, Registrar's office and the new university TRACE vendor to explore feasibility of committee's resolutions and implement the new version of TRACE survey.
3. We recommend that another ad hoc TRACE committee be established for academic year 2026–27 to collaborate with university leadership, Registrar, and Explorance to implement recommended changes to the TRACE survey.

Charge 3: Faculty handbook states that "Implementation of multiple, mutually independent mechanisms of evaluation, at least one of which is based on input from students". Review processes at all colleges/departments/units and confirm that they use TRACE as only one component in a more comprehensive assessment of teaching effectiveness in faculty merit, promotion, and tenure processes. Propose a resolution with handbook updates if needed.

Charge 4: Similar to previous charge, review tenure and promotion criteria for all colleges to ensure that all units are following the appropriate criteria. Prepare a list of units that are not in compliance so that faculty senate can follow up. If TRACE is used as sole student-provided data, propose additional assessment options to be adopted.

Background

The Northeastern University Faculty Handbook requires "implementation of multiple, mutually independent mechanisms of evaluation, at least one of which is based on input from students" for assessing teaching effectiveness in annual merit, and in promotion and tenure (P&T) decisions. This review examines survey data collected from department/unit leaders and associate/assistant deans for faculty affairs across all colleges to assess compliance, identifies units requiring Faculty Senate follow-up, and proposes additional assessment options for units relying on TRACE as their sole student-provided data source.

Methodology

Data were drawn from a university-wide survey of department/unit leaders and associate/assistant deans for faculty affairs ($N \approx 55$ unique respondents across 9 colleges and 35+ departments). The survey is provided in Appendix D, the survey data are provided in Appendix E. Respondents reported which data sources their unit uses to assess teaching effectiveness at the department/unit level for promotion and tenure. Compliance was assessed against the handbook standard requiring: (1) multiple mechanisms, (2) mutual independence among mechanisms, and (3) at least one mechanism based on student input. Incomplete and duplicate responses were excluded. Units operating without tenured or tenure-track faculty (e.g., NTT-only programs) were considered structurally exempt from tenure criteria.

Compliance was classified into three categories:

- **Compliant:** Two or more independent mechanisms documented, including at least one student input source
- **Minimal Compliance:** Technically meets the two-mechanism threshold but relies on TRACE as the only student input with only one additional mechanism (typically self-reflection), raising concerns about independence and robustness
- **Non-Compliant:** TRACE reported as the sole mechanism, or response was insufficient to confirm multi-mechanism use

FINDINGS:

1. TENURE AND PROMOTION

Overall Compliance Summary

Compliance Category	Promotion	Tenure
Compliant (2+ independent mechanisms, student input present)	42 units	41 units
Partial Compliance (TRACE + self-reflection only)	3 units	3 units
Non-Compliant (TRACE as sole mechanism)	4 units	4 units
Not Applicable (NTT-only, no P&T, or N/A)	6 units	7 units
Ambiguous / Insufficient Response	3 units	3 units

The majority of responding units demonstrate compliance with the handbook standard at the promotion and tenure level, representing improvement relative to annual merit practices (addressed in prior charge response). However, a defined set of units warrants follow-up.

Category 1: Non-Compliant: TRACE as Sole Mechanism for Both Promotion and Tenure

These units reported using only TRACE surveys to assess teaching effectiveness for promotion and/or tenure decisions. This represents a clear failure to satisfy the handbook requirement for multiple, mutually independent mechanisms.

Department/Unit	College	Context
School of Journalism	CAMD	Promotion and Tenure
Electrical and Computer Engineering	Engineering	Promotion and Tenure
Mechanical and Industrial Engineering (MIE)	Engineering	Promotion and Tenure
Applied Psychology	BCHS	Promotion and Tenure

Notable context: The School of Journalism respondent acknowledged low TRACE response rates as a persistent challenge and noted active efforts to increase student participation. The ECE respondent explicitly stated that TRACE is the only available "objective measure" used for tenure and promotion, while acknowledging questions about its accuracy. Applied Psychology noted active internal discussions about over-reliance on TRACE for high-stakes decisions. These comments suggest awareness of the problem but an absence of structural remediation.

Category 2: Partial Compliance: TRACE + Self-Reflection Only

These units report two mechanisms, TRACE and faculty self-reflection statements, but rely on TRACE as the sole source of student input, with no additional independent data sources. While technically meeting the numerical threshold, this approach is fragile: self-reflection is faculty-generated rather than independent, meaning TRACE is effectively the only externally validated evidence. These units (Management (MOD) in D'Amore McKim, Civil and Environmental Engineering in COE) should be encouraged to add at least one additional independent mechanism.

Category 3: Ambiguous or Insufficient Response

These units provided responses that could not be definitively classified due to incomplete data, deferred responses, or explicit uncertainty. Faculty Senate follow-up should seek clarification from these units before drawing compliance conclusions.

Department/Unit	College	Issue
Khoury College (Teaching Track)	Khoury	Deferred tenure response to T/TT Associate Dean; incomplete for this track
MGEN / College of Engineering (unit-level)	Engineering	Reported "N/A" for tenure without explanation

Proposed Additional Assessment Options for Non-Compliant and Minimally Compliant Units

For units relying on TRACE as their sole or primary student-provided data source, or any unit that may be discussing additional or evidence-based alternatives, we propose the following options. These options are drawn from best practices in teaching effectiveness assessment and are consistent with mechanisms already in use by compliant units within the same institution.

Assessment Option	Details
Tier 1 — Recommended for Immediate Adoption (Low Burden, High Independence)	
1. Faculty Peer Observation of Teaching	The most widely adopted supplementary mechanism across compliant NU units. A trained peer (or small committee) directly observes one or more class sessions and prepares a written evaluation. Provides an independent, qualitative assessment of pedagogical approach, classroom environment, and instructional clarity that student ratings cannot capture. Departments in Chemistry, Biology, Pharmacy and Health Systems Sciences (who has published multiple articles on this topic), Architecture, Theatre, Philosophy, and many others already use this mechanism effectively.
2. Structured Teaching Portfolio Review	Faculty submit a curated portfolio including a teaching philosophy statement, sample syllabi, course materials, assignment design, and evidence of teaching-related professional development. Reviewed by the merit committee or a designated peer. Provides longitudinal, faculty-curated evidence while introducing an additional mechanism independent of student ratings.
3. Qualitative TRACE Comment Review as a Distinct Data Source	Where TRACE is already in use, formally separating the qualitative student comment data from the numerical score and treating each as an independent mechanism can increase the evidentiary base without requiring new infrastructure. Multiple respondents (Khoury, CSSH, Political Science, Philosophy) described the qualitative comments as more actionable and informative than numerical scores. This is not a substitute for structural reform but represents an achievable near-term step.
Tier 2 — Recommended for Units with Capacity to Implement	

4. Supplemental Student Surveys	Locally designed or program-specific surveys administered at the course or program level, separate from TRACE, can capture student perspectives on specific learning outcomes, course design, or instructional practices. The PA Program in Medical Sciences and CPS Graduate Programs provide existing NU models. These allow measurement tailored to disciplinary context, particularly valuable in professional and health sciences programs with specific accreditation requirements.
5. Department/Unit Leadership Observation	Structured observation and evaluation by the department chair or designee, using a consistent rubric, adds an independent administrative perspective. Used by approximately 25–30% of NU units across disciplines including Pharmacy and Health Systems Sciences, Architecture, Marine Sciences, Nursing, and SCCJ. Particularly useful for identifying concerns that neither students nor peers are positioned to evaluate (e.g., course administration, responsiveness to student needs, alignment with curriculum).
6. Student Learning Outcomes Data	Aggregate, anonymized data on student performance (exam pass rates, grade distributions, learning outcome attainment) can serve as indirect evidence of teaching effectiveness when interpreted alongside other mechanisms. The DMSB already incorporates course difficulty and student performance variables into its TRACE-adjacent review. This approach requires care to avoid penalizing faculty who teach required, high-rigor, or gateway courses, but when properly contextualized, it adds an independent and outcomes-focused dimension.

2. ANNUAL MERIT REVIEWS

Overall Compliance Summary

Compliance Category	Number of Units
Compliant (2+ independent mechanisms, student input present)	33
Partial Compliance (limited independence or no external mechanism)	5
Non-Compliant (TRACE as sole mechanism)	11
Not Applicable / Structural Exemption	5
Ambiguous / Insufficient Response	4

Non-compliance at the annual merit level is substantially more prevalent than at the promotion and tenure level, with 11 units relying on TRACE as their only mechanism. This pattern is consistent with the broader institutional tendency to apply more rigorous multi-method review at career-milestone decisions while treating annual merit as a lower-stakes administrative exercise. The handbook standard, however, does not distinguish between evaluation contexts.

Category 1: Non-Compliant: TRACE as Sole Mechanism for Annual Merit

These units reported using only TRACE surveys to assess teaching effectiveness for annual merit decisions, representing a clear failure to satisfy the handbook requirement for multiple, mutually independent mechanisms.

Department/Unit	College	Open-Ended Comment
School of Journalism	CAMD	Noted active efforts to improve TRACE response rates; no additional mechanisms reported
Supply Chain & Information Management	D'Amore McKim	Described DMSB's multi-variable TRACE scoring rubric; no additional mechanisms reported
Management (MOD)	D'Amore McKim	Recommended grade-release incentive for TRACE completion; TRACE described as "a great tool"
Electrical and Computer Engineering	Engineering	Acknowledged effectiveness concerns but described TRACE as the "only available objective measure"
Mechanical and Industrial Engineering	Engineering	Noted faculty concerns about using TRACE for evaluation; no alternatives reported
Cultures, Societies, and Global Studies	CSSH	Raised concerns about bias against women and people of color in student evaluations
Entrepreneurship & Innovation	D'Amore McKim	Noted disadvantage for faculty teaching required versus elective courses
Applied Psychology	Bouvé	Noted active internal discussions about TRACE over-reliance
Biology	COS	Described TRACE as a check for repeated concerns only; no additional mechanisms reported for merit
Civil and Environmental Engineering	Engineering	Recommended mandatory TRACE completion; no additional mechanisms reported
School of Public Policy and Urban Affairs	CSSH	Provided detailed critique of student evaluations; no alternatives currently in place

Category 2: Partial Compliance

Department/Unit	College	Mechanisms Reported	Concern
Communication Studies	CSSH	TRACE + self-reflection	Self-reflection is faculty-generated; no external independent review
Latin American & Caribbean Studies (LLACS)	CSSH	TRACE + informal student feedback	Both mechanisms are student-sourced; no independent external review

Khoury College (T/TT track)	Khoury	TRACE + self-reflection	Self-reflection used without noted external review; single student-input source
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Category 3: Ambiguous or Incomplete Response

These units provided incomplete or unclear data for annual merit mechanisms. Faculty Senate follow-up should seek clarification before determining whether referral for formal compliance action is warranted.

Department/Unit	College	Issue
Writing Program	CAMD	Response varied across contexts; programmatic survey noted as preferred but TRACE consistency unclear
Khoury College (Teaching Track)	Khoury	Self-reflection described as optionally incorporating observation notes and student messages — not a standardized mechanism
MGEN / College of Engineering	Engineering	Reported peer observation and leadership observation for merit but described mechanisms inconsistently across contexts
ATP Committee / MCNU	MCNU	Described narrative merit review form; unclear whether TRACE is supplementary or primary mechanism

Category 4: Structural Exemptions (Not Referred)

The following units are not referred to Faculty Senate for non-compliance. Their responses reflect structural realities — no formal merit process, evaluation through home departments, or accreditation-governed alternatives — rather than policy violations. The TRACE Committee recommends these units formally document their approaches for institutional records.

Department/Unit	College	Reason
Medical Sciences (PA Program)	Bouvé	External accreditation precludes standard TRACE; uses equivalent multi-mechanism approach including workload and student outcomes data
Graduate Programs, CPS	CPS	Uses Evalkit/Watermark platform as equivalent student survey mechanism; multi-mechanism compliant
Jewish Studies	CSSH	Does not independently assign merit; faculty evaluated through home departments
World Languages and Cultures	CSSH	NTT-only unit; uses multi-mechanism approach including peer and leadership observation
American Sign Language & Interpreting Education	CSSH	NTT-only unit; uses leadership observation and self-reflection alongside student data

Recommendations:

Tenure and Promotion	
1	Request formal compliance plans from the four non-compliant units one academic year, including a timeline for implementing at least one additional independent mechanism.
2	Encourage the partially compliant units to adopt faculty peer observation or a structured teaching portfolio review to strengthen their processes.
3	Seek clarifying responses from the two units before determining whether referral for formal follow-up is warranted.
4	Formally acknowledge structural exemptions for NTT-only and accreditation-governed units while requesting documentation of their alternative approaches for institutional records.
5	To operationalize the existing standard and provide clear guidance to non-compliant units, the TRACE Committee proposes the following addendum to the relevant handbook section: "For promotion and tenure review, departments and units must document a minimum of two mutually independent mechanisms for assessing teaching effectiveness, at least one of which incorporates direct student input. Sole reliance on student evaluations of teaching (e.g., TRACE) does not satisfy this requirement. Qualifying independent mechanisms include but are not limited to: faculty peer observation of teaching, department/unit leadership observation, faculty teaching portfolios, structured self-reflection narratives reviewed by an independent committee, supplemental student surveys, and student learning outcomes data. Self-reflection statements submitted by the faculty member under review do not constitute an independent mechanism when used without external review. Units unable to implement standard mechanisms due to accreditation requirements, course structure, or faculty appointment type must document and gain approval for an equivalent multi-mechanism alternative through their college. Compliance with this standard will be reviewed by the Faculty Senate on a triennial basis."
Annual Merit Reviews:	
6	Request formal compliance plans from all eleven non-compliant units within one academic year, including a commitment to implement at least one additional independent mechanism for the next merit cycle.
7	Request clarifying responses from the four ambiguous units before determining whether formal referral is warranted.
8	Advance the proposed handbook addendum language for Faculty Senate review, establishing the explicit annual merit compliance standard necessary for future monitoring and enforcement.
9	To clarify the standard's application to annual merit and provide enforceable guidance to non-compliant units, the TRACE Committee proposes the following addendum to the faculty handbook: "The requirement for multiple, mutually independent mechanisms of evaluation applies to all faculty evaluation contexts, including annual merit review. For annual merit, departments and units must document a minimum of two mutually independent

mechanisms, at least one of which incorporates direct student input. Sole reliance on student evaluations of teaching (e.g., TRACE) does not satisfy this requirement. Faculty self-reflection statements constitute an independent mechanism only when formally reviewed against defined criteria by a merit committee or equivalent body; they do not satisfy the independence requirement when submitted without structured external review. Qualifying independent mechanisms for annual merit include but are not limited to: faculty peer observation of teaching, department/unit leadership observation, faculty teaching portfolios or annual teaching activity summaries, supplemental student surveys, and structured self-reflection narratives subject to independent review. Compliance with this standard will be reviewed by the TRACE Committee on a triennial basis, with Faculty Senate referral for persistent non-compliance."

Resolutions:

At the time of submitting this report, the committee does not recommend new resolutions. The committee is still working with the provost on existing resolutions that were passed previously and are awaiting a support decision by the provost. The Senate Agenda Committee informs the committee that it can return to the Faculty Senate in the future to introduce and propose new resolutions as it deems necessary.

Respectfully submitted,

Amy Bryzgel, CAMD – Art + Design
Michael Gonyeau, BCHS – Pharmacy and Health Systems Sciences
Steve Lustig, Chair, COE – Chemical Engineering
Talia Vestri, CSSH – English
Susan Wang, Mills – Mathematics & Computer Science
Joanna Weaver, COS – Psychology

APPENDIX A: Survey used to engage both the global university faculty and the Student Government Association

Fall Faculty Survey Items from TRACE Ad-hoc Committee

Please rate your level of satisfaction with each of the proposed aspects of the TRACE survey revision, including the directions and queries. You will be asked for open-ended discussion at the end of this survey.

Directions

You are encouraged to evaluate this course based on *its content*, *your engagement with the material*, and *your mastery of intended course outcomes*, and the *instructor's actions*, rather than any unrelated attributes. Given the intended use of the TRACE to enhance teaching, we welcome student comments that are thoughtful, professional, constructive, and considerate.

very dissatisfied	dissatisfied	neither	satisfied	very satisfied
1	2	3	4	5

Student reflection

1. How often did you attend this course?

- 80-100%
- 60-80%
- 40-60%
- 20-40%
- 1-20%
- This course had no scheduled class meetings.

very dissatisfied	dissatisfied	neither	satisfied	very satisfied
1	2	3	4	5

2. The number of hours per week I devoted to this course outside scheduled class meeting times.

- More than 10
- 8-10
- 5-7
- 3-4
- 0-2
- The course had not scheduled class meetings

very dissatisfied	dissatisfied	neither	satisfied	very satisfied
1	2	3	4	5

3. What could I have done to make this course better for myself?

very dissatisfied	dissatisfied	neither	satisfied	very satisfied
1	2	3	4	5

Course-related questions

4. The syllabus was accurate and helpful in delineating expectations and course outcomes.

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

very dissatisfied	dissatisfied	neither	satisfied	very satisfied
1	2	3	4	5

5. Required and additional course materials were helpful in achieving course outcomes.

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

very dissatisfied	dissatisfied	neither	satisfied	very satisfied
1	2	3	4	5

Learning-related questions

6. Course sessions (in person, online, recorded, or any other type of presentation) were helpful for learning.

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

very dissatisfied	dissatisfied	neither	satisfied	very satisfied
1	2	3	4	5

7. Indicate whether you met all/most/some/few/none of the learning outcomes for the course.

- Met all
- Met most
- Met some
- Met few
- Met none

very dissatisfied	dissatisfied	neither	satisfied	very satisfied
1	2	3	4	5

8. My grades in this course reflect my mastery of the course learning outcomes.

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Neutral

- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

very dissatisfied	dissatisfied	neither	satisfied	very satisfied
1	2	3	4	5

9. This course had the expected amount of rigor in relation to the learning outcomes.

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

very dissatisfied	dissatisfied	neither	satisfied	very satisfied
1	2	3	4	5

10. The classroom conditions (i.e., time of day, class size, exterior noise, less aesthetic environment) negatively impacted my learning and achievement of learning outcomes.

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree
- This course did not have a classroom

very dissatisfied	dissatisfied	neither	satisfied	very satisfied
1	2	3	4	5

Instructor-related questions

11. The instructor explained how I would be graded in this course.

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree
- I was not graded in this course

very dissatisfied	dissatisfied	neither	satisfied	very satisfied
1	2	3	4	5

12. The instructor helped the students identify ways to master the learning outcomes.

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree

- Strongly Disagree

very dissatisfied	dissatisfied	neither	satisfied	very satisfied
1	2	3	4	5

13. The instructor created opportunities for me to be engaged in the course.

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

very dissatisfied	dissatisfied	neither	satisfied	very satisfied
1	2	3	4	5

14. The instructor promoted a course environment that enables learning.

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

very dissatisfied	dissatisfied	neither	satisfied	very satisfied
1	2	3	4	5

15. The instructor clearly communicated ideas and information.

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

very dissatisfied	dissatisfied	neither	satisfied	very satisfied
1	2	3	4	5

16. What did the instructor do well?

very dissatisfied	dissatisfied	neither	satisfied	very satisfied
1	2	3	4	5

17. What could be improved about the course?

very dissatisfied	dissatisfied	neither	satisfied	very satisfied
1	2	3	4	5

What do you believe are the overall strengths of this revised version of the TRACE survey, which was approved by the Faculty Senate on April 26, 2025? (See below for synopsis of **all 6 resolutions passed**.) Open-ended response:

1. Replace “What is your overall rating of this instructor's teaching effectiveness?” with well-posed questions about instructor’s actions and enabling learning outcomes.
2. Revised survey questions (see each item above).
3. TRACE surveys be used as only part of more comprehensive assessment of teaching effectiveness in faculty merit, promotion, and tenure processes that includes peer evaluations and instructors’ teaching reflections.
4. TRACE survey results be made available to students for 2 years prior of the current academic year, or the last 2 times the instructor has taught the course, or extend longer than 2 years.
5. Instructors have the optional opportunity to include their own response statements with the TRACE survey results made available to the students.
6. Enable the university, colleges, departments, and instructors to automate incentives to students to submit complete and thoughtful TRACE surveys.

What do you believe are the overall weaknesses of this revised version of the TRACE, which was approved by the Faculty Senate on April 26, 2025? Open-ended response:

What specific changes would you like to see to this draft of the updated TRACE? Open-ended response:

APPENDIX B: Response Data collected from the global university faculty from the 2025 Fall Faculty Senate Survey

Code	Title	N	Mean	Mode	Very dissatisfied Count	Dissatisfied Count	Neither Count	Satisfied Count	Very Satisfied Count	Very dissatisfied %	Dissatisfied %	Neither %	Satisfied %	Very Satisfied %
Q2	"You are encouraged to evaluate this course based on its content, your engagement with the material, and your mastery of intended course outcomes, and the instructor's actions, rather than any unrelated attributes. Given the intended use of the TRACE to enhance teaching, we welcome student comments that are thoughtful, professional, constructive, and considerate."	435	3.55	Satisfied	28	36	97	217	57	6.4%	8.3%	22.3%	49.9%	13.1%
Q3	"How often did you attend this course?"	429	3.84	Satisfied	23	30	58	198	120	5.4%	7.0%	13.5%	46.2%	28.0%
Q4	"The number of hours per week I devoted to this course outside scheduled class meeting times."	428	3.83	Satisfied	21	21	73	206	107	4.9%	4.9%	17.1%	48.1%	25.0%
Q5	"What could I have done to make this course better for myself? "	428	3.95	Satisfied	15	21	68	191	133	3.5%	4.9%	15.9%	44.6%	31.1%
Q6	"The syllabus was accurate and helpful in delineating expectations and course outcomes. "	428	3.86	Satisfied	19	16	69	224	100	4.4%	3.7%	16.1%	52.3%	23.4%
Q7	"Required and additional course materials were helpful in achieving course outcomes."	426	3.73	Satisfied	17	25	91	214	79	4.0%	5.9%	21.4%	50.2%	18.5%
Q8	"Course sessions (in person, online, recorded, or any other type of presentation) were helpful for learning. "	425	3.83	Satisfied	21	20	64	226	94	4.9%	4.7%	15.1%	53.2%	22.1%
Q9	"Indicate whether you met all/most/some/few/none of the learning outcomes for the course. "	423	3.24	Satisfied	47	65	106	148	57	11.1%	15.4%	25.1%	35.0%	13.5%
Q10	"My grades in this course reflect my mastery of the course learning outcomes. "	423	3.06	Satisfied	63	76	103	136	45	14.9%	18.0%	24.3%	32.2%	10.6%
Q11	"This course had the expected amount of rigor in relation to the learning outcomes. "	422	3.29	Satisfied	50	58	90	167	57	11.8%	13.7%	21.3%	39.6%	13.5%
Q12	"The classroom conditions (i.e., time of day, class size, exterior noise, less aesthetic environment) negatively impacted my learning and achievement of learning outcomes."	420	3.25	Satisfied	58	61	85	148	68	13.8%	14.5%	20.2%	35.2%	16.2%
Q13	"The instructor explained how I would be graded in this course."	423	3.77	Satisfied	22	19	78	220	84	5.2%	4.5%	18.4%	52.0%	19.9%
Q14	"The instructor helped the students identify ways to master the learning outcomes."	420	3.53	Satisfied	28	42	93	192	65	6.7%	10.0%	22.1%	45.7%	15.5%
Q15	"The instructor created opportunities for me to be engaged in the course."	420	3.82	Satisfied	22	24	59	216	99	5.2%	5.7%	14.0%	51.4%	23.6%
Q16	"The instructor promoted a course environment that enables learning"	420	3.88	Satisfied	20	21	54	221	104	4.8%	5.0%	12.9%	52.6%	24.8%
Q17	"The instructor clearly communicated ideas and information."	419	4.05	Satisfied	16	12	39	222	130	3.8%	2.9%	9.3%	53.0%	31.0%
Q18	"What did the instructor do well?"	417	4.04	Satisfied	16	13	36	226	126	3.8%	3.1%	8.6%	54.2%	30.2%
Q19	"What could be improved about the course?"	420	3.99	Satisfied	19	12	44	225	120	4.5%	2.9%	10.5%	53.6%	28.6%

TRACE Survey Results

Total number of survey rows with data: 577

Faculty Status

Total number of nonblank responses: 573

Faculty status	Number of responses	Percentage of responses
Full time non tenure track	332	57.9%
Full time tenured	174	30.4%
Full time tenure track	65	11.3%
Part time faculty	2	0.3%

Faculty Rank

Total number of nonblank responses: 571

Faculty rank	Number of responses	Percentage of responses
Full level (or equivalent title)	233	40.8%
Associate level (or equivalent title)	172	30.1%
Assistant level (or equivalent title)	153	26.8%
Other	2	0.4%
Lecturer	2	0.4%
Senior Co-op faculty	1	0.2%
Senior	1	0.2%
prefer not to say	1	0.2%
Professor of Practice	1	0.2%
Professor of thr Practice	1	0.2%
Senior Co Op Faculty	1	0.2%
visiting	1	0.2%
Prof of Practice	1	0.2%
Principal Lecturer	1	0.2%

College/School

Total number of nonblank responses: 569

College/School	Number of responses	Percentage of responses
College of Science	111	19.5%
College of Social Sciences and Humanities	99	17.4%
Bouve College of Health Sciences	82	14.4%
College of Engineering	79	13.9%

College of Arts Media and Design	71	12.5%
D'Amore-McKim School of Business	67	11.8%
Khoury College of Computer Sciences	43	7.6%
College of Professional Studies	25	4.4%
School of Law	16	2.8%
Mills College at Northeastern	10	1.8%

Gender Identity

Total number of nonblank responses: 556

Gender identity	Number of responses	Percentage of responses
Cisgendered woman	279	50.2%
Cisgendered man	176	31.7%
Prefer not to answer	79	14.2%
Non binary	10	1.8%
Prefer to self describe	10	1.8%
Transgender man	2	0.4%

Campus

Total number of nonblank responses: 565

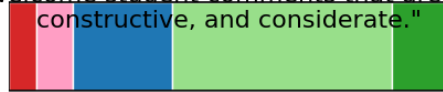
Campus	Number of responses	Percentage of responses
Boston	517	91.5%
Oakland (Mills College at Northeastern)	25	4.4%
Vancouver	8	1.4%
Portland	5	0.9%
Charlotte	3	0.5%
Seattle	3	0.5%
Silicon Valley	1	0.2%
Toronto	1	0.2%
San Francisco	1	0.2%
Arlington	1	0.2%

Likert Box Results (Q2–Q19)

Each image contains the 100% stacked Likert Box (blanks ignored), plus Total Number of responses, Mean response (1–5), and Most frequent response for that question.

Q2

"You are encouraged to evaluate this course based on its content, your engagement with the material, and your mastery of intended course outcomes, and the instructor's actions, rather than any unrelated attributes. Given the intended use of the TRACE to enhance teaching, we welcome student comments that are thoughtful, professional, constructive, and considerate."



Total Number of responses	435
Mean response	3.55
Most frequent response	Satisfied

Q3

"How often did you attend this course?"



Total Number of responses	429
Mean response	3.84
Most frequent response	Satisfied

Q4

"The number of hours per week I devoted to this course outside scheduled class meeting times."



Total Number of responses	428
Mean response	3.83
Most frequent response	Satisfied

Q5

"What could I have done to make this course better for myself? "



Total Number of responses	428
Mean response	3.95
Most frequent response	Satisfied

Q6

"The syllabus was accurate and helpful in delineating expectations and course outcomes. "



Total Number of responses	428
Mean response	3.86
Most frequent response	Satisfied

Q7

"Required and additional course materials were helpful in achieving course outcomes."



Total Number of responses	426
Mean response	3.73
Most frequent response	Satisfied

Q8

"Course sessions (in person, online, recorded, or any other type of presentation) were helpful for learning. "



Total Number of responses	425
Mean response	3.83
Most frequent response	Satisfied

Q9

"Indicate whether you met all/most/some/few/none of the learning outcomes for the course. "



Total Number of responses	423
Mean response	3.24
Most frequent response	Satisfied

Q10

"My grades in this course reflect my mastery of the course learning outcomes. "



Total Number of responses	423
Mean response	3.06
Most frequent response	Satisfied

Q11

"This course had the expected amount of rigor in relation to the learning outcomes. "



Total Number of responses	422
Mean response	3.29
Most frequent response	Satisfied

Q12

"The classroom conditions (i.e., time of day, class size, exterior noise, less aesthetic environment) negatively impacted my learning and achievement of learning outcomes."



Total Number of responses	420
Mean response	3.25
Most frequent response	Satisfied

Q13

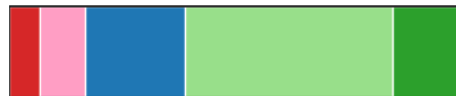
"The instructor explained how I would be graded in this course."



Total Number of responses	423
Mean response	3.77
Most frequent response	Satisfied

Q14

"The instructor helped the students identify ways to master the learning outcomes."



Total Number of responses	420
Mean response	3.53
Most frequent response	Satisfied

Q15

"The instructor created opportunities for me to be engaged in the course."



Total Number of responses	420
Mean response	3.82
Most frequent response	Satisfied

Q16

"The instructor promoted a course environment that enables learning"



Total Number of responses	420
Mean response	3.88
Most frequent response	Satisfied

Q17

"The instructor clearly communicated ideas and information."



Total Number of responses	419
Mean response	4.05
Most frequent response	Satisfied

Q18

"What did the instructor do well?"



Total Number of responses	417
Mean response	4.04
Most frequent response	Satisfied

Q19

"What could be improved about the course?"



Total Number of responses	420
Mean response	3.99
Most frequent response	Satisfied

What do you believe are the overall strengths of this revised version of the TRACE survey?

1. The fact that trace is no longer the sole measure of teaching effectiveness and 'effectiveness' is now expanded upon.
2. 5). is extremely important. Some of the comments are so inappropriate that having an opportunity to correct the record for future students is very important.
3. Seems good
4. Use of rigor expected relative to course content -- much better than some of the old language about intellectual challenge.
5. unsure
6. I have always found that the written responses on TRACE surveys are the most useful. I am glad to see that there are more questions that will allow students to elaborate.
7. All good except incentive part.
8. More specifics for students to consider the different mechanisms of the course is helpful. Senior faculty evaluation of teaching is a much more rigorous way to assess teaching.
9. number 6 is key!!!!
10. As I stated earlier these should not be anonymous and scoring sheets where the student just selects all the negative responses should be removed and reported as they reflect a vindictive spirit. Students who write outrageous comments about faculty should be reported to OSCRR and their entire score sheet discounted.

11. Number 4 sounds good -- we should not be keeping outdated reviews around -- but I have no idea what it means. It sounds like it is saying that it should make results available for 2 years, or for longer than 2 years? Aren't those the only two choices? But two years is not enough. I would increase to at least 3 years to allow students to have a better sense of patterns. Otherwise, one small sample size or one bad year could easily give students a false impression. I think anything older than 3 years is too old to be considered.
12. More concrete, specific, and directed.
13. TRACE correlates to grade; an A means a good evaluation, less than an A or a grade that the student "feels" they don't deserve gets a low evaluation. So, student evaluations are helpful for course design and feedback but not for evaluation of teaching ability. Also, hard subjects get low scores, easy A's get high scores. Has little to do with ability to teach -- it's like asking a patient to rate a surgeon's surgery skills -- they are uninformed and unsuited to evaluate the surgeon...
14. These 6 resolutions contextualize TRACE evaluations better and with the new revised questions, the focus is on meeting learning objectives rather than the instructor themselves.
15. TRACE should DEFINITELY only be part of assessing faculty because only the students who love you or hate you take the time to fill them out. Once I had a student with a severe mental health issue -- involving hallucinations--who bashed me because I set boundaries with her around her classroom behavior and because I suggested she seek support via CAPS. Such comments should not be determining my career future. Survey results should be available to faculty for more than 2 years, especially since we are often asked to teach classes that are outside of our expertise. We can always dig for reports on those classes that we teach the best--usually those that ARE in our areas of expertise--when applying for advancement opportunities. Yes, instructors should be able to include their own comments, for context when a student shreds us as described above.
16. Looks good to me.
17. Not sure what the questions are here, yes it seems better for #1 Revised questions - some are more obscure than before I didn't even know the Trace survey was being revised. The trace survey is not sent if less than 5 students! Yet it would still be useful for the instructor to get it, even if not integrated in overall statistics, but at least in merit review. Otherwise half of my courses are not taken into account!
18. Good
19. Overall it is more thoughtful than the previous version.
20. I like these changes.
21. If implemented well, #5.
22. It's fine. I don't think this will fix the problem with TRACE, which is that students will rate primarily based on the grade they got.
23. TRACE is garbage. Students are students--they shouldn't be the ones evaluating instructors. Open-ended questions are the only ones I look at
24. This survey will never capture what we intend to capture, it only captures what the student perceived about the course. I support items 5-6.
25. Explicitly shifting questions so that students are less likely to be biased due to environmental factors.
26. These are general improvements. This doesn't look into how these evaluation results will be used.

27. I find TRACE to be such a catch all -- so many of the questions do not really apply. I am not sure that the focus on learning outcomes really makes sense -- or at least not the way they have been structured in my department.
28. The entire system is based on a misunderstanding which is well documented in research, specifically, that students are, by definition, not masters of the material, and therefore are incapable of evaluating the teacher or teaching. As a result, it is both illogical and unfair (to them and to faculty) to suggest that they can do so, and instead results merely in a satisfaction survey, like a product rating. This is broken, and cannot be fixed. That said, I highly value student feedback, it simply needs to be asking the right questions and framed correctly. Students are very well placed to report on what happened in the classroom, what the instructor and students did. That information is very helpful as part of the information needed by qualified peers (other faculty) to make an assessment. Students should not be put in a position of assessing, just providing information. The 6 Points above represent a well-meaning effort by the Senate, however, the specific execution has some issues. To points 1 and 2, The proposed questions above are not well formed, and do not actually focus on facts. Further, they often group multiple factors together (perhaps in an effort to reduce question count) which will make evaluating any results difficult or impossible. Further, so many of the questions touch on issues outside the faculty control (e.g. classroom environment) yet are somehow in an "evaluation" of teaching. That's unacceptable. There are a number of large, validated, long-standing instruments to gather information from students about teaching. We don't need to invent this. Point 3 touches on something essential, although I would phrase it differently to focus primarily on the comprehensive evaluations of teaching effectiveness, rather than starting with TRACE. 4 and 5. TRACE scores should not be available to students, period. I don't want an opportunity (obligation) to provide a response, I want asinine or factually incorrect statements not to be public. 6 I don't know what people are imagining here, but I think incentivizing surveys is hard, and I cannot imagine a world where we "automate" the screening for "thoughtful." so this makes no sense, and I am strongly opposed.
29. paper always works better than the electronic forms. we get more results.
30. I think it is important that any TRACE questions (or parts of questions) do not imply there should be online activity for in-person courses -- as has been the case in past TRACE surveys (some students choose Not applicable and others must evaluate low). If you want to assess the value of the LMS environment to learning, then questions should be much more specific.
31. I think the incentives are a good idea.
32. This seems like a good idea, especially the time boundaries. The question about "time of day" will always get a bad response for 8 AM classes.
33. I like the 2 year status. Student need to be required to take or do not get grades if we are requiring this for advancement/tenure.
34. Indifferent. Students are overwhelmed by finals by the time these come out or they are done and checked out completely so the number of responses is never substantial.
35. I prefer "What is your overall rating of this instructor's teaching effectiveness?"
36. Thoughtfulness is necessary, and we don't often see it. I am grateful to the students who respond thoughtfully, and I understand the mental load at the end of the semester is intense. TRACE cannot

- be the end-all-be-all, and I will admit I am more concerned about TRACE this year with the academic environment being what it is. I'm hopeful that this revision will alleviate some of these concerns.
37. 6. could be good. Some instructors provide extra credit for filling in Trace (falls under "class participation") which I think is wrong.
 38. I'm very glad about #1 - this will provide much better feedback and a more fair rating for assessment. #5 will give faculty an opportunity to not let comments that aren't necessarily reflective of their teaching influence student perspectives so much.
 39. 3 seems crucial to me.
 40. Evaluation shouldn't be anonymous
 41. 1 & 2 seem reflected in the new survey. On 3, the Provost's Office makes it quite clear that they do not look at evaluations other than TRACE. No comment on 4. On 5: This would be a vast improvement — I often have students each semester who say that the syllabus did not help and then who also make clear that they never read the syllabus OR that the materials on Canvas were not helpful but who rarely engaged with Canvas. So, instructors need robust ways to speak back to these results. On 6: yes, we really need this. If only a small percentage of a class responds to TRACE then the results have an extremely low confidence level and are not worth reporting.
 42. 1 and 3.
 43. Some of these questions are not readily able to be addressed by students. I'm not even sure what they mean.
 44. I think it's important to increase response rate for students completing these surveys.
 45. I do NOT support #1 and #2. #3 through #6 all make sense.
 46. The new draft follows well the resolutions and *MUST* be adopted. We must stop using the current "teaching effectiveness" question, it is ill posed and subject to terrible bias
 47. 1, 3 and 5 are especially important
 48. 1, 3, 5, 6 This statement is excellent " we welcome student comments that are thoughtful, professional, constructive, and considerate"
 49. Most of the revised survey questions are well worded and pointed.
 50. TRACE IS TOO LONG! Remove the questions at the start about online stuff for in person courses. ALLOW incentives for student survey response. The evaluation response rates at NU are embarrassingly low. Remove extraneous questions that cause survey fatigue. ALLOW faculty to see prior TRACE evaluation results (or allow us to see what students have access to).
 51. I wish there was another way to gather student feedback. I also do not believe student's even look at the learning objectives, so I don't think they could accurately answer those questions. I like the notion behind #3 above, but do not feel it is really put into practice, I think there is still too much emphasis placed on them and the newer generation of students are not always objective. I am a Program Director and read all the TRACES and believe scores are based on personality as opposed to effectiveness and I do agree they are biased with respect to gender.
 52. Biggest strength is recognition that students have no idea how effective a teacher their professor is and that it asks students to be professional and constructive.
 53. #2 Rather than, or in addition to, a question about course materials, students should be asked how thoroughly they engaged with the materials. Often students will rate materials that they have not engaged with. #4 This can only bias students to expect certain outcomes. For example, an instructor

could change materials or classroom practices in response to a previous term's evaluation, but will get the same feedback from students because they were expecting particular deficiencies. #6 It is already easy to incentivize participation in trace. I don't understand this one.

54. Students should sign the trace evaluation.
55. Put this question back in: "What is your overall rating of this instructor's teaching effectiveness?"
56. I feel it is too long and much overlap of marginally significant aspects of courses. I know it is difficult to find a tool for all courses but trace asks irrelevant questions ...poorly relevant ...and skips vital ones....I learn the most from the open ended since the liker is in the eye of the beholder and really should not be used to compare .
57. I don't know.
58. need to remove questions based on grade
59. allowing instructors to include their own response statements
60. I think the new questions address some of the disparities I see btw on-ground and online sections of the same course.
61. The low response rate for TRACE is a problem. I hope the participation process improves.
62. Agree the old approach of a single OIE score had significant problems. This does not solve them.
63. TRACE should NOT be part of a faculty's evaluation! It's a popularity contest in which "easy" teachers get good ones, while the "hard" ones get bad ones.
64. Along with these revisions the faculty senate needs to clearly communicate how these new surveys results will be used for merit, in concrete and not vague ways.
65. 3
66. This is a much preferred and overdue revision.
67. I like that it emphasizes learning outcomes rather than entertainment values.
68. The aspect number 3 is the most important, since these surveys are biased due to SO MANY reasons. Due to the timing they are released, I am aware of some people that bribe students with extra points or promises of grade in exchange of filled TRACE evals. Also, students just got their grades and normally they are not very happy, so that is not very helpful.
69. TRACE needs to go. It is a lopsided survey where students anonymously hammer the professor if they are not getting a good grade -- it flies in the face of the university ethos where faculty are held to a grade curve, work hard to provide the best content they can, and when students can't meet it, they slam the professor - it's a joke
70. Replacing the "overall rating of teaching effectiveness" question is a significant improvement.
71. I think that all of these changes are good improvements! Many of my courses are asynchronous and online so my students don't know how to answer many of the questions, and this new version gives them appropriate options. The most important change to me is the removal of the "teaching effectiveness" rating because students generally don't know how to evaluate teaching effectiveness and it is better to have clearly defined questions.
72. It is appropriate to have revisited TRACE questions and its role for both faculty and students
73. I like the questions that hold students accountable for their own attendance and level of engagement, which affect their experience of the course and their ability to fairly assess the instructor. I also like the question about classroom conditions, which I feel can have a big impact on classroom dynamics and energy.

74. It asks students to reflect on diverse aspects of teaching pedagogy, which will likely lead to a better assessment of instructor effectiveness.
75. 5
76. These are the needed changes that we, the faculty, voted yes on last spring. I stand by them.
77. I'm not sure yet since I haven't been evaluated on this new TRACE
78. I feel that other pieces, in addition to TRACE, should be used to evaluate teaching effectiveness. Having incentives from outside of the instructor to complete TRACE would be welcome, so this doesn't always fall on the instructor.
79. #3
80. Taking away the overall effectiveness question will change how we report on TRACE.
81. Reducing the emphasis on TRACE in general, making the responses more open, encouraging students to reflect on their own behavior and participation in learning
82. These add more flexibility to the TRACE process, which is optimal.
83. I like point 3, and would be happy to see it strengthened further.
84. On 1: I don't think those questions are well-posed. Students are not often in a position to self-assess whether they were enabled to achieve various learning outcomes right at the end of a class without faculty taking the time to map for them how skills relate to those outcomes. I agree that "Overall rating of effectiveness" is not great, but the other options aren't great either...and just encourage a particular kind of metric....at least with the old question...a student might give a high score if they were inspired as opposed to just thinking narrowly about a particular leaning outcome that they aren't well-positioned to assess. 2. Some seem fine, some seem pretty bad. 3. Yes, absolutely. WE should use TRACE as only part of a more comprehensive assessment, but I'd be surprised to learn we aren't doing that already. 5. I don't think that's a good idea. But, I also don't know what people have in mind. 6. Depends on the incentives.
85. Seeking to revise TRACE is a positive undertaking.
86. Significant improvements.
87. in the few examples where the standards were CLEAR, the Qs were fine. Most were vague or even assumed problems.
88. I don't know what the 4th resolution means, but I think that TRACE results should not be made available to students. Many colleges and universities do not do this. Why does Northeastern do it? The comment redaction process does not work and the current system allows TRACE reports full of inaccurate and defamatory statements get put out. How is that okay? The evaluation should be for the faculty member and their department. Please do not incentive students to complete TRACE unless we want to admit that we live in a world where sponsored reviews on online shopping portals are deemed trustworthy.
89. Satisfied
90. So happy about #1, which was ridiculous. I would love to get rid of all numerical ratings and just have students provide comments.
91. TRACE evaluations should not be available to students at all. I see no justification for that.
92. Having incentives to complete the survey is a good idea.
93. TRACE evaluations should be discontinued altogether. They are inherently biased.
94. The changes are fine.

95. 6 is much needed. I like them all!
96. There are a few empirical questions about the students' class experience. These are good and will likely reflect what happened in the classroom.
97. This is great.
98. TRACE is one sided. Student responsibility for learning and collaborating with the faculty and classmates in the course is a very important factor. Some students are not committed or engaged no matter the faculty efforts. Teaching effectiveness is a 2 way street. The TRACE survey have very limited references student contribution to formative and competency based learning. What value is student access to TRACE results without context of course changes and review of generalized data and themes by the class?
99. All seem useful
100. I like these proposed changes.
101. Reflects student learning.
102. I am astounded to find out my past evaluations are released to students - including student comments! I have never heard of this - this seems like a huge violation of my privacy! So students - who in most cases - don't even attend class already have the power to keep me from getting a raise --- and now their unjustified comments are publicized?!!!
103. I think this is well meaning but pointless. you need a ratings system and I also doubt students use the TRACE more than Rate my Professor ratings. So I think we keep the overall effectiveness, while it is flawed it is still useful.
104. One strength of the revised TRACE survey is that it represents an effort to address long-standing issues with the evaluation process. It shows that the university recognizes the need for improvement in how teaching effectiveness is assessed. While TRACE has often been criticized for allowing student bias, such as personal preference for an instructor's personality or dissatisfaction with a grade, to influence scores, this revision at least indicates an awareness of those problems and a willingness to take steps toward a fairer and more meaningful system of evaluation.
105. Generates more accountability for the student
106. I agree in general with the above six resolutions. Regarding #4: I must confess I am not sure what the time window is for TRACE data availability to students, but I would support more transparency (just like I support administrative transparency). So whatever the maximum window of time for data available ("extend longer than 2 years") I would agree with. Unless I'm missing the intent of item #4 on this list.
107. It's important to recognize that student feedback can still reflect biases related to professor demographics such as gender and ethnicity. This supports point 3 that TRACE should not be the sole measure of teaching effectiveness.
108. 1. - Unlikely to get sufficient comments. 3. - TRACE was never supposed to be the only vehicle to measure teaching effectiveness.
109. No comment.
110. Provides more details on student views of course experience than current TRACE questions.
111. Some of the revised questions protect professors.
112. These all look like helpful changes, especially the incentives aspect, outlined in #6.
113. 5. is very good.

114. More quantifiable and actionable questions about the instructor.
115. I think a strength is that instructors have the opportunity to provide a statement with the survey. I think the term "automate incentives" for #6 is vague. Is everyone, instructor, dept, college and university giving students incentives? What sort of incentives would the university give?
116. 1. Great 2. -Students cannot assess their own mastery of content unless they have mastered the content. This question is not logical or helpful and only invites distress for students and faculty. This question will not yield useful data. -Questions regarding the class time, class location, number of students, noise, etc. are not within the control of the instructor and thus are not appropriate for a course evaluation. We also don't have to ask them if they're pleased with the aesthetics of the environment. When we ask them their opinions of things that they are not entitled to change or unable to change, it actually makes students experience more distress than less. They need predictability, not customizability. 3. Great 4. Great 5. This sounds nice in theory, but I personally would not take the time to do this and I don't think this is a good use of any faculty member's time. We as the ~grown-ups~ in the room can filter/translate the comments of young growing minds into the constructive things they mean to get at for our own purposes, but spending time either defending or justifying negative comments to prospective students just doesn't make a lot of sense. They don't have to take our classes if they don't want to, and if they do have to, whatever I have to say to my own TRACE comments isn't gonna make a lick of difference. I am okay with the reality that not all young people will like the way I teach, and I am going to do my very best to grow as an educator and then the best way I possibly can regardless of individual comments. 6. Not sure exactly what this looks like, but sounds fine
117. Number 6.
118. More comprehensive of the full experience of a course.
119. Asking the students more specific questions about what the teacher did as opposed to just ask them how efficient the teacher is is a good change.
120. I think these questions are largely more focused on the correct things that should be looked for when reviewing one's TRACE reports. That is, I think Resolution 1 was enacted well.
121. less room for Yelp-like feedback
122. TRACE surveys can be used as part of a more comprehensive assessment of teaching effectiveness in faculty merit, promotion, and tenure processes, alongside peer evaluations and instructors' teaching reflections.
123. That it acknowledges TRACE is a horrible experience for instructors. It feels like being mandatorily bullied at the end of each semester. I agree it is needed but it cannot be this long and this complex in language. The best thing would be not send the forms during finals week when they are out of their mind stressed.
124. 1. I agree with the idea to replace that question. 2. I agree with #2 for the revised questions. 3. Agree 4. Disagree 5. See #4 6. I agree very strongly with this. My previous institution had its system set up in a way that students could not (or assumed that they could not) see their grade without completing the evaluation. A result was that the completion rate was always well above 90 percent and therefore more reflective of student assessment. Here, the completion rate is much lower and therefore affords greater weight to students who are exceptionally motivated to fill it out, and this

often includes students who are angry about their expected grade, or who have a "beef" with the instructor.

- 125. This may diversify the reliance on a small number of TRACE questions if implemented well.
- 126. I oppose 3. TRACE being used for promotions and faculty merit. Student opinions can vary between cohorts and are often discriminatory. I taught the same course last semester with the same content to two different student cohorts and the TRACE responses and scores were wildly different. It is a good feedback tool for instructors to improve - which was its original intention. An overall input by the department unit head and their take on the feedback would probably be more important on faculty merit than raw student feedback.
- 127. I don't like #1, #3 (this is already the norm), #5. I don't understand #2 or #4. I like #6.
- 128. An improvement over the current form. Feels slightly shorter (less fatigue filling it in) and with questions that are more actionable and mostly in control of the instructor. I like that it includes at least one question that is OUTSIDE of the control (The classroom conditions) to (a) encourage students to reflect on whether that's biasing them, and (b) let faculty detect statistical biases with that control question.
- 129. All around, this revision is much better.
- 130. The questions seem more informative for teachers to actually use TRACE to improve a class. And #5 will be especially important for that.
- 131. I really think students are not well positioned to evaluate teaching. The initial "warning: or disclaimer does a poor job of delineating the consequences of usingn TRACE for personal attacks or to express unfair bias. There should be a note that says responses considered to deviate from that goal, and that in any way become personal in nature will be redacted or removed.
- 132. all fine
- 133. 3, 6, 2
- 134. I like all of these, especially #3
- 135. 6

What do you believe are the overall weaknesses of this revised version of the TRACE survey?

- 136. IT ASSUMES WE ARE USING online teaching methods when we may not be
- 137. That we are still relying on trace.
- 138. The question about classroom environment is posed with a negative intonation. Surveys with inconsistent framing may affect responses to questions that are placed later in the order. It is also strange that this is grouped together with a survey that is supposed to quantify the instructor's effectiveness. Should be a separate survey, perhaps.
- 139. Student evaluations are still quite subjective and it is very difficult to control for all kinds of variables that could affect ratings at a given time.
- 140. questions about achieving learning outcomes -- I suspect students largely won't remember what the stated LOs were for the course (and won't look at the syllabus) -- their answers will reflect any number of other things they happen to think about, and will likely just get to their overall preference for the course and/or instructor.

141. unsure
142. Need "not applicable" as a possible response for more questions. Some questions apply to conditions beyond the instructor's control such as room conditions or time of day. Prior research on student course evaluations suggested it is very difficult to avoid bias.
143. #6 - how will we know if a specific student submitted a thoughtful TRACE, what is the method of assessment for thoughtful responses?
144. I worry that some of the student who are not as well engaged with the course may not know what the learning objectives for the class actually are. This may affect some of the survey questions. I also worry about the incentives that might be used to increase participation. My wife found me that all drug representatives have to do is take a doctor out to lunch to get them to prescribe their medicines more frequently. This is a \$20 lunch for someone who is earning \$300,000 or more per year. How will these incentives alter the evaluations the students give? Hopefully there is some level of standardization so that there is a level playing field.
145. Too many questions. The question about the classroom is odd - instructors have no control over that.
146. In actual evaluations we still place too much emphasis on TRACE
147. Should indicate that TAs are evaluated separately.
148. The incentives point is odd. Students should not receive incentives.
149. Incentivizing students to submit surveys when they are not inclined to otherwise has the risk of really having data included that are not meaningful. It is not clear that the above will get away from the bias that is well documented in student scoring for instructors of certain races or genders. The fact that this is at all a part of promotion assessment remains a bit of a mystery to me.
150. I don't think all colleges use TRACE.
151. perhaps include a N/A or "not sure" option for all/most. Students may otherwise feel prompted to give a response for something not relevant to them. For "rigor", students may be inclined to want less rigor, which is not necessarily good for them, but a rigorous course may hurt faculty.
152. The wording of the questions is vague, unclear and highly subjective. Did you actually have a trial run with a set of students and debrief them - we call this think alouds in education research.
153. It provides almost no actionable information for the faculty member -- it is much too generic to be useful, I very much worry that the answers will reflect student characteristics rather than faculty performance. The only question with enough specificity to be helpful are the two open-ended questions. It would be better if the other questions were more specific and did not group so many different issues together. But mostly what is needed is a small handful of overall measures for promotion purposes, with an opportunity for colleges, units, and/or faculty to customize questions. Right now, the only way to really move forward in addressing issues in a class is to conduct separate surveys, and the act of conducting these surveys signals to students exactly how much of a waste of time TRACE is.
154. I'm still not sure that students are well placed to measure teaching effectiveness (as opposed to their own learning).
155. They incentivize only students at the extreme ends to participate. Last year I had whiplash reading them b/c the 2 poles were so contradictory in their evaluations.

156. One possible downside is comparison against evaluations at other institutions, since there will no longer be a "definitive" overall rating given by the students (such as when we nominate colleagues for external awards and they are compared against faculty from other institutions).
157. I'm not sure if students will know the course outcomes when they fill out the survey. So, I'm not sure if those questions will be valuable. For the question "What could be improved about the course", is this referring to the instructor's teaching style, or topics covered, or course logistics? Is it everything mentioned and open to interpretation by the student?
158. Some questions seem very indirect or repetitive - not always clear what you are asking the student to evaluate. See the ones where I didn't agree.
159. No
160. Some of the new questions can be ambiguous and can be interpreted differently by different students. For example, "What could I have done to make this course better for myself?" can be interpreted as asking what the students would do differently if they were to take the class again, or as what they would do to modify the course if they were the instructor of the course.
161. #3 was previously adopted by the Senate, and yet multiple academic units (including the Provost office) focus on a single numerical evaluation for merit & promotion. I'm not sure what #6 means? Why limit #4 to 2 years when evaluations/promotions look beyond that horizon?
162. This evaluation seems long, and students may lose interest. Consolidate the questions.
163. Only open-ended questions have any utility.
164. It allows too much subjectivity on the student's response (what is the intention to ask "My grades in this course reflect my mastery of the course learning outcomes" -- how do we know the student understands well those outcomes?) or ambiguity (e.g., regarding the classroom conditions, we will not know if it is the class size or the poor physical conditions of the classroom)
165. I think everything is fine except 3, which in my mind doesn't go far enough. So much research has been done to show that student evaluations are biased and do not correlate with learning. I do not think they should be used at all for merit, promotion, or tenure.
166. I did not know that the Faculty Senate had reworked TRACE.
167. The students likely won't remember what the actual learning outcomes were exactly, so those questions won't be accurate. There are some typos and grammatical changes needed. "This course had the expected amount of rigor in relation to the learning outcomes." If a student disagrees, you can't tell whether the course had more or less rigor than expected. There are too many questions.
168. Question: "The classroom conditions (i.e., time of day, class size, exterior noise, less aesthetic environment) negatively impacted my learning and achievement of learning outcomes." is confusing as it flips the scale and some students may not notice, and the "negatively" stated question causes unreliability in scoring. Some actions of the instructor that enable learning are not present in the TRACE survey, such as how well organized the course is, how prepared the instructor is to teach, how ready the instructor is to teach (is tardiness and/or class cancellation a common event?), etc.
169. Well, one major issue is this is the first I'm learning of it, I saw no debate or discussion in the spring semester, and I'm usually pretty good about tracking Senate (I read the agenda etc.) Why would you do this at end of term, during exams, before summer, and without a widespread communication effort in the colleges and departments?

170. the main problem is that i have been told every year by the committee that rates teaching performance that they do not use TRACE. so my question is: why do we have it if itv is not being used?
171. Many students do not look at or think about learning outcomes
172. Reference to learning outcomes is far from what students focus on, which is grades and specific deliverables.
173. There's still too many questions.
174. It doesn't make sense to still be asking about online interactions, and should absolutely not be the first set of questions asked. Second, the csv file download option does not include the numerical scores, it only gives the words associated with the score (if a student indicated Strongly Agree, that is literally in the spreadsheet, not the numbers), making it extremely difficult to analyze the data-- and also makes no sense to do this, the numbers must be in the system somewhere.
175. REMOVE ONLINE questions from COVID DAYS. brings down scores. I would change the what could done to improve this course.(students do not know that they don't know) Perhaps: What suggestions do you have to support your learning in this course.
176. Teaching evaluations are inherently subject to bias. Students who read prior evaluations may form impressions of an instructor before ever attending the course, and I have observed cases in which those pre-existing perceptions persist until students realize that the written comments do not accurately reflect their actual experience in the class.
177. 6. Enable the university, colleges, departments, and instructors to automate incentives to students to submit complete and thoughtful TRACE surveys. - only Colleges with extensive funding will be able to do this so the results will be skewed
178. TRACE will never be perfect, and I think we need to continue to find ways to evaluate courses (and instructors) that do so effectively, and humanely. I do not think this TRACE revision is perfect. Some of the questions in particular I imagine will result in frustrating results. It should probably be regularly evaluated.
179. 1. is a terrible idea. "Overall teaching effectiveness" is the best way to assess overall teaching effectiveness: students know if the course worked for them or not. The notion that very precisely posed questions somehow increase objectivity in overall assessment is dubious. 3. The teaching reflection bit, essentially, says that "you are now a better teacher because you wrote down why you are a bad teacher."
180. It is probably impossible to deal with bias related to instructor identity and/or gender and/or sexuality. But that seems an issue. I also think of these as "student satisfaction surveys" that do not actually measure knowledge acquisition. So a faculty member who is challenging can get lower numbers and yet students might learn more.
181. It is still too long
182. None of these changes do anything to work against the systemic bias that is robustly documented in student evaluations. No sign of AI in this version — and we do need to poll students anonymously on their non-approved AI use.
183. These questions do not remove biases.
184. Some of these things can be done while many of the questions are not easy to understand.
185. Not sure.

186. I think the anonymity of TRACE in general to then be used to evaluate Faculty performance is unfair as it does not portray a truthful picture. We are hoping that students are truthful about their own presence within the course but in my experience, it is generally the students who do not do well that respond to TRACE to gripe against the class & Professor - again, not effectively providing a clear picture of the Professor or the class.
187. The instructor has no control over the class environment (outside noise, climate, etc.). Students may confuse the classroom environment with how the instructor creates an environment conducive to learning. The question about rigor is too vague.
188. Students do not need multiple extra questions to criticize professor performance.
189. some of the questions are tied to students' definitions subjective terms like "rigor" ; some questions put a lot of emphasis on students being able to articulate the course goals that they are measuring against
190. The question on asking to rate the instructor's overall effectiveness should still remain. It is the value of this response that faculty report on their CVs and tenure & promotion materials. Why stop that question? It makes it difficult to put a number on faculty performance that could be compared across the university and outside the university.
191. As stated above, I don't think students pay attention to the learning outcomes. I also believe they don't use any outside course materials anymore so these scores are always lower. They do not even watch videos posted ahead, they want to be "lectured" on all the content although it conflicts with best evidence for teaching and learning.
192. It does not recognize that some courses don't have grades throughout (like at the law school)
193. It seems very similar to the original TRACE evaluation. Some questions request feedback on students individual experiences (good), while other request student to assess things like expected rigor and clarity of presentation for which personal scales will differ.
194. Put this question back in: "What is your overall rating of this instructor's teaching effectiveness?"
195. too long
196. Too many questions
197. not trace itself, but how schools use trace in performance review; some questions simply do not count
198. asking students to contrast their learning with grades
199. You are assuming the students know what the course learning outcomes are (which I suspect most students don't). For these CLO-related questions, I think it will be important to state what the CLOs are (so students are not relying on what they think they are..)
200. One way or another, TRACE will get mapped to a single number to facilitate review of large numbers of faculty for merit. We might as well come up with a uniform way of doing this, rather than leaving the derivation of this function up to each unit. A multi-dimensional composite scale measure - that maps to a single number - seems the least of all evils.
201. There should be a few more student focused questions, meaning they should be owning and evaluating their own learning through out the semester in addition to the one sided faculty feedback when evaluating the course.

202. I think student feedback is really important, as long as the sample size is big enough so that it weeds out the overly critical or the overall enthusiastic student.
203. The rationale for TRACE results to be available to students is not self-evident. Who does it benefit, students or faculty? Some of the revised questions also have some inherent weaknesses. "The syllabus was accurate and helpful in delineating expectations and course outcomes." "Required and additional course materials were helpful in achieving course outcomes." "Indicate whether you met all/most/some/few/none of the learning outcomes for the course." "This course had the expected amount of rigor in relation to the learning outcomes." These questions assume that students are rational enough and engaged with the basic course material such as syllabus to delineate what is being asked and form an answer. In my observations, many students cannot connect these features. Many have not even read the syllabus – may have at start of the class – and so have no idea what the outcomes are. Many also do not read the materials of the syllabus. As such, these questions are not good measures. My guess is that a student who fills out TRACE will be annoyed by having to “think” about the materials and outcomes. "My grades in this course reflect my mastery of the course learning outcomes." I see no relevance for this question. Grades do not necessary mean the student has mastered the outcomes. "The instructor explained how I would be graded in this course." Ok, but this is only done at the beginning of the course; in my practice during the first meeting. What if the student joined later? Or the student paid no attention? And while I share my materials on Canvas including grade distribution and rubrics, what if a student didn't bother to pay attention or check? "The instructor helped the students identify ways to master the learning outcomes." This lays responsibility on the faculty. But faculty cannot be chasing a student to explain to them about the course. And while faculty have office hours, few students take advantage of that. I tell my students I have an open door policy
204. It is very unclear and students won't know how to interpret most of the questions. For example, This course had the expected amount of rigor in relation to the learning outcomes. — I have no idea what students expect the level of rigor to be and I wouldn't know from this question whether they expected it to be more or less rigorous.
205. eliminate anonymous evaluation
206. it is useless -- want to critique professors, do audits - don't ask the students
207. While maybe not a weakness, the number of additional questions might result in less overall completion of the surveys.
208. Will students know how to differentiate between learning outcomes and course outcomes? I think students will not know what a "course environment" consists of. Is it the physical classroom space and meetings? If so, should there be an option for "online course"? Or, should there be a clarifier statement something like, "for online courses, consider opportunities for engagement with peers and faculty (e.g., discussion boards, lectures, assignments, etc.)"
209. Most undergraduate students are not aware of how to evaluate "expected rigor" or an environment that "enables learning." Very few students will know the expected learning outcomes of a course. And very few students will be able to fairly evaluate whether their grade reflects their mastery.
210. I'm not sure the new questions are any more useful than the old ones
211. Some questions seem like run on sentences. Could be split into 2 sentences.

212. For some questions, e.g., "My grades in this course reflect my mastery of the course learning outcomes," the student's perspective is perhaps an interesting data point but they don't always have the context (as non-experts) to accurately assess whether this is true.
213. Some questions related to learning outcomes require an understanding that is above what can be expected of students. It is known students are poor at assessing their own learning. Learning outcomes (even good ones) still rely in a lot of subjectivity. Ex: "Students should be able to compare classic sorting algorithms on multiple metrics" How deep one need to be able to compare two algorithms get an A? Students and instructors may disagree on that. This will be more likely for higher order (analysis / synthesis / evaluation) skills. I believe the questions should not asks students to do the instructor's job (actually judge whether students achieved the LOs) but focus on how effective the methods used by the instructors' helped students to move towards the LOs.
214. Trace by nature is good as long as it is not used for promotion and a tool to suppress faculty or used as a tool of retaliation for the students as they know it will be used against the faculty
215. None.
216. There is an excessive focus on "learning outcomes" terminology, and I think this makes the associated items unclear and vague
217. I'm not sure yet since I haven't been evaluated on this new TRACE
218. I don't think that the question about overall rating of instructor's teaching effectiveness should be removed, as this is an objective measure that allows for faculty to set goals and understand effectiveness related to the unit/college/university.
219. Categories that are not under the control of the instructor (for instance, classroom conditions, time of day, exterior noise, aesthetics) should not be part of our TRACE evals. Faculty should be asked to rate their classroom environments, not students. TRACE eval results are still emphasized too much for merit and promotion decisions. Incentivizing student responses are not necessarily a way to get more thoughtful responses.
220. The problem with linking so much of the survey explicitly to learning objectives is that the students will not be able to bring specific learning objective to mind when filling out the TRACE evaluations.
221. Questions that bring in grades. That should be an entirely separate conversation.
222. Some survey questions still contain too many different issues in a single question. We know from survey research that this leads to different respondents utilizing different parts of the question in making their responses, making it difficult to interpret the results.
223. I still expect women and visible minorities to receive lower marks for the same quality.
224. Too many questions asking students to assess things (like "rigor") that they aren't in a position to assess or evaluate.
225. These revisions need a great deal more vetting.
226. Many of these current draft questions actually put the onus for student success on the instructor. They also ask students a lot of questions about content and pedagogy that they don't actually have the knowledge and experience to answer. These questions, and student evals in general, as *so* much research has shown really boil down to how the student "vibed" in the class and their feelings about the professor's personal attributes and the degree to which the student had

to endure (or not) the discomfort that should be inherent to learning to arrive at the high grade they wanted/expected.

- 227. see above.
- 228. The questions above could be improved even more
- 229. Definitely better than before. I have always felt that evaluations should be available only to the instructor and his/her supervisor. Results should not be made public.
- 230. Any question that asks about whether the rigor of the class was appropriate or if the grading was appropriate leads to declining expectations and grade inflation. Why would students be equipped to evaluate whether a class is appropriately difficult?
- 231. The hours outside of class breakdown does not have sufficient granularity at the high end to properly address Masters courses (which have higher hours expectations per week)
- 232. I think the overall rating is still useful. I wouldn't remove that.
- 233. TRACE evaluations should be discontinued altogether. They are inherently biased.
- 234. Nothing is particularly weak.
- 235. Complicated questions asking students to judge synergies between three abstract concepts are more likely to reflect whether the student liked the course/instructor, than whether any of the specific relationships are valid. Asking students about rigor as relates to level, questions that rely upon the students knowledge of the course outcomes are unlikely to produce accurate information.
- 236. None?
- 237. Noted above.
- 238. Too much weight is put on the difference between Agree and Strongly Agree in evaluating faculty. Research shows 5 points scales like this are problematic
<https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/simple-thumbs-up-down-eliminates-racial-bias-wfieee/>
- 239. Can we change the 'average' score to the median score? Statistically, we should always go with the median unless the scores are a bell curve.
- 240. Response rate too low.
- 241. I doubt the student knows what the learning outcomes are for the course. So putting that in lots of questions is strange. Some of the questions are ridiculous like "The instructor helped the students identify ways to master the learning outcomes." -- really? Isn't that what the syllabus is for? I have a great idea, do the homework! Is that identifying ways? Or how about this gem "The instructor explained how I would be graded in this course." -- again isn't the syllabus supposed to do this? Is n't is required to do that in the syllabus. And now you are asking students did teh instructor explain? What if they say "no" then you take a look at the syllabus and its there? "The instructor created opportunities for me to be engaged in the course." What does it mean to "be engaged in the course"? What are instructors supposed to do to create opportunities for each person?
- 242. A major weakness of the revised TRACE survey is that it still leaves room for personal bias and unprofessional comments from students, especially when they are unhappy with their grades. The system continues to allow evaluations to be used as a form of retaliation rather than constructive feedback. Faculty also have no meaningful opportunity to respond to or contextualize unfair evaluations, which undermines the accuracy and usefulness of the data in assessing teaching effectiveness.
- 243. Still doesn't fully account for the student. Final grade or other metrics not attached to TRACE

244. "Indicate whether you met all/most/some/few/none of the learning outcomes for the course." question. I think students will either gloss over the question and treat just like they did "learned a lot in this course" or get annoyed at feeling like they are experiencing a pop quiz and then either (if they like the instructor) rate highest or (if they personally dislike the instructor) rate lowest. I think there will be a lot of noise in the data.
245. It won't give faculty much help in building cases for promotion and tenure.
246. trace asks many questions that are irrelevant. out of the two dozen questions, only four are used in the annual evaluation and truly only one matters (instructor evaluation). simplifying the survey would increase participation
247. Any question that uses rigor inherently biases the answer. Quantitative courses are graded as "high rigor" and qualitative/soft skill courses are graded as "low rigor." Remove this question.
248. unsure that students may understand to what extent learning outcomes are met or how well they learned - sometimes that takes more than the end of a class until the learning and experience sets in
249. No comment.
250. I have some reservation over this question: "My grades in this course reflect my mastery of the course learning outcomes" . Many students (Except for A students) would disagree with this statement.
251. I have never heard of teaching evaluations being shared with students. This will create too much anxiety among faculty who want to hold their students up to a certain standard, especially related to students who have difficulties reflecting on their own roles in learning.
252. The whole TRACE system is skewed towards students with a negative view of the course or instructor. In a class of 20, for example, if only half the students complete the TRACE, the results will be strongly biased by the 2 or 3 students with negative inputs. We can reject their comments if they are outrageous or patently false, but the numerical scores remain. If TRACE scores are part of the merit process, then professors/instructors are pressured to please the students to get good scores, which leads to easier classes where everyone gets an A to limit potential bad reviews. Students won't learn anything and professors can't challenge them to learn or tackle difficult topics - and this diminishes the reputation of NU when graduates enter the workforce with limited skills and knowledge but amazing GPAs
253. Trace surveys should not be made available to students. I do not see the point of this, since the circumstances of the evaluations will not be available to students (ex: Covid years). We also know that student evaluations are very subjective, yet having student see them will set up expectations and attitudes for the new students.
254. Students will not know or care what the "learning outcomes" specifically are... so why ask if those have been satisfied?
255. I think students gauging their own mastery of the learning outcomes is a little bit tricky. Students, especially novices, will often swear they know information and then do poorly on exams designed to show whether or not they know the material. So, asking them whether they met the learning outcomes or if their grade shows it opens up a nebulous area of their self evaluation of the material--often by a novice in the very topic they are being asked to judge their mastery of. I don't disagree that there should be some kind of question where they reflect on how well they think they

retained the information in the class, or whether they were given opportunities to demonstrate their mastery, or journey toward improvement. However, I would wager A) most students don't even know the learning outcomes, despite them being prominent on the syllabus B) most students don't read the syllabus (despite assignments designed to get them to do so) and C) at a novice level, many students are not well positioned to judge if they have achieved mastery by their own estimation. Suggestions for qualifiers about syllabus and confidence in evaluating mastery are provided in next question.

256. Understanding how a student is experiencing a course is extremely important. Changing a course so that it fits every student preference and desire is not helpful to them. Asking them questions about things we *can* change and things they *can* tell us is good and necessary. Asking them questions about things we *cannot* change and things they *cannot* assess does not make them feel more heard; it invites further distress when those desires cannot be met. Part of our job as educators is to teach them how to show resilience in the face of obstacles. Removing obstacles for their comfort and therefore also mine is antithetical to teaching and growing.
257. Need to differentiate course and instructor. No student questions to provide context for the survey results. Merit evaluation should not be based on TRACE due to various factors (e.g., core vs electives, course level, size, etc.) TRACE should be for the entire curriculum or concentrate, not just for one class. The length of time provided to students to take the TRACE is too long.
258. Allowing instructors to create their own responses is fraught with challenges and I am not convinced it is an appropriate path forward.
259. More time consuming
260. If TRACE is to be used as a tool for promotion of faculty, then it is no place for a question asking about the classroom environment that is out of the control of the faculty. I think it is a useful metric to keep track of for Facilities, but it doesn't belong in the faculty TRACE reports.
261. TRACE survey results should be made available to students for 2 years before the current academic year, for the last 2 times the instructor has taught the course, or for an extended period of more than 2 years.
262. I didn't have much agency over my classroom selection and it had some issues (e.g., broken air conditioning) - seems unfair if this could hurt my evaluations.
263. The language is very hard for 18-22 year olds during their finals week to fully comprehend and fairly judge. Language needs to be satisfied. The number of questions should be reduced. It just is not going to get any accurate data. Instructor effectiveness was better for fast interpretation even being very vague.
264. None that I can foresee, though I may ultimately be proved wrong on this.
265. However, most of the questions proposed as additions require students to make comparisons on dimensions for which they are unlikely to have any real point of reference. For instance, "This course had the expected amount of rigor in relation to the learning outcomes," feels wildly vague and assumes that students crave rigor as opposed to an easy course. It's not clear to me that these will provide any further nuance beyond the baseline TRACE questions which we already know are biased in many ways and ultimately act as a customer satisfaction survey rather than an actual evaluation of learning or effectiveness. Further if we're going to allow other methods like peer evaluation or self-reflection to be added as part of the merit and review process, this creates much

more likelihood for subjectivity - which may be good as it gets away from biased responses on TRACE which can otherwise appear objective but are not, but in such a case, what are we really using TRACE for anyway?

266. I thought the gist of it all looks OK but quite a few questions are written in a vague or ineffective way.
267. I don't like #1, #3 (this is already the norm), #5. I don't understand #2 or #4. I like #6.
268. Evaluations are still heavily dependent on each student's subjective judgment of the instructor. If the student was challenged, it is very likely they will provide a negative evaluation. The students who did well tend to not even fill out the evaluations. Thus, there is pervasive bias.
269. Students are already reluctant to complete TRACE and I do not know if any of these changes will address that. I think if students understood how the University uses TRACE (vs. how teachers use TRACE) it would change the way they fill it out. I think the university should publish TRACE ratings by dept and by race and gender of the teachers so students can see any implicit bias in the way they fill out these surveys - for an example
https://benschmidt.org/profGender/#%7B%22database%22%3A%22RMP%22%2C%22plotType%22%3A%22pointchart%22%2C%22method%22%3A%22return_json%22%2C%22search_limits%22%3A%7B%22word%22%3A%5B%22his%20kids%22%2C%22her%20kids%22%5D%2C%22department__id%22%3A%7B%22%24lte%22%3A%25%7D%7D%2C%22aesthetic%22%3A%7B%22x%22%3A%22WordsPerMillion%22%2C%22y%22%3A%22department%22%2C%22color%22%3A%22gender%22%7D%2C%22counttype%22%3A%5B%22WordCount%22%2C%22TotalWords%22%5D%2C%22groups%22%3A%5B%22unigram%22%5D%2C%22testGroup%22%3A%22D%22%7D
270. Student evaluations of teaching are known to be flawed instruments. Any question about how grading is done is a waste of time. Questions about how professors present information are built for expressing bias.
271. 1. There's no distinction between students that attend class and the ones that view recorded lectures or attend virtually. 2. The questions don't allow the students to gain any sense of accountability. 3. Students should be required to provide their most recent course assessment (current grade total and/or anticipated grade). The instructors should be able to correlate each survey respondent's performance with their assessment of the instructor effectiveness.
272. Without a demonstrated history, 3 is going to be challenging to put faith in. Realizing 3 will take effort and time.
273. Far too many questions which will distract students from providing targeted, self-directed feedback. It's hard enough to get anyone to complete any surveys, and this seems to unnecessarily complicate this process.

What specific changes would you like to see to this draft of the updated TRACE?

274. don't assume use of online teaching or A1
275. For the attendance question - I would change the percentages • 90-100% • 80- 89% • 70-79%
60- 69 - Less than 60%
276. More of a definition of learning outcomes, most students won't know what the learning outcomes of the course are meant to be.

277. "The classroom conditions (i.e., time of day, class size, exterior noise, less aesthetic environment) negatively impacted my learning and achievement of learning outcomes." This question addresses aspects of the course over which the faculty member has no control.
278. I disagree with the changes. It's an imperfect measure but generally speaking, effective teachers will receive high TRACE scores and ineffective teachers will receive low scores. Ineffective teachers will continue to receive low TRACE scores, but now, it seems they will be able to complain about it.
279. question about hours worked outside of class has an answer option that is not relevant (about lack of class meetings)
280. keep questions concrete and without opinion
281. There should be less questions overall, student attention spans are incredibly short and therefore we cannot expect them to answer so many questions with meaningful responses. Students treat TRACE like a Yelp review and we need to train them about the importance of quality responses.
282. students do not know how to teach effectively, and we should stop asking them to evaluate these areas
283. Fewer questions.
284. TRACE should not be used in any way for merit or promotion. This is the opposite of inclusive practice to foster a culture of belonging. There are mountains of research on this.
285. Looks good. Let's implement it and revisit it in few years.
286. Some of the questions listed on this page just don't make sense - like the one related to hours/week of time spent outside the classroom which has as an option 'this course did not have scheduled meeting times'?
287. Read the questions as a student would. Define terms that need definition. For instance, what does "engagement" mean to a student. I would strongly encourage this committee to run these questions by undergrad and grad students for their input. I would also suggest that we greatly simplify the evaluations to no more than 5 questions.
288. I was unaware that you were revamping it. Why wasn't faculty feedback solicited before you approved this version? This seems backwards to me.
289. There are many. (1) Preface is too long. Students will not read it. (2) What do people do with the attendance information? Are we supposed to discount the information of students who never show up? Or weigh it more heavily? Also, in many classes this could easily be identifying data, if answered honestly. I would drop it. (3) The number of hours per week outside of the class is very low and may reinforce for students the mistaken impression that they should only be doing a few hours of work outside of class. According to our formal policies, the number of hours of work expected outside of class for a 4-credit class is 8-12. The question structure may suggest to students that 8-10 hours is at the high end of expectations and anything over 10 is too much. At the very least, I would add a 11-12 and an over 12 category. (4) Many students do not read our overly long and boilerplate-stuffed syllabi. If you asked students to tell you what learning outcomes are on the syllabus, I suspect that most would not be able to tell you even if you asked in the first week of classes. It is not appropriate to assume that the students know this in the last week of classes. You might argue that if students disagree with the statement, that demonstrates that the syllabus needs to be better. But I actually am not sure that you could infer this from a "disagree" statement. A "disagree" is more likely to

express frustration that a course did not deliver what the _student_ wanted to get out of the course. Which might be useful, too, but is not what the question is asking. (5) What is a "course session" and how does it apply to asynch courses that have a mix of Canvas written content (or pictures/other graphics) and recorded lectures? When faculty use a mix of modalities, how much info does this question provide? Could we ask specifically about Canvas materials and then ask separately about live or recorded content delivered by professors? Can we have a branching survey design that allows for different questions depending on modality? (6) The two grading questions are one too many. These questions will pick up annoyance about grading generally. (7) The classroom conditions questions is useless as is, except if it prompts comments in how the course could be improved, and if it does that, complaints over a too hot/too cold/too crowded classroom might displace more substantive concerns, now that you have prompted the question. I might think about moving this question later and asking it only as an open-ended question -- that would be really interesting, actually. Note that I think you probably mean "e.g." rather than "i.e." and it is better to say "such as" then to use either abbreviation. (8) The professor helped students to identify ways to master learning outcomes -- what is the thinking behind this question? All of the assigned work in the course are ways to master learning outcomes. Are you looking for students to comment on whether professors gave them study guides? This question is unclear and I don't think the responses would be easily interpretable. If the faculty senate is going to dictate a single survey for all classes at this extraordinarily diverse university, with a multitude of courses, programs, geographies, student profiles, course modalities, course formats, course learning outcomes, program learning outcomes, professor experience, professor goals, etc., the stakes are extremely high. These surveys take countless hours to take and to review. It is so important to spend serious time on testing these questions with different faculty and student populations, making sure that they are eliciting information we think they are eliciting, and making especially sure that information is actionable to a large enough number of users to justify the considerable investment.

- 290. TRACE in general has too many overlapping questions. Also, I'd like to see students who withdraw from the course have their survey submissions not included.
- 291. None, let's give this a go!
- 292. I think the weakness relies on the question ""This course had the expected amount of rigor in relation to the learning outcomes. " how are students who are new to the topic and materials covered on the course have an opinion on the rigor. I think this questions could be more precise, what are we really trying to ask students here?
- 293. Remove "helpfull" for materials or course sessions, this makes no sense, instead it could be "the materials were relevant and clear" or "the course sessions were well.organized and planned". And reword "learning outcomes", too obscure for students, instead it could be "I ended up learning more/less than I expected" or something like that.
- 294. Remove the ambiguity in the questions. Also, what is the purpose of asking about the classroom? It is not something that the instructor can decide on. Also, it should be explained more clearly how the TRACE results will be used in promotion. Now that there is not an overall score, would a weighted score be calculated?

295. Trace simply doesn't work as there is low participation and so mostly it is a way for students to complain or for faculty to encourage a few students to say nice things, but doesn't do a good job representing the actual teach/learning experience.
296. It would be helpful for faculty to see TRACE results like students can of all their classes.
297. More specificity on items 1 and 6.
298. "Required and additional course materials were helpful in achieving course outcomes." - Separate this out (required vs additional)
299. I like the new version of TRACE. The specific changes I'd like to see are NOT using one single trace score in decisions for merit, promotion, and the fake-sabbatical fellowship. We can read comments and look for thoughtful ways to make improvements. But it is not ok to evaluate my job performance on the opinions of 100 19-year-olds.
300. Only open-ended questions allowed. No damnable 'scores' anymore
301. Take the burden away from faculty to get students to fill it out. For example, require evaluations before you can view your final grade or make the colleges require it.
302. I think everything is fine except 3, which in my mind doesn't go far enough. So much research has been done to show that student evaluations are biased and do not correlate with learning. I do not think they should be used at all for merit, promotion, or tenure.
303. Is this the full draft?
304. See overall weakness above.
305. I think that there needs to be a statement added that summarizes how evaluations like TRACE can pick up bias toward particular groups (e.g., women, ESL, underrepresented minorities) of people and how students should check the bias and be mindful when filling it out.
306. You cannot reasonably send around this consolidated survey with dozens of questions and expect me to come up with a coherent set of suggestions on the fly, with no preparatory work, and at this one moment in time. I appreciate the desire to have a single survey, but this is the wrong place for this kind of question, to open-ended, unlikely to yield anything useful> You need to design a better process to gather this kind of feedback. Right now this feels like at best a misguided request, and at worse a deliberate way to limit participation. Do better senate!
307. Make the survey shorter!
308. I think that there should be a faculty-facing TRACE where they can optionally submit one for their students. These would be matched up in the system automatically, and professors would never be able to see the two side-by-side, preserving anonymity. Thus, when others are reviewing a potentially negative comment, they may also see where a professor noted that the student had not attended many classes, engaged in academic dishonesty, etc... This would help avoid the case of a student's retaliatory behavior skewing data.
309. If online interaction questions must be asked, they should be moved to later in the survey (just like demographic questions should not be asked at the beginning of a survey); the report formats should be more like the old ones. The new format is useless beyond the actual student responses. I have known faculty who carry out very detailed analysis, comparing numerical scores on given questions, etc. and the new output format makes this likely not worth the additional time, which is too bad.

310. ADD QUESTION: ASK STUDENTS ON TRACE IF THEY HAVE DISCUSSED THEIR CONCERNS WITH THE PROFESSOR PRIOR TO TRACE. IF SO HOW MANY TIMES... STUDENTS WAIT TO BRING UP ISSUE IN TRACE AND THERE IS NOTHING TO DO TO CHANGE AT THAT POINT. REMOVE ONLINE questions from COVID DAYS. brings down scores. I would change the what could done to improve this course.(students do not know that they don't know) Perhaps: What suggestions do you have to support your learning in this course.
311. none
312. If we can't get rid of TRACE evaluations then they should be mandatory. Students won't be able to access their grades for the semester until they complete their evaluations.
313. keep "What is your overall rating of this instructor's teaching effectiveness?"
314. I think students will struggle to accurately assess their mastery around learning outcomes generally, especially in 1000+2000 level courses. I'm not against the questions but I fear they'll be unproductive/inflate the time it takes to complete TRACE, which is an obstacle for students (...it isn't a huge ask, but students want to get through these quickly at the end of the semester). With the question about their grade reflecting mastery...I fear students have too many big feelings about grades to accurately reflect on that.
315. Retain the overall effectiveness question, as one of many measures. It carries significant value in assessing teaching quality and allows instructors to "signal" their teaching effectiveness in a manner that potential employers can easily understand. Winsorize numerical data, i.e., push each of the tails in ratings toward the median. This mitigates the impact of outliers without removing them. It is common practice in empirical work in economics.
316. I don't think it's fair to include a question about the impact of the physical classroom environment in this context because a negative rating would then reflect on the instructor when they have no control over that.
317. The evaluative questions (e.g. the syllabus being helpful) need to be accompanied by responsibility questions (for example, whether the student actually read the full syllabus).
318. Questions included that root out bias so those TRACE can be excluded from use.
319. Not sure.
320. Get rid of open ended questions, tie students response to TRACE to something University wise so students are incentivized to complete it for all courses.
321. I think we need to keep the "overall rating of this instructor's teaching effectiveness" question, and not replace it with all of these specific questions that lead them to focus on aspects of teaching that they likely don't understand or have the capacity to accurately assess.
322. None, I would like to see it implemented starting this semester going forward!!
323. I think there should be language that explains to students how these are used and positioned in the faculty evaluation/retention process.
324. Resolution 4 should have a time limit where only the 2 most recent evaluations for an instructor for a specific course are available. All the rest should be removed. This question "What could be improved about the course? _____ (open ended)" should add in comments similar to the opening paragraph " we welcome student comments that are thoughtful, professional, constructive, and considerate"
325. Put the question back in on rating the overall effectiveness of the instructor.

- 326. REDUCE its length!
- 327. To address my point above. Also don't like question: This course had the expected amount of rigor in relation to the learning outcomes. (Don't think students are in a position to decide what level of rigor should be.)
- 328. Removal of the question about the classroom, faculty have no control over where/how classes are roomed, and this has no bearing on instructor effectiveness.
- 329. Put this question back in: "What is your overall rating of this instructor's teaching effectiveness?"
- 330. Let faculty add course relevant question
- 331. Reduce the number questions
- 332. I would like to see inclusion of items about AI use in course
- 333. For CLO-related questions, I think it will be important to state what the CLOs are (so students are not relying on what they think they are..)
- 334. see above.
- 335. Do NOT use it at all!
- 336. Explain the university policy about study time related to credits, and ask the students did they spend the appropriate time studying? Did their grade reflect that. Did they reach out to the faculty for support, questions etc. Did they feel supported when they engaged with the faculty? Were they actively engaged through out the semester? Did they participate in the extra study sessions or seminars offered by the faculty to support their learning?
- 337. This is a minor thing, but it's 2025 -- it's well past time to drop all that "master" language...
- 338. It would be nice to have students reflect on one project/test/paper they completed in the class and ask for their feedback on how it was presented, graded, lessons learned, etc.
- 339. Above.
- 340. I would like to see a smaller list of questions that are focused only on things in the control of the instructor, phrased in language the students can understand.
- 341. eliminate anonymous evaluation
- 342. get rid of it
- 343. ""This course had the expected amount of rigor in relation to the learning outcomes" doesn't make sense to me. What is "rigor"? Will a student understand that other than as the number of assignments? What will students know or remember about the learning outcomes?
- 344. I would like to see an option to drop or investigate a negative TRACE rating - not all, but one per course per term (e.g., like "dropping the lowest quiz score" in grading). I appreciate the option to withhold a comment that is a personal attack but I recently had a student that turned in wholly negative ratings even though their comments were not negative. I wonder whether they filled out the form incorrectly. Or, perhaps they really thought I did a poor job teaching the course. Although the other students in the course all rated my performance highly, this one evaluation brought down the average rating due to the overall enrollment of the course. Now that number has to be part of my annual evaluation, my promotion materials, etc. I have no recourse and no understanding. I agree that ratings serve a purpose and I am not advocating for wiping out all negative ratings but I do think there should be the option to either drop the lowest rating in a course section, particularly if it is an anomaly, OR reduce the weight of these numbers in terms of their importance for faculty

merit and promotion. I also would like to see this item state, "The syllabus AND/OR CANVAS LAYOUT was accurate and helpful in delineating expectations and course outcomes.

345. "The course had no scheduled meetings" is completely unrelated to the question "The number of hours per week I devoted to this course outside scheduled class meeting time."

346. Not a comment about the survey itself, but rather about the execution: Students should be required to complete TRACE evaluations. It's surprising that after all these years, a tool that plays such a significant role in annual reviews and promotions is still not mandatory for all students. Without full participation, the results are skewed and unrepresentative, essentially a collection of outliers rather than a reliable measure of teaching effectiveness.

347. A lot of the above questions are enormously vague ("The instructor helped the students identify ways to master the learning outcomes.") or overbroad ("You are encouraged to evaluate..."), or they ask students to self-report activities that they were almost definitely not keeping track of ("The number of hours per week..."). I would also be skeptical of the value of questions that essentially ask students if they paid attention to the class guidelines/syllabus ("The instructor explained how I would be graded in this course.").

348. See above

349. "How often did you attend this course? -> would be better to more concrete like the existing question about hours of study. Suggestion: "The number of class meetings I missed for any reason is:" "The instructor helped the students identify ways to master the learning outcomes." -> do you mean alternative ways? For example using a different book or practicing in a different way? Otherwise the way is already identified by the instructor in the form of the course structure. If it is an alternative way, there should be a question on whether the student has asked for help. Suggestion: an additional question would be "I have sought or made use of additional help, such as instructor office hours, TAs, writing center, etc.." "My grades in this course reflect my mastery of the course learning outcomes." -> the intention is good, but not sure how this would be different than "are you happy with your grade?" Because the perception of mastery can be very different between student and instructor. Another issue is that a student may have issues with a single grade in the course in which case they would honestly disagree with a question mentioning every graded activity. What seems more relevant is the average (or single course grade). One can probably get more accurate answers by considering each LO as binary and looking into the total course outcome. Suggestion:: "My grade in this course is consistent with the [number of] learning outcomes I achieved." ""This course had the expected amount of rigor in relation to the learning outcomes. " -> expected with relation to what? Does "expected" refers to student expectation when they enrolled or according the the syllabus? Is "rigor" referring to rigor in evaluating the learning outcomes or addressing all outcomes with sufficient depth? Not clear what the goal is here. If it is both, make two questions and rewrite making it clear. Avoid "in relation".

350. Students' self-assessment of whether they achieved learning outcomes is questionable.

351. Anonymous ratings have serious limitations. End TRACE.

352. None.

353. Some questions could differentiate among the instructor's overall work, versus the course content itself -- to allow answers like "The material was boring but the instructor worked hard to make it interesting". "The instructor explained how I would be graded in this course." is okay, but I

think it possibly be accompanied with a question like "I feel that grades were assessed fairly in this course" or maybe combined as "Expectations for how my grade was determined were clear and fair"

- 354. I think we should update department/university policies on how TRACE scores are used in promotion
- 355. a different trace form needs to be created for practicum and internship courses (other versions of experiential learning courses); the items pertaining to online instruction should only be listed for online courses and in-person only for in-person courses
- 356. Did the student use resources not provided/recommended by the faculty in the course? If so, what? Have them explain how they formed their expectations of the course (e.g., syllabus, friends who took it previously, course catalog, etc.)
- 357. Students already have the ability to rate their professors in a public way, so #4 seems redundant and unnecessary.
- 358. TRACE evaluations MUST be made mandatory. Too often ratings are based on a few disgruntled students who bother to fill them out.
- 359. Student discussion of what they enjoyed about the course.
- 360. Eliminate all language about grading
- 361. Keep questions more targeted. I'd also suggest enabling instructor choice in some of the questions. Perhaps there could be 3-5 standard questions, but then instructors could choose from a bank of 20-30 other questions so they can get feedback on more specific aspects they'd like to learn about for their own learning. Some of the standard questions are not very relevant for my classroom purposes (or a specific class), and so I find much of the useful info to be in the students' written comments.
- 362. ALL students should be required to do TRACE. For example, if they don't do TRACE, they can't view grades (immediately; they would have to wait longer).
- 363. I would be interested seeing how a different focus for the survey would affect less biased responses. Instead of The instructor promoted an environment that enabled learning, have the students answer questions about their experience. "I felt comfortable engaging with the course material in a way that met my learning needs" It should be more refined, but the idea is if students rate their experience in the class, the data still will reflect if the instructor did well, but as the questions are focused on their experience and rating themselves, they may be less biased.
- 364. 1. Elimination of the word "mastery" - it refers historically to master/slave relationships. Students at the undergraduate level are "mastering" nothing. They are exploring, investigating, testing, learning, thinking, problem solving. 2. Some courses have incredibly lofty language in terms of "learning outcomes" and include words like "mastery". 3. Why am I being held accountable for poor classroom conditions and scheduling based on the following question. "The classroom conditions (i.e., time of day, class size, exterior noise, less aesthetic environment) negatively impacted my learning and achievement of learning outcomes.
- 365. Questions that ask the student to address what they did to facilitate their own success within the parameters of the class. Ask if they thought the skills they had to bring to college-level material and assignments were up to the task (not just academic skills like appropriate reading-level, but also basic skills like keeping a calendar of assignments, reading directions even if it means having to scroll

down a page) if those skills improved over the course of the semester, and what the students did to improve their skills.

- 366. I am not sure that students know what learning outcomes are, especially when teachers express them differently. I do NOT think boilerplate is the answer.
- 367. most of these questions should not be offered.
- 368. Review data of how requiring TRACE for all students would impact the results
- 369. shorten the number of TRACE questions
- 370. I would love to see TRACE scores correlated with grades given by the professor for the course.
The new TRACE, which is absolutely better to the previous one, still does not address the issue of TRACE-related grade inflation.
- 371. Questions should focus only on measuring how much students learned in the class.
- 372. I'd like to see more time band options above 10 hours
- 373. Stop using TRACE
- 374. Nothing specific.
- 375. Ask only empirical or dispositional questions that students can answer accurately.
- 376. Opportunity to participate in a modified Delphi survey to comment on specific aspects of the changes.
- 377. 'Open-ended questions are best.
- 378. see above
- 379. Will the percentage of class attended affect how much a student's rating counts towards a score?
- 380. I think what would be interesting is to sort the ratings by grade in the course. So of students that earned an A this is their evaluation, of those that earned a B this is their rating of the professor, etc.
- 381. No point- nothing ever really changes
- 382. Make students quantifiably accountable
- 383. I very much like allowing instructors the options to comment (just like rating/review platforms online).
- 384. I strongly suggest piloting the new TRACE survey across all colleges and comparing the results to the current version before launching the program university-wide.
- 385. ask the questions that matter (instructor, learning, suggestions) and drop all the irrelevant ones (classroom, textbook...)
- 386. The phrase "unrelated attributes" is confusing and meaningless.
- 387. No comment.
- 388. Students won't understand "mastering learning outcomes", what that means, or what to respond. This is not a useful change. The effectiveness question was clearer and more accurate of whether the course was effectively delivered or not by the instructor.
- 389. include those questions (I know some of them are modified existing questions) in the updated TRACE: "Course sessions (in person, online, recorded, or any other type of presentation) were helpful for learning. " ""This course had the expected amount of rigor in relation to the learning outcomes. " "The classroom conditions (i.e., time of day, class size, exterior noise, less aesthetic environment) negatively impacted my learning and achievement of learning outcomes. "The instructor helped the students identify ways to master the learning outcomes.

390. I strongly believe students should not have access to teaching evaluations. This also feels like a violation of privacy of instructors. In no company I know of are work performance reviews shared with multiple individuals. This can backfire really badly.
391. Points 3 and 4 are in contradiction to each other - 3 underscores holistic evaluation; while 4 offers to students a limited, subjective evaluation.
392. Remove references to "learning outcomes", speak in the language of the student.
393. I understand that this is an INSTRUCTOR evaluation tool, but I don't want to neglect that students do have a responsibility to read the material provided to them. I think the wording of some of the questions could be tweaked to indicate the students responsibility in reading/listening to the information they were provided with, as well as their ability/confidence in being able to comment on the topics. For example: 'The syllabus was accurate and helpful in delineating expectations and course outcomes.' If a student doesn't read the syllabus, a 'disagree' here has a different meaning than a student who read it and genuinely didn't find it helpful. A modification: add the last selection of : I did not familiarize myself with the syllabus enough to comment This also allows the student to take responsibility and doesn't result in overly negative scores for faculty if they did in fact give all that information but the student didn't read it. For the question: "Indicate whether you met all/most/some/few/none of the learning outcomes for the course." If a student did not familiarize themselves with the learning outcomes, they are not positioned to answer this. Even if they did read them in the syllabus at the beginning of the semester, I doubt they have memorized them all and probably many students are not going to go open up the syllabus document to look at them all. I would suggest adding another bullet at the end: I don't feel confident enough in my memory of the learning outcomes to comment. I like the idea of students genuinely reflecting on how many they felt they accomplished. But I don't know if students are going to go to the trouble to open up the syllabus, read through the learning outcomes in it and genuinely reflect on how many of them they met. They are doing 4-5 of these TRACE surveys at the end of the semester while frantically prepping for finals. An opportunity for them to admit they don't feel confident is preferable for them saying 'did not meet' because they can't remember or don't want to go look at the list of learning outcomes. For the question: "My grades in this course reflect my mastery of the course learning outcomes." I am pretty concerned that students, especially novice students in first year courses don't have the pedagogical background to identify mastery. Maybe the juniors and seniors are able to better identify whether they mastered learning outcomes for courses, but I think many first years are not even sure what mastery looks like, let alone being able to evaluate whether they have actually demonstrated it. Often they conflate 'putting in many hours' with 'learning the material'--they feel that if they read their notes for 10 hours, that should get them an A, even if they cannot demonstrate knowledge of the material. For this one, I'm not sure of a good fix--given the disconnect between what students think of as 'mastery' and what they think they should've gotten as a grade. This question causes a lot of alarm bells for me. One suggestion would be to change question to something like: I was given the opportunity to demonstrate knowledge/skill For the question: 'The instructor explained how I would be graded in this course.' I'm concerned that students often don't listen to/read information provided to them and are quick to pass of blame that they 'didn't know' about something required in the course, when it was that they didn't listen/read. I would suggest modifying the question to: I was able to find the grade breakdown in

the syllabus/Canvas and understand how it connects to my final grade. And additional bullet point as a last option: I did not familiarize myself with the syllabus enough to comment allows delineation of dissatisfaction with their grade from whether or not they were provided with/took responsibility to read instructions. It also provides an opportunity for them to provide negative feedback of the instructor if in fact the instructor did not provide them with clear information.

394. This paragraph needs major revisions: "You are encouraged to evaluate this course based on its content, your engagement with the material, and your mastery of intended course outcomes, and the instructor's actions, rather than any unrelated attributes. Given the intended use of the TRACE to enhance teaching, we welcome student comments that are thoughtful, professional, constructive, and considerate." 1. The tone of how this is expressed is somewhat scolding. 2. Most students have a tough time separating the course content from the instruction. 3. TRACE isn't used to improve teaching... it's primarily used for faculty merit reviews. Students should know and understand that. Improvement to teaching is rarely made based on TRACE. Here's a revision that I'd be much more happy with: Please reflect on your learning experience in this course. Your comments help the university understand both the effectiveness of the course design and the instructor's teaching. TRACE results are used in faculty merit reviews and to inform improvements in teaching and curriculum. In your responses, please focus on aspects that affected your learning, such as the clarity of instruction, quality of feedback, organization of materials, and the ways the course supported your engagement and understanding. Comments that are specific, respectful, and constructive are most helpful.
395. Currently, NU does not have a closed-loop teaching effectiveness improvement system in place. TRACE or other assessment methods may result in some faculty to change the way they do things. While I do not recommend making this a requirement for annual performance/merit self-review reports, one possibility is to ask faculty to describe planned actions to improve delivery in the next cycle based on the TRACE comments of students, and following up in the next year's report to see how those changes impacted delivery. While year-to-year measurements may be noisy, over multiple years, trends should become apparent if there are systematic improvement actions taken by instructors. The reason I do not want to make it a requirement but a suggestion is that annual performance reports are already cumbersome and barely impact salary raises, so one cannot escape the 'why bother' sentiment?
396. 1. Removal of questions related to self-assessment of mastery. They SHOULD practice this internally, but they are not in a position to evaluate whether the grades they received reflect their mastery of the content. That's why they're getting undergraduate degrees. That's what they're here to learn over the course of several years. 2. Removal of questions related to classroom ambiance/location/size/etc. that an instructor can't control and that change for every iteration of a course.
397. Student questions should be included, such as why the student took the course, how much prior knowledge did they have before the course, time spent at office hours/emailing with instructor, how did prior TRACE results affect them, does the student know their grade at the time of the TRACE survey, etc.
398. Removal of #5
399. Reminding students that there is bias towards minority faculty would be very helpful.

400. I don't think the question about classroom environment should be on the faculty TRACE reports. I think it is a useful question to ask, but the data should be funneled to Facilities and not the faculty teaching the courses, since they don't have control over the rooms they are assigned. If there is some overall "teaching effectiveness" score that is created in these reports, this question should not be included in that calculation.
401. It would be good to see a question related to intellectual independence - how much of this course was able to be completed by AI, or how much did you need to think independently? Which assessments were effective and which were not? Many of my instructors are not sure if students are actually learning when they submit their assignments, and in addition to revising the assessments to more effectively reveal this, it would be good for students to self-report so that we could adjust more quickly. Particularly if this is open-response, so that students can identify exactly which assessments they are not gaining value from.
402. Something about - we practiced applying course concepts/theories, rather than just memorizing them. Something about how the course assignments will be useful to students in their future careers.
403. I would like to see TRACE eliminated as there is more than enough evidence to show such evaluations are bias against minority groups. They don't really measure teaching ability or effectiveness, but the students' satisfaction with their experience. Having TRACE as any part of an evaluation process twists incentive structures for students and instructors.
404. In general, it is unclear to me what role TRACE plays in actually improving student learning in a course. In my own courses, it has often been unclear to me how TRACE results could map to changes in course quality to improve quality; rather, my own experiences in the classroom, interacting with my students, have been the gold standard providing clear directives for what can be improved. I feel obligated each term to ask my students to complete TRACE, but I often feel unable to do much with a large portion of TRACE results, aside from the feedback that is open-ended and more concretely specified.
405. None that I can think of right now, as this looks like it is the result of some feedback and consideration.
406. Most of these questions require students to make evaluations of concepts that they have no reference point for. At the very least they need some definitions or further working to again really get to what students are learning or not.
407. Revisit the ones that I marked as "dissatisfied". They are vague Qs or likely to fail.
408. For "My grades in this course reflect my mastery of the course learning outcomes.", note that the final grade is not known when students fill in the form. So perhaps the best we can hope for is "I expect my grade in this course to reflect my mastery of the course learning outcomes.". Could maybe ask something along the lines of "Feedback helped me learn"? I'm not sure I could judge a "How often did you attend this course?" that specifically. Maybe something like 100-80-60-30-1%.
409. Eliminate reductive questions that ask students to rank teachers for ambiguous terms like "teaching effectiveness." Eliminate any questions that are likely to result in favoring people who speak English as a first language, or are taller, or louder.

410. Would like to see a TRACE for professional development class specifically. Students can't separate the course from their accountability in securing a co op. If a student doesn't get a co op the faculty member is blamed. But if a student fails a course the student is held accountable.
411. See above.
412. I would love to go even further and require even more limited inclusion of TRACE in faculty merit
413. Simplify and streamline

Straight Response Count

Total number of nonblank responses: 577

Straight Response Count	Number of rows	Percentage of all survey rows
All Satisfied	56	9.7%
All Dissatisfied	5	0.9%

APPENDIX C: Survey used to engage both the global university faculty and the Student Government Association

Likert Averages

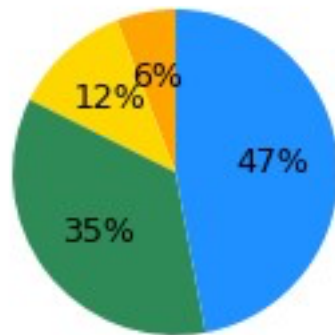
Question	Average
1	4.24
2	4.50
3	4.26
4	3.76
5	4.56
6	4.47
7	4.62
8	3.44
9	4.41
10	4.15
11	4.41
12	4.50
13	4.32
14	4.24
15	4.35
16	4.47
17	4.71
18	4.62

Straight Response Count

Total number of nonblank responses: 34

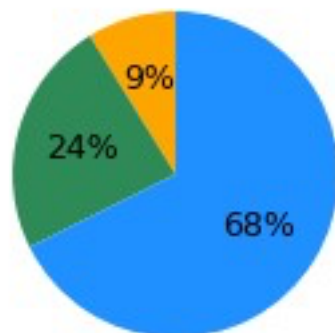
Straight Response Count	Number of rows	Percentage of all survey rows
All Satisfied for Very Satisfied	10	29%
All Dissatisfied or Very Dissatisfied	0	0.0%

Q1. Directions and preamble



Response	Percent
Very Dissatisfied	0.0%
Dissatisfied	5.9%
Neither	11.8%
Satisfied	35.3%
Very Satisfied	47.1%

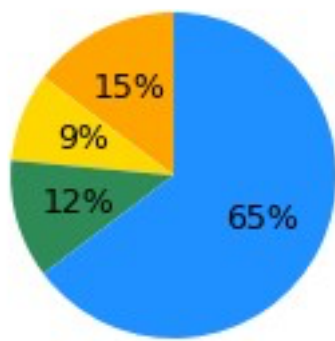
Q2. How often did you attend this course?



Response	Percent
Very Dissatisfied	0.0%

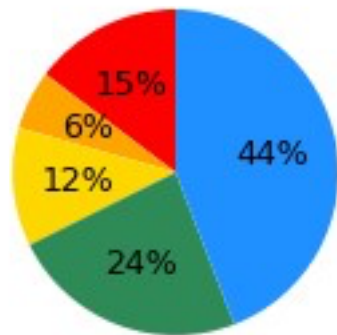
Dissatisfied	8.8%
Neither	0.0%
Satisfied	23.5%
Very Satisfied	67.6%

Q3. The number of hours per week devoted to course outside meeting times



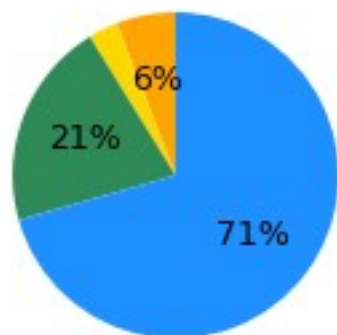
Response	Percent
Very Dissatisfied	0.0%
Dissatisfied	14.7%
Neither	8.8%
Satisfied	11.8%
Very Satisfied	64.7%

Q4. What could I have done to make this course better for myself



Response	Percent
Very Dissatisfied	14.7%
Dissatisfied	5.9%
Neither	11.8%
Satisfied	23.5%
Very Satisfied	44.1%

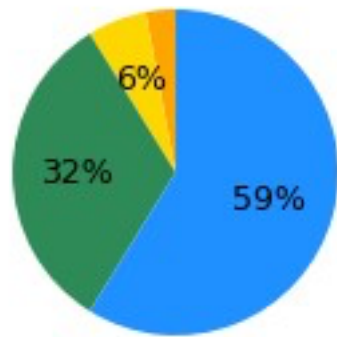
Q5. The syllabus was accurate and helpful



Response	Percent
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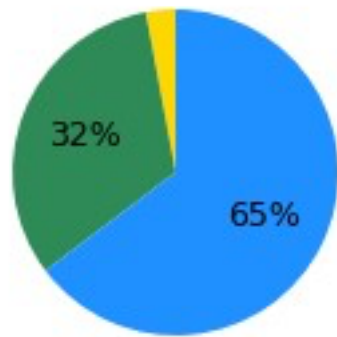
Very Dissatisfied	0.0%
Dissatisfied	5.9%
Neither	2.9%
Satisfied	20.6%
Very Satisfied	70.6%

Q6. Course materials were helpful in achieving course outcomes



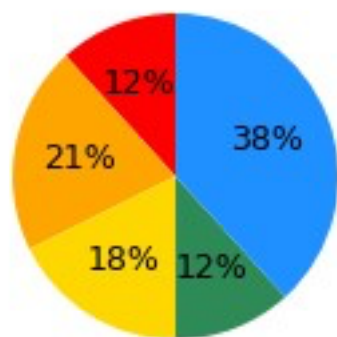
Response	Percent
Very Dissatisfied	0.0%
Dissatisfied	2.9%
Neither	5.9%
Satisfied	32.4%
Very Satisfied	58.8%

Q7. Course sessions were helpful for learning



Response	Percent
Very Dissatisfied	0.0%
Dissatisfied	0.0%
Neither	2.9%
Satisfied	32.4%
Very Satisfied	64.7%

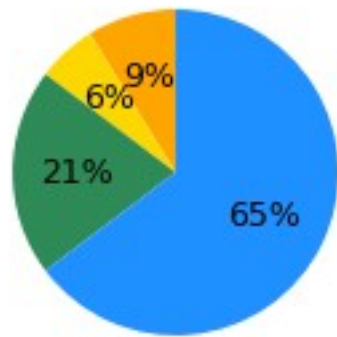
Q8. Indicate whether you met learning outcomes



Response	Percent
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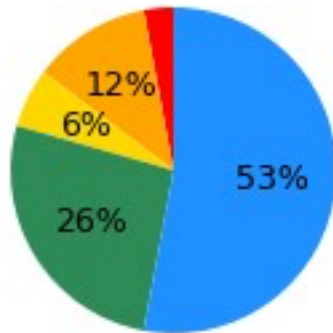
Very Dissatisfied	11.8%
Dissatisfied	20.6%
Neither	17.6%
Satisfied	11.8%
Very Satisfied	38.2%

Q9. My grades reflect my mastery of course learning outcomes



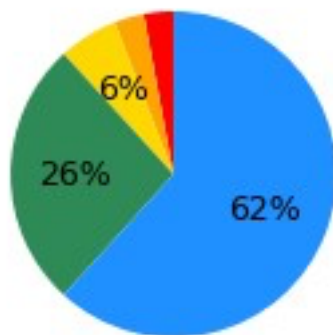
Response	Percent
Very Dissatisfied	0.0%
Dissatisfied	8.8%
Neither	5.9%
Satisfied	20.6%
Very Satisfied	64.7%

Q10. This course had expected amount of rigor in relation to learning outcomes



Response	Percent
Very Dissatisfied	2.9%
Dissatisfied	11.8%
Neither	5.9%
Satisfied	26.5%
Very Satisfied	52.9%

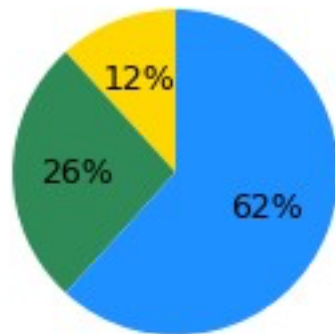
Q11. The classroom conditions negatively impacted my learning



Response	Percent
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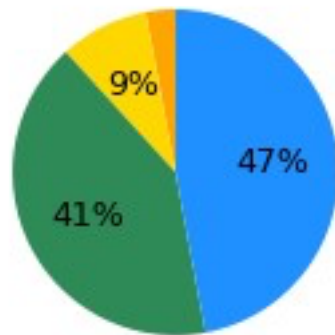
Very Dissatisfied	2.9%
Dissatisfied	2.9%
Neither	5.9%
Satisfied	26.5%
Very Satisfied	61.8%

Q12. The instructor explained how I would be graded in this course



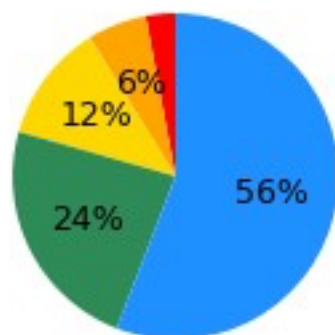
Response	Percent
Very Dissatisfied	0.0%
Dissatisfied	0.0%
Neither	11.8%
Satisfied	26.5%
Very Satisfied	61.8%

Q13. The instructor helped students identify ways to master the learning outcomes



Response	Percent
Very Dissatisfied	0.0%
Dissatisfied	2.9%
Neither	8.8%
Satisfied	41.2%
Very Satisfied	47.1%

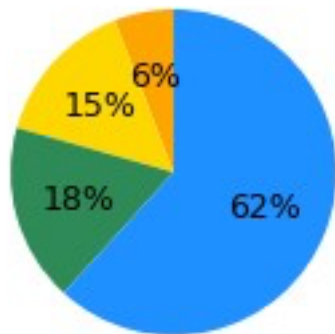
Q14. The instructor created opportunities for me to be engaged in the course



Response	Percent
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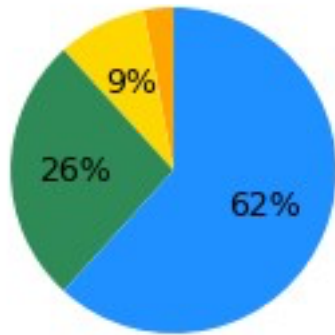
Very Dissatisfied	2.9%
Dissatisfied	5.9%
Neither	11.8%
Satisfied	23.5%
Very Satisfied	55.9%

Q15. The instructor promoted a course environment that enables learning



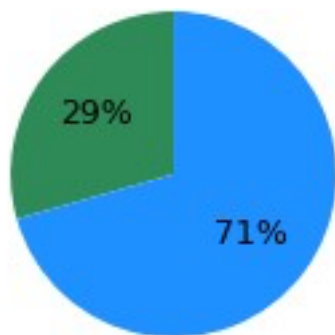
Response	Percent
Very Dissatisfied	0.0%
Dissatisfied	5.9%
Neither	14.7%
Satisfied	17.6%
Very Satisfied	61.8%

Q16. The instructor clearly communicated ideas and information



Response	Percent
Very Dissatisfied	0.0%
Dissatisfied	2.9%
Neither	8.8%
Satisfied	26.5%
Very Satisfied	61.8%

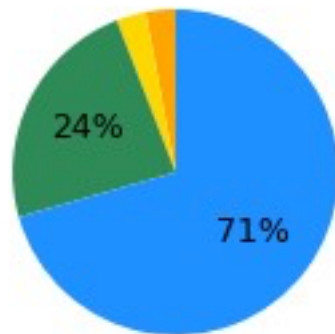
Q17. What did the instructor do well



Response	Percent
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Very Dissatisfied	0.0%
Dissatisfied	0.0%
Neither	0.0%
Satisfied	29.4%
Very Satisfied	70.6%

Q18. What could be improved about the course



Response	Percent
Very Dissatisfied	0.0%
Dissatisfied	2.9%
Neither	2.9%
Satisfied	23.5%
Very Satisfied	70.6%

What do you believe are the overall strengths of this revised version of the TRACE survey?

better design, shorter than original TRACE

The survey is updated and has relevant questions that are helpful when deciding a course.

I think this revised version of TRACE thoroughly covers the student perspective on the course itself, and only mentions the class.

i like that there are not questions about the online learning environment because those were irrelevant in the past version.

more focused on the prof and course with ambiguity

Hi this is thor, I liked how the language was definitely a little simpler, written in plain language that's easy to understand. It also covers all bases of the course experience.

I really like the quantitative aspects of the survey. I particularly like the questions on how well the professor explained grading, on opportunities to be engaged, and environment that enables learning.

It's less subjective toward the professor.

touches on relevant info about class

I think that the wording has significantly improved from the prior TRACE surveys.

I like that the questions are very specific and have clear expectations.

I like the 1-5 scale.

it's shorter than most

More specific questioning to narrow down how a student really feels about the instructor/course. Allows an area of improvement to become more clear and able to be targeted. Syllabus accuracy is important.

I like that it is more specific to experiences by students and metrics that actually matter to us.

I think it is more experienced based which is helpful for different types of learning types

Concise questions

Determining if a teachers learning style is appropriate

Learning how teachers can improve to fit student needs

None

it focuses more on the attributes of the course rather than personal biases against the Professor

Less ambiguous

I think it defiantly focusing more on the student then the prof

Na

Professor Accountability

When the focus on teacher styles and how the interaction between the teacher and students are.

This gives an opportunity for students to voice their experience.

N/A

I like most of the questions asked! It is a very nice and thought out survey.

i like how it adds more depth to how the course goes in terms of professor actions, student outcomes, etc.

It takes more factors into account

Reflecting on learning outcomes AND grade received and if they disconnect

I like the additional questions

What do you believe are the overall weaknesses of this revised version of the TRACE?

It is only given at the end of the course

The new UI is harder to work with and is missing all the data from the old version, the should be merged.

I think that this revised version allows for students to provide a good perspective on the course, but I think the last question should be more focused on improvements specifically for the instructor, rather than just the course.

I know that the results of TRACE are used to assess profs, but they are also used by students as a complement to Rate My Professor, so I would also just make sure that the questions would be helpful to students as well

explain what "learning outcomes" entails

Couple things, I would say question 11 didn't really make sense, maybe could elaborate with "was consistent and vocal about grading" instead of just "did they explain it", which they usually always do but just on the first day. It's more about reiteration throughout the course, so I would reframe the question in that sense. I also think question 13-15 could be elaborated upon, I feel like they are a little too vague. For 13, wdyb by "created opportunities"?, etc.

The term "learning outcomes" is vague. Often, a professor doesn't explicitly lay out learning outcomes or doesn't quantify them well leading to having questions relating to learning outcomes to be hyper subjective.

Some questions are vague.

self reflection questions are kind of irrelevant

I think that this revised version of TRACE encapsulates all concerns / comments that students may have about their professors. As I mentioned earlier, the other surveys were very vague and didn't establish what "effectiveness" of a professor meant, so I appreciate these changes.

Some of the wording is very complex and could be simplified for better understanding.

Add if the syllabus was good or not

how it's required

With any change there will be pushback and support, this revised survey is an improvement

I think it looks pretty good I just hate the question that asks what "what could I have done to make the course better for myself". Normally its not the students that are the reason the classes are weak. It's the professor. I found that question unhelpful and shifts responsibility onto students, not the professors that make the courses.

It at times can be rather vague. There is an option to continue to elaborate but most people will not unless they are on either extreme of the statistic.

N/A

Lengthy

Needs to account for the students interest in the class, their grade, if they were required to take the course

None

I think a potential problem with this is it doesn't necessarily count for the fact that there are certain times where information about the professor could not be biased and could be genuine concerns

Some questions don't work well with satisfied-dissatisfied scale.

Some student may not answer honestly

Na

N/A

Too much about time spent out of class, expected rigor

Under each of the objective questions ranking satisfaction, there should be a text box where students have the ability to comment further on that question. Sometimes the answer options don't satisfy how the student feels and this can help. Personal experiences or elaborations from students could be insightful and an option to do so would be appreciated.

Could use more elaboration on what some questions mean

I would love to know if the results are actually all read and implemented.

i think the "met learning outcomes" question is a little vague and could be worded differently

Work outside of class can take a long time but not be rigorous

Emphases on "being engaged" and "enabling learning" is more personal to student opinion than the instructor's overall performance

Some of the questions are vague and are not clear in their desired type of response.

What specific changes would you like to see to this draft of the updated TRACE?

nothing- go with it!

Incorporate the old responses, improve the filtering, and get student input on how to change the UI so students can navigate it.

I think the wording of the last question should be changed to specifically mention what the instructor could do differently/improve upon.

i think the question about how many hours per week did you work on stuff is kind of irrelevant because it is very subjective per student and depends on the week for most classes.

if grading made sense in the class

For questions 11-15, elaborate more, and reframe the question to something like "The instructor was consistent and clear with grading expectations over the course of the semester", rather than just, "The teacher explained grading." Same with the other 4. This would just help with confusion from a student POV.

Find another way to define success in a course or standardize learning outcomes among faculty.
More concreteness to the questions.
n/a
I think this draft is good how it is. I think no changes are necessary at this point.
Are the learning outcomes listed in the question ones from the syllabus or where can students find these outcomes.
See above
shorter
Questions 4, 9 and 10 are definitely improvements
More questions regarding professors behavior and how they run the class and teaching styles.
I think just asking about learning types.
None
Maybe a little shorter so the clearer questions
It's good myb add some stuff on reason for taking the class
None
More questions about the actual content
More dynamic questions
I like the survey
Na
N/A
Less questions about out class experience and more in class
One question asks what the professor did well, but there is not a question asking what the professor could improve on. I think that this influences the student and sways responses. An opportunity for comments regarding the instructors strengths and weaknesses are required for constructive criticism and for the professors to grow.
N/A
Removing the questions about the online Canvas page creating a good environment is a good move - those questions seem like they were asked by someone that has never used Canvas and doesn't know how school works.
fix the typos, and change the wording on the "met learning outcomes" question
Add a question about out-of-class rigor
Expand on classroom conditions, possibly include whether scheduling/too few sections was a problem
Clarify some of the more vague questions

APPENDIX D: Survey of University Leadership

Survey Page 1

Northeastern University

The Faculty Senate TRACE Committee has created this survey to complete its charges assigned by the Faculty Senate. Thank you in advance for your participation in this work! This survey should take 5 minutes or less to complete.

Please select your position

☐ Associate or Assistant Dean for Faculty Affairs

☐ Department or Unit leader (e.g., chair, director, coordinator, other)

Please provide your name (Last, First)



If Dean is selected on page 1, then pages 2 and 3 are:

Northeastern University

Please select your college

☐ Bouve College of Health Sciences

☐ College of Arts, Media and Design

☐ College of Engineering

☐ College of Professional Studies

☐ College of Science

☐ College of Social Sciences and Humanities

☐ D'Amore McKim School of Business

☐ Khoury College of Computer Sciences

☐ Mills College

☐ School of Law

Does your college utilize the same measurement methods and assessment criteria to determine teaching effectiveness for all faculty (e.g., tenured, tenure-track, teaching, clinical, coop, etc.) for annual merit, tenure, and promotion?

☐ Yes

☐ No - please explain

What data does your college collect to measure and assess teaching effectiveness for **annual merit**? Select all that apply:

☐ TRACE surveys

☐ Informal student feedback

☐ Student surveys other than TRACE

☐ Faculty peer observation

☐ Department/Unit leadership observation

☐ Faculty self-reflection statements

☐ Other - please describe

What data does your college collect to measure and assess teaching effectiveness for **promotion**? Select all that apply:

☐ TRACE surveys

☐ Informal student feedback

☐ Student surveys other than TRACE

☐ Faculty peer observation

☐ Department/Unit leadership observation

☐ Faculty self-reflection statements

☐ Other - please describe

What data does your college collect to measure and assess teaching effectiveness for **tenure**? Select all that apply:

☐ TRACE surveys

☐ Informal student feedback

☐ Student surveys other than TRACE

☐ Faculty peer observation

☐ Department/Unit leadership observation

☐ Faculty self-reflection statements

☐ Other – please describe

What would you like the TRACE Committee to know about measuring and assessing teaching effectiveness?

If Department or Unit Leader is selected on page 1, then pages 2 and 3 are:

Northeastern University

Does your department/unit utilize the same measurement methods and assessment criteria to determine teaching effectiveness for all faculty (e.g., tenured, tenure-track, teaching, clinical, coop, etc.) for annual merit, tenure, and promotion?

☐ Yes

☐ No - please explain

Please state the name of your department/unit

What data does your department or unit collect to measure and assess teaching effectiveness for **annual merit**? Select all that apply:

☐ TRACE surveys

☐ Informal student feedback

☐ Student surveys other than TRACE

☐ Faculty peer observation

☐ Department/Unit leadership observation

☐ Faculty self-reflection statements

☐ Other - please describe

What data does your department or unit collect to measure and assess teaching effectiveness for **promotion**? Select all that apply:

☐ TRACE surveys

☐ Informal student feedback

☐ Student surveys other than TRACE

☐ Faculty peer observation

☐ Department/Unit leadership observation

☐ Faculty self-reflection statements

☐ Other - please describe

What data does your department or unit collect to measure and assess teaching effectiveness for **tenure**? Select all that apply:

☐ TRACE surveys

☐ Informal student feedback

☐ Student surveys other than TRACE

☐ Faculty peer observation

☐ Department/Unit leadership observation

☐ Faculty self-reflection statements

☐ Other - please describe

What would you like the TRACE Committee to know about measuring and assessing teaching effectiveness?

APPENDIX E: Survey Data of University Leadership

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Comments from survey of university leadership

What would you like the TRACE Committee to know about measuring and assessing teaching effectiveness?
there is a lot of literature that supports that student evaluations are biased as far as ethnicity, gender, or even the time of day the class is offered. Last year I recommended some language preceding the surveys to remind students about implicit bias - not sure it has been implemented.
The dossier requirement for a table of quantitative trace results sends the wrong message.
The responses by students to TRACE can be very spotty.
1. I'm not certain that our current questions measure teaching effectiveness in a meaningful way. There are no descriptions or examples of effective teaching, nor am I certain that students are able to judge/assess effective vs ineffective teaching. Often, my perception, is that TRACE is a popularity contest and the scoring reflects that. 2. I have concerns when having team-taught courses that the current system becomes too unwieldy for students, their response rate and quality of responses diminishes with each additional faculty member added to the survey, thus reducing the overall effectiveness of the evaluation. 3. There is no method currently to either exempt a faculty who may have operational oversight for a course and not teach in that course, or receive a separate evaluation on the course operations using different questions or criteria. In the legacy version of TRACE, faculty could be "opted out" from receiving a TRACE evaluation, and that is no longer the case. This is very problematic when you have multiple faculty who may teach in a given course, or when having a faculty who provides operational oversight but may not teach in a given course e.g. multiple lab / seminar sections.
We appreciate the flaws and biases in the TRACE evaluations. We try to use them in a thoughtful way, without focusing too much on the fraction-of-a-point variations in the average trace numerical scores. We always try to use other information to complement the TRACE results. We try to account for biases. We use low TRACE scores not as a direct reason for a negative judgement but as an indication to look more deeply into the reasons.
The PA Program structure and accreditation requirements do not allow for the use of TRACE in its current format. Due to the nature of medical specialties and the curriculum, there is substantial cross-teaching across courses. We must evaluate each module and its instructor within a course, in addition to the course as a whole.
It is concerning that the tenure and promotion criteria set by the university require the one "teaching effectiveness" score in the TRACE table that is part of the dossier. It sends a powerful message that this is what the university/Provost's office values, and so, years ago our department recreated that table as part of our merit reviews. We are discussing getting rid of it now, though. TRACE feedback can be very helpful to instructors and the department (what students like and not like about specific courses/instructors and feedback about their interactions with instructors), but in terms of TEACHING effectiveness and ultimately the impact on learning, it seems to be of limited value.
Finding ways to ensure students fill out TRACE. We now ask faculty to allot 15 minutes in class near the end of each term to have students fill out TRACE (the faculty leaves the room). That has improved response rate but it can still be low in some courses which can makes evaluation for annual merit difficult
Qualitative data only presents some aspects of effectiveness, and is often riddled with prejudice. Quantitative data can be more illuminating.
I don't have any suggestions at the moment.

Personally, I find our programmatic surveys (student perceptions of learning) more helpful in thinking about my teaching since they are mostly qualitative. The quantification of Teaching Effectiveness in TRACE is inconsistent and biased.
TRACE scores have an outsized impact on teaching effectiveness. Should be supplemented by other means to measure teaching impact and effectiveness. Methods to measure how the teacher challenges the students to reach beyond their expectation for an A, can create a cadre of super outstanding students. The outsized effect of TRACE has the effect of dampening the teacher tolerance for risk.
Evaluations are a bit reason why we have so much grade inflation. There is often a strong correlation between grades given and TRACE scores.
TRACE is helpful in assessing effectiveness, but it is sometimes difficult to get students to complete TRACE without giving extra credit points.
We use college-level (DMSB) criteria where 8 variables in TRACE are used --- instructor effectiveness accounts for 50% and other measures such as level of learning, difficulty level, etc. It may be helpful to reduce the number of measures to make the survey easier for students to complete, and keep only the variables that are most meaningful.
It would be helpful if more data points (in addition to overall teaching effectiveness) could be standard to include promotion dossiers. I find the ratings on feedback to also be particularly important.
I recognize that this is not new information, but many evaluation items are highly correlated with instructor effectiveness. Additionally, research has demonstrated bias in student assessments of faculty based on factors such as race, nationality, and gender.
TRACE survey results are generally unavailable for classes with low enrollment. This is unfortunate, as they may still have probative value.
The TRACE evaluations are unreliable measures of teaching effectiveness. In addition to research-backed biases within student evaluations of teaching, there is no incentive for students to complete these evaluations and so the response rates are typically very low. Therefore, faculty in my programs are encouraged to submit other measures of teaching effectiveness in addition to the university-issued student evaluations of teaching.
To enhance student participation, we could think about making trace mandatory to receive a grade.
We find the TRACE qualitative comments to be valuable. We also are working to increase the participation rates in the survey so they are more representative so we are trying to give students time in class to fill out the survey.
Would like more triangulated data for teaching effectiveness at the college level. For example, our survey currently only has one question that we pull teaching effectiveness for - it would be great if this were asked over 2-3 questions for different perspectives from the students and then consolidated into an overall teaching effectiveness score on the survey
TRACE is a great tool. However, it seems like faculty have a variety of means to achieve higher response rates. One effective way to increase student participation is to link the release of grades to whether the student filled in the TRACE survey or not. I would recommend that grades be released a week later on a course for which a student does not respond to a TRACE survey. This does not impose any real cost other than a short delay for the student but will serve as a sufficient motivator to respond to TRACE. As a new Group Chair, I have responded this survey to the best of my knowledge and I will learn as I go along. As I have not handled all scenarios that this survey asks about, my views on this will change as I spend more time in this role.
Our department has serious reservations about the use of numerical teaching scores in evaluating teaching effectiveness. These concerns are based on numerous factors. First there is significant document research demonstrating numerous biases in these measures. Second, our our department also has serious reservations about the meaningfulness of aggregate scores involving ordinal subjective

judgements and whether they are a reliable indicator of successful learning outcomes.
We view the TRACE evaluations as a single indicator, acknowledging its flaws and noise, and do not place significant weight on those evaluations alone. The qualitative student comments are taken into consideration along with our peer observations (which include analysis of course syllabi and content) as well as self-reflection narratives during our review.
I do not think the TRACE surveys should be available to students to view, especially the written answers. These are performance evaluations and having them publicly available to students as a form of customer satisfaction survey is not appropriate. This was not always the case and I was quite surprised to find out the level of detail students can access about student comments. Perhaps a more limited overall score could be given, so they get a general sense but not the ability to pore over the details of people's evaluations.
The overall picture they present tends to be consistent (i.e., across the evaluations a consistent image of the teacher's work is visible, and is usually in sync with our more detailed internal reviews) and they are useful to a degree, but can never replace in person evaluations and the work of community teaching development. What they fundamentally show is if someone is a little better, around the same, or a little worse than their colleagues and reveal any areas of unusual concern or problems.
It would be really helpful to know the average grade for the class. If the average grade for the class was an A, a strong overall teaching effectiveness score would have less weight in my view. A class where the grade was B-C but there were still strong TRACE evals would mean more. Would it be possible to include the grade average with TRACE evals?
Faculty are skeptical of relying on the single teaching effectiveness score
As noted above we consider multiple forms of feedback when evaluating teaching effectiveness but TRACE reports are nevertheless central to our assessment.
There have been questions about the effectiveness and accuracy of TRACE reviews. But so far it is the only available objective measure we use for tenure, promotion, merit.
It's something that needs to happen by multiple constituents. We also get undergraduate and graduate feedback at both formal and informal mechanisms, but these are generally brought to the faculty member directly, unless egregious.
Include first 6 week surveys. Represent opportunity for faculty improvement in class performance
Comments from students are particularly effective for understanding how things are going in a class or with an instructor. The instrument itself could be shortened to promote more students engaging.
In measuring and assessing teaching effectiveness, it can be coarser-grained to fall into several categories, such as: cannot teach, need improvement, satisfactory, excellent instructor.
I don't have much to add
If more tenure cases come up at MCNU it would be good to have peer review of teaching--colleagues sitting in on classrooms. I don't think that happened in the one case I oversaw.
We do not appear to have consensus around what constitutes effective teaching.
Prior to the Fall 2025, there were no TRACE scores for classes that enrolled 5 or fewer students. This made it challenging to capture student feedback for P & T of faculty. In January, we noticed that TRACE evaluations are now captured for classes less than 5 students, which helps P & T teaching effectiveness evaluation, but does this new method protect student identities? Especially if there is only one student who replies.
Faculty have concerns about using TRACE for evaluation.
The trace eval is but one measure that should be taken with caution given the data being skewed and bias to non white men

In light of the fact that studies and data indicate that these evaluations are often biased against women and people of color, how is the committee, how is the TRACE committee accounting for implicit bias and or training department chairs to read the data with an intersectional lens? (See for example https://journals.plos.org/plosone/article?id=10.1371/journal.pone.0216241)
I think there should be some acknowledgment when folks are teaching courses that are REQUIRED for a student's concentration. These are not electives and so teachers have a slight disadvantage since students did not choose to be in that course. For example, INNO 2301 is our REQUIRED course for all students concentrating in Entrepreneurship, or Corporate Innovation, or Social I&E.
We are having internal discussions about the use of TRACE as an effective assessment, since faculty know their merit and promotion is promised in part on how much students liked their course.
Many faculty are skeptical about the extent to which the TRACE scores reflect teaching effectiveness. We do find the student comments helpful. We mostly pay attention to extreme scores (very positive for awards and merit and very negative to identify issues that we want to fix).
That this measure is very biased based on the content of a course
There is often large variation in the number of responses across courses. We generally use TRACE to check for repeated concerns, but generally the weight of TRACE evaluations for merit has little to no impact unless there are red flags. In promotion or tenure, TRACE is a good indication of growth as an instructor over time.
We focus on the single number, the TRACE effectiveness score, in large part because it's weighted so heavily in promotion at the university level. This makes it difficult to assign our own values and use other things to measure effective teaching; we want merit and promotion process within Khoury to directly feed into promotion process that goes through the Provost office.
there are other metrics to measure effectiveness besides student trace
While we do TRACE surveys, many faculty feel that the scores are not particularly useful for measuring teaching effectiveness. The extreme scores may be meaningful--very high for awards and other recognition, and very low for identifying potential issues. The other numbers not much. We try to pay more attention to student comments from the surveys.
Not sure if this is possible but we need to make TRACE required for all students. For example, they cannot see their final grades until they complete TRACE. The issue is that some courses only have a fraction of students to report. This group is typically students who liked or disliked the course, which general means got an A or performed poorly. Thus, they TRACE scores can be biased high or low depending on who does the survey.
They are often statistically irrelevant
Students deserve to have their say in the form of TRACE but we consider them on balance with other factors particularly in tenure and promotion and do so with knowledge of its biases (pertaining to gender, race, ethnicity of the instructor as well as the difficulty of the course).
I appreciate the opportunity to contribute to this data collection effort and look forward to the committee's findings and recommendations.
We are trying to move away from using TRACE as the only/primary source of teaching feedback by adding voluntary peer observation and encouraging faculty to use additional methods for measuring student success.
Growing body of research shows that student evaluations are not good measures of teaching effectiveness and are especially ill-suited for high-stakes decisions in institutions committed to rigor, inclusion, and public purpose. Here are some of the main concerns: - Student evaluations measure student satisfaction and perceptions, not actual learning or teaching effectiveness. - Students are not trained to assess pedagogical quality, course design, or disciplinary standards.

- Evaluations are systematically biased by gender, race, ethnicity, accent, age, and perceived authority.
- They create incentives to reduce rigor, inflate grades, and prioritize popularity over learning.
- Results are often methodologically weak due to low response rates, selection bias, and overinterpretation of small score differences.

I would suggest that the committee propose alternatives and examples and ways to train students to perform such evaluation.

TRACE alone is often not an accurate reflection of teaching effectiveness.

I would like there to be more awareness about the various studies carried out on student evaluations, for example, about student bias and the limits of such evaluations. I find the junior faculty are especially anxious about their teaching evaluations during the first couple of years on the tenure-track, so it would be helpful to include critical coverage on how to engage with these evaluations. I find the peer teaching observations very helpful as they more fully document an instructor's style and effectiveness in the classroom.

We have had concerns about how representative TRACE evaluations. We see their value as a single data point, but not as the only measure of teaching effectiveness. Over the years we have added more data points (peer evaluations, self reflection, and evaluation of unit leadership) to be weighed along with TRACE. For our merit process, we use just three measures that we ask faculty to submit. For Tenure and Promotion, we look even more holistically, enlisting even more information. The choices above capture the measures we use.