

# **NATIONAL CENTER**

for the **Study of Collective Bargaining in Higher  
Education and the Professions**

## **HUNTER**

The City University of New York

*49th Annual National Conference*

*The State of Collective Bargaining and Higher Education*

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*April 11, 12, 13, 2022*

# **Panel: Limiting Use of Student Evaluations in Contracts: Challenges in Vision and Enforcement**

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ARBITRAL DECISION: “The Collective Agreement is to be amended to ensure that SET results are not used to measure teaching effectiveness for promotion or tenure”

**Conclusion:** SETs cannot be used to measure teaching effectiveness. Simple as that – an end to the debates on how to employ the data from SETs.

## The Student Experience

“FCS results can be used to provide information about the student experience, but not for reaching conclusions about teaching effectiveness.”

where a SET (which should presumably now no longer be referred to as a SET) is used to assess the student experience the numerical weighting system in the SET be replaced with an alphabetical one.

**Conclusion:** no averages, and instead use actual numbers such as in frequency distributions – which mitigates against comparisons

## **“Assessment of Student Experience in a Course” (ASEC)**

- At X university we are in the process of constructing a student feedback system. It is called “Assessment of Student Experience in a Course” (ASEC)
- It is a voluntary multi phase/stage customisable tool with carefully crafted items that only tap in into the student experience and do not have the student assess the instructor’s teaching
- The feedback will be confidential and only released (to the employer) to the degree that the instructor has any preference for doing so.
- The ASEC is a formative instrument, with no summative element

## Course Operations Questionnaire

Our employer does have a need to gather information from students.

We have agreed that they can run a mandatory survey at the end of each semester gathering student feedback on whether an instructor complies with their contractual obligation to satisfy certain elements of the student experience such as:

- being punctual,
- providing proper course information,
- maintaining office hours as required,
- providing feedback by required deadlines

This should not be conflated with SETs.

Such questionnaires surely still suffer from the unreliability of student questionnaires, and may be threatening to probationary or precarious instructors, but they cannot be used to reflect on teaching effectiveness

**What method to use to assess teaching effectiveness for purposes of promotion and tenure?**

The gold standard for assessing teaching effectiveness is through the careful use of teaching dossiers and in-class peer evaluations.

## How did we get here?

- A ten year grievance struggle coupled with parallel efforts at the bargaining table -i.e. securing contract language and enforcing it.
- A belief that if we let universities compromise on methodological rigour, what would be left for society to rely on?
- Respect for the process and faith that there is still some life left in the Collective Bargaining process.