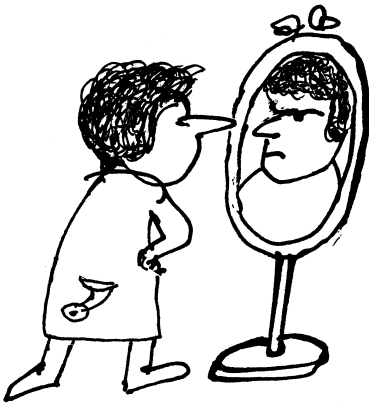


## INTRODUCTION

There is an increasing demand that university teachers provide evidence of their teaching effectiveness for purposes of appointment, tenure and promotion. As a result we have included this new chapter which we hope will help you in three important ways.

- Provide you with information and resources that will assist you to evaluate your teaching and the learning of your students.
- Guide you in ways that will assist you to make good use of the information you create through your evaluative activities.
- Arm you with ideas on how to improve the practice of evaluation in your institution.



The third is especially important and is often overlooked. In our experience, as many difficulties in evaluation are created by the implementation of poor policies and practices as by the processes of collecting and presenting evaluative information. One poor practice is an obsession with quantification. This has led to an over-emphasis on those things that can be most easily counted, such as student ratings of a teacher's behaviour, and an under-emphasis on those areas of academic work less easy to quantify such as learning processes or advising students.

There is another important factor here as well. Just as the ways we go about assessing our students will directly influence their learning behaviours, so too will the ways institutions evaluate their teachers drive teacher behaviour. For example, the strong emphasis on research in many universities is, in part, a direct consequence of the way we evaluate and reward this academic activity by promoting people on the basis of their research output and grant income generation. This may compete with activities required to perform teaching duties at a high level.

Before we address these matters in more detail, we want to outline the context in which we are presenting ideas to you and to clarify some important concepts.



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