

This study was designed to assess peer evaluation of teaching in the University of Florida's College of Agricultural and Life Sciences. The population for this study was one department chair, one peer review committee chair, and one peer reviewed faculty member from each of 17 departments. Of 51 possible interviewees, 45 chose to participate in the study. While the results may not be generalizable to a wide audience, the researchers addressed an area of increasing interest in higher education. Quality teaching and rewarding quality teaching are important in today's higher education climate.

The procedures used in the study are appropriate. The researchers, using an eight-item questionnaire, conducted interviews. Pilot testing was conducted and interviewers were trained to insure consistency in the interview process. Although the paper does not describe how content analysis was conducted, it was reported that content analysis and triangulation were the methods of analysis for the study.

Department chairs and peer review committee chairs indicated that the primary purpose of peer evaluation was for promotion, tenure, and awards with teaching improvement being of lower purpose. Peer reviewed faculty indicated the primary purpose was for teaching improvement with promotion, tenure, and awards being of lower purpose. Why is there a difference in the perceptions of these groups? Additionally, all groups indicated a reluctance to provide negative feedback. Assuming negative feedback is appropriate, what can be done to insure honest assessments of teaching during peer review?