

Student ratings: the validity of their use

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The authors are in general agreement with the earlier themes that (1) SETs are valid but that (2) certain external factors such as grading leniency moderate this validity. But the focus here is not on the ratings themselves, but on their ultimate use in tenure and promotion decisions. This addresses the “consequential validity” of SETs. The authors feel that personnel committees lack the statistical sophistication to properly use the ratings.

While noting that it will probably be difficult to do observational studies on such committees in action, the authors said they expect the results would be similar to studies done on medical diagnoses or mortality predictions, namely that combination of computer diagnostic programs and pooled judgment of physicians is superior to individual predictions.