

WILKES UNIVERSITY
ANNUAL FACULTY EVALUATION FOR 2020-21
Dr. Benjamin Toll

1. Teaching Effectiveness (40-50%)

This year was Dr. Toll's second year at Wilkes University. It was an unprecedented year, no doubt, but Dr. Toll did very well considering all the pressure. He remained flexible and student-centered and students once again responded positively to his teaching.

Semester	Program Prefix	Course Number	Section	Number Enrolled	Number of Responses	Q. 19	Q. 20
Summer 2020							
	PS	111	A	6	4	3.75*	3.75*
Fall 2020							
	FyF	101	A	19	16	4.88	4.81
	PS	111	A	37	20	4.85	4.90
	PS	111	B	31	10	4.70	4.70
	PS	213	A	13	7	5.00	5.00
Spring 2021							
	PS	111	A	21	6	5.00	5.00
	PS	111	B	22	5	5.00	5.00
	PS	298	A	15	9	5.00	5.00
	SOC	298	A	12	5	5.00	4.80
	PS	311	A	15	9	5.00	5.00
Total				191	91	4.86	4.85

In the fall semester, Dr. Toll taught two sections of PS111: *Introduction to American Government*, FyF101: *Politics of Money and Sports*, and PS213: *Political Parties and Elections*. PS111: *Introduction to American Government* is an essential course for the Political Science and General Education (Area III) curriculum. This course “is a broad survey of the institutions of American Government as well as the different tangential parts of the political world” (Dr. Toll SER, p. 2). With all the changes that the COVID-19 pandemic has created for education, Dr. Toll instituted a “flex-hybrid” model and “flipped classroom” model, posting lectures on D2L before class, then discussing the topics or issues that students needed the most help with. Dr. Toll’s SER scores were very high. In the fall, Dr. Toll earned a **4.85** and **4.70** on question 19 (“Instructor was an effective teacher”) and a **4.90** and **4.70** for question 20 (“Overall quality of the course was high”). In the spring, Dr. Toll earned **5.0s** for questions 19 and 20. These are very high scores for a year that was fundamentally altered because of COVID-19, social distancing, mask wearing, and other mitigation protocols. Dr. Toll adapted to the changes and new requirements very well!

Dr. Toll also taught FyF 101 for the first time. His course was entitled, *Politics of Money and Sports*. For the main project in the course, Dr. Toll broke the students into five (5) groups for the final project. Students were tasked with determining whether their group should proceed with sports during the COVID-19 pandemic. For the five groups, the students represented the Ohio State men’s basketball team, the Mid-Atlantic Conference, Penn State Swimming and Diving, and the Big Ten. Based on personal connections that Dr. Toll already had, the students were required to interview at least one person from their real-life group. Students enjoyed this project. For question 19, Dr. Toll earned a **4.88** and for question 20, a **4.81**. This course was a success.

In the fall, Dr. Toll also taught PS213: *Political Parties and Elections*. This was a new preparation for Dr. Toll. He taught it using a hy-flex approach. Students were required to follow a local campaign for the PA Assembly or 8th congressional district. Dr. Toll earned a **5.0** for questions 19 and 20 and the students were very pleased with this

course. One student commented that “Dr. Toll wanted all students to enjoy the class in the discussion portions of the class, and helped show all students where they might be having trouble in an area.”

In the spring, Dr. Toll also was responsible for two (2) new preps: PS/SOC 298: *Politics of Race and Policing* and PS311: *American Presidency*. The *Politics of Race and Policing* was a cross-listed course (PS and SOC) and benefitted both academic programs. Many difficult concepts and issues were addressed, including incarceration policies, racial profiling, police practices, and the goals of our criminal justice system. Dr. Toll earned a 5.0 for questions 19 and 20. Students made the following comments about this course:

- “Course is nicely organized and it is easy to follow, which allows for me to stay on top of the work necessary for the class as I know what is expected of me.”
- “He knows when to grade hard and when to lay off for a little bit. When he knows we are all struggling he will always be flexible and easy to work with.”
- “He will answer you at all hours for anything you could possibly need. There is no professor in the political science department that cares about their students wellbeing like Dr. Toll does.”
- “He actually cared about the students and our wellbeing. His ability to connect the course to the real world made the class relevant and interesting.”

Finally, PS311: *American Presidency* was also extremely successful. Dr. Toll earned a 5.0 for questions 19 and 20. In addition to the normal exams, Dr. Toll instituted a Presidential Fantasy Draft. This competition was “designed to encourage research, thinking, and discussion about effective presidential leadership” (Dr. Toll SER, p. 6). The student comments were overwhelmingly positive.

Dr. Toll had an outstanding year in this area.

2. Scholarship and Other Professional Activities (20-30%)

Dr. Toll was extremely productive in this area, even with enhanced job pressures (applying for other jobs as a result of Wilkes retrenchment decisions in June, 2020).

- Book chapter, “What Does It Mean to be ‘One of Us’?: The Impact of Place and Belonging on Campaigns in Northeastern Pennsylvania.” (Temple University Press, forthcoming).
- One paper under review at *Perspectives on Politics* (POP). The paper is “Using TV to Teach: Teaching Politics and Civic Ideals Through *The West Wing* and *House of Cards*.”
- Delivered paper at the American Political Science Association annual meeting (online).
- Delivered two (2) papers at the Southern Political Science Association annual meeting (online)
- Discussant at APSA.
- Chair and discussant at SPSA.
- Served as a reviewer for four (4) journals: *Politics and Religion*, *Politics and Policy*, *Journal of Church and State*, and *Journal of Political Science Education*.
- Served on a committee to determine the best poster presentation on Public Policy at APSA 2020.
- Maintained memberships in numerous professional organizations.

Dr. Toll had a good year in this area.

3. Advising/Participation in Student Organization (10-20%)

This was Dr. Toll’s first year of advising responsibilities. He currently has five (5) advisees. Dr. Toll is also the advisor for “Draw the Lines” participants and is the co-advisor for *Sigma Pi* (Political Science Honor Society) and for the Political Society. Dr. Toll is also the advisor to the Chess Club.

Dr. Toll had a good year in this area.

4. University Service (10-20%)

This past year, Dr. Toll served on the Academic Standards Committee (elected on first nomination), the Barre Scholars Program Advisory Board, the Public Forum on Women's Participation in Elections and participated in the Accepted Students Day, delivering a lecture for accepted students (April, 2021). Dr. Toll also was a reader for the AP US Government Exam.

Finally, Dr. Toll completed more than 75 interviews from the summer of 2020 through May, 2021 on many different political topics, with the 2020 presidential election taking up a majority of those conversations. To be clear, no other faculty member on the Wilkes campus gets as much public exposure as Dr. Toll. He is well-respected by local, state, national, and international news outlets and is a "go to person" for those seeking to understand Pennsylvania and national politics. Based on this media attention, Dr. Toll is a great ambassador for the University and the Political Science program.

Dr. Toll had an outstanding year in this area.

5. Community Service (10-20%)

Dr. Toll and his wife are licensed foster parents with two (2) different placements and had two (2) children in their home during the past year. Dr. Toll was also a DMC co-advisor and, in this capacity, worked with a juvenile probation office and a local pastor to continue to bring law enforcement into the conversation with minority teens to try to break down barriers and mistrust between communities. Finally, Dr. Toll was a CEO Food Distribution Co-Director and served on the Care Portal Advisory Board. Please see Dr. Toll's SER for more information on these key community programs.

Dr. Toll had an outstanding year in this area.

Dr. Toll's Goals 2021-22

The 2020-2021 school year was successful, and stressful. I am looking forward to what will hopefully be my first normal year at Wilkes in the 2021-2022 school year. I am also planning for my third year review which will take place next academic year. So, my goals are focused on keeping my strengths and trying to overcome the weaker parts of my resume.

- Continue to be effective teacher with evaluations averaging 4.8 or higher
- Get at least one article accepted for publication and have 3 different papers under review from June 1, 2021 to May 31, 2022.
- Get involved in the Pennsylvania Political Science Association
- Grow my advising portfolio and develop stronger relationships with students leading organizations I advise.
- Continue serving the university effectively and help develop the Barre Scholars Program in the College of Arts, Humanities, and Social Sciences
- Continue being active in the community in ways that look good for Wilkes and are in areas that I have expertise in.

Wilkes University
Annual Faculty Evaluation

1. Name: Dr. Ben Toll

2. Faculty member signature indicating receipt of chair's evaluation:

Signature: Benjamin Toll Date: 06/14/21

3. Chair's rating and signature:

Outstanding Good Satisfactory Needs Improvement Unsatisfactory

Signature: Kyle L. K... Date: 6.4.21

4. Dean's rating and signature:

Outstanding Good Satisfactory Needs Improvement Unsatisfactory

Signature: _____ Date: _____

5. Provost's signature:

Signature: _____ Date: _____

6. Faculty member's signature following meeting with chair:

Signature: _____ Date: _____

7. Chair's signature following meeting with faculty member:

Signature: _____ Date: _____