USC Center for Excellence in Teaching

# Defining teaching excellence

## WHAT IS THIS RESOURCE?

A selection of literature resources discussing efforts to define what is meant by “teaching excellence” at the university level.

**Devlin, M., & Samarawickrema, G. (2010). The Criteria of Effective Teaching in a Changing Higher Education Context. *Higher Education Research and Development, 29*(2), 111–124.**[**https://doi.org/10.1080/07294360903244398**](https://doi.org/10.1080/07294360903244398)

Discusses attempts at defining excellence in teaching; presents the definition devised by the Australian Learning and Teaching Council, and a discussion of its development with many useful references.

**Hildebrand, M., Wilson, R., & Dienst, E. (1971). *Evaluating university teaching*. Berkeley: Center for Research and Development in Higher Education, University of California.**

Early attempt to evaluate effective teaching. In this work, a “good teacher” is defined as a teacher who is recognized by students and/or other faculty as a good teacher. Used interviews with students and faculty peers to determine two separate five-component lists of characteristics of a good teacher. They demonstrated that faculty and student evaluations of the quality of individual teachers correlated strongly with each other, although the faculty and students used different criteria to describe what they thought were distinguishing characteristics of a good teacher.

**Hunt, G., Touzel, T., & Wiseman, D. (1999). *Effective teaching : preparation and implementation* (3rd ed.). Springfield, Ill.: Charles C. Thomas Publisher.**

Summary of research on what constitutes effective teaching. (see Chapter 1)