

Gathering Early-Semester Student Feedback



Fall 2014

After successfully completing this workshop you will be able to:

- state reasons for incorporating early-semester feedback in your course.
- describe at least one option for administering an early-semester feedback form.
- create a form that you could use to gather feedback from your students.

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Why

- “Students are motivated by the instructor's concern for their learning. This motivation, along with the additional support that might come from a concerned instructor, can lead to higher levels of achievement” Jacobs, D. et al (2008).
- “Research indicates that ongoing formative feedback from students and colleagues is the best way to improve teaching,” National Research Council. (2003).
- “Faculty who collect midterm feedback and who make changes to improve their teaching on the basis of that feedback see increases in their ratings on the end-of-course evaluations” (Huston, 2009).

Creating and Administering the Evaluation (Adapted from: Angelo & Cross (1993).)

Instructor Designed Feedback:

- Write/choose questions about:
 - Student attendance and effort
 - specific strategies/methods/activities in your course.
 - Class format, pace, and content
 - Instructor availability, approachability, feedback, speaking pace
- Consider including open-ended and/or Likert Style (ratings) questions.
- If there is an aspect of the course you are not willing to justify or change, don't ask about it on the evaluation.
- Administer paper-based evaluation in class (leave the room to provide anonymity)
- Administer evaluations electronically to collect data anonymously.
 - Concourse or Concourse in Sakai Survey Tool
 - Survey Monkey – Kaneb Center compiles results - <http://kaneb.nd.edu/services/student-feedback/>

Classroom Assessment Quality Circles (Large class)

- Meet regularly with a small group of students to get their feedback on the course.
- Decide which aspects of the course will be the focus of the group(s).
- Ensure that the entire class knows who the members of the quality circles are so they can contribute their feedback through the quality circle.

Group Instructional Feedback Technique (small to mid-size class)

- Write open-ended questions about the course.
- Arrange for someone to interview the students using the questions you've created.
- Ask them to provide you a summary of the interview.

Responding to the Evaluation and Communicating Results to the Class

- Look for trends in the results, don't over-react to outliers (either positive or negative).
- Discuss the results of the evaluation with your students!!
 - Indicate changes that you will make based on their input.
 - Explain if there are cases where the results indicate a desire for change but none will be made.

“I received countless favorable comments from my students on this practice. They appreciated the fact that I listened to what they had to say and made some adjustments in the course.” — Scott Mainwaring, Political Science

Professor Ghilarducci:

Introduction to Macroeconomics- Mid Term Evaluation on Feb. 20, 2007

Please fill out this questionnaire as extensively as you would like. Please leave it on the podium.

1. Does the syllabus help you organize your time and know what to expect in class?

1. excellent 2. helpful 3. Somewhat helpful 4. Not Very helpful 5. useless

Please suggest ways this aspect could improve your learning

2. Do the lectures help you understand the material in the textbook?

1. excellent 2. helpful 3. Somewhat helpful 4. Not Very helpful 5. useless

Please suggest ways the lectures could improve your learning

3. Do the periodic exercises (where you get into pairs and answer questions) help you learn?

1. excellent 2. helpful 3. Somewhat helpful 4. Not Very helpful 5. useless

Please suggest ways I can make the activities stimulate, motivate, and reinforce the material in the textbook.

4. Does the outline presented at the beginning of lectures help?

1. excellent 2. helpful 3. Somewhat helpful 4. Not Very helpful 5. useless

Comments on the format of the lecture?

5.a. Do you find listening to student presentation helpful?

1. excellent 2. helpful 3. Somewhat helpful 4. Not Very helpful 5. useless

Improvement in the way the presentations are used to teach macroeconomics?

5.b. If you have done a presentation did it help you learn?

1. excellent 2. helpful 3. Somewhat helpful 4. Not Very helpful 5. useless

Please suggest ways do a presentation can help you understand the material.

6. Does reading the newspaper help motivate you?

1. excellent 2. helpful 3. Somewhat helpful 4. Not Very helpful 5. useless

7. Did the exam help you learn the material?

1. excellent 2. helpful 3. Somewhat helpful 4. Not Very helpful 5. useless

How do exams help you learn? Given the exams are multiple choice how can they be improved?

8. Did the study guide help you study for the exam

1. excellent 2. helpful 3. Somewhat helpful 4. Not Very helpful 5. useless

What do you like in study guides?

9.a. Have you used the online homework?

1. Yes 2. no

9.b. Was it helpful?

1. excellent 2. helpful 3. Somewhat helpful 4. Not Very helpful 5. useless

Please suggest ways homework could be used to improve your learning

10. How many times in the semester have you've read the material before class:

1. All 2. Almost all 3. About Half 4. Seldom 5. Never

11. What about the textbook?

1. excellent 2. helpful 3. Somewhat helpful 4. Not Very helpful 5. useless

Anything else?

Thanks very much. I will share the results with you in the next class.

Mid-semester evaluation – ND Course

Instructions: Please circle the most adequate answer on a scale of 1 – 5. Please add any suggestions you might have for improvement in this particular area in the space provided.

1=lowest (poor)

3=medium

5=highest (best)

1. How much are the reading materials in this course helping you to learn about the topic?

1

2

3

4

5

Suggestions for improvement?

2. How much are the audio-visual components of the course helping you to learn?

1

2

3

4

5

Suggestions?

3. How much is the journal contributing to your learning by helping you think of the reading materials?

1

2

3

4

5

Suggestions?

4. How much do you think the journal is helping you to improve your writing skills?

1

2

3

4

5

Suggestions?

5. How much are the professor's written comments in essays helping you to learn?

1

2

3

4

5

Suggestions?

6. How much are the professor-directed discussions helping you to understand and make sense of the material?

1

2

3

4

5

Suggestions?

7. How can the professor help you increase your participation in class?

a. Calling on you?

1

2

3

4

5

b. Keep asking for volunteers?

1

2

3

4

5

c. Reminding you participation is worth 20% of final grade?

1

2

3

4

5

d. Other? _____

8. Do you think that more small group discussions in the classroom would enhance your learning?

1

2

3

4

5

Suggestions?

9. How can the professor successfully motivate you as a student?

a. Giving extra points as an incentive?

1

2

3

4

5

b. Positive written comments ?

1

2

3

4

5

c. Professor's level of enthusiasm in class?

1

2

3

4

5

d. Demanding more of the student?

1

2

3

4

5

e. Other? _____

10. Please rate your progress toward meeting your goals for the course? Comments?

1

2

3

4

5

1. Default Section

1. Please respond to the following statements:

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
The course is well-organized					
The instructor is well-organized and prepared for class					
The instructor's manner of presenting the material is clear and understandable					
The instructor appears to be engaged in the material					
The instructor is fair and impartial when dealing with students					
The instructor encourages class discussion/participation					
Working in small groups provides variety in class which is helpful/interesting					
The reading materials help me learn about the topic and prepare for class discussions					
I come to class having read the material before-hand					
The amount of reading is appropriate for each class period					
Blogs are a helpful way to engage the course material					
Blog comments facilitate engagement with other students					
The study guide and review session were helpful for preparing for the exam					
The style of the exam was helpful in learning the material					
I feel engaged and interested in this course					

2. How can the instructor help you increase your participation in class?

3. Further comments?

SURVEY of CLASSROOM SKILLS - SIDE 1

(1992, with many items in 1-40 used with permission of Ctr. for Research & Development in Higher Ed., U of CA, Berkeley)

This survey has been requested by your instructor at his/her own initiative for the sole purpose of discovering ways to enhance teaching effectiveness. The results of this survey are confidential between the instructor and the Idaho State Center for Teaching and Learning, and they are not a part of the rank, salary and tenure review processes. This form results from research on traits of good teaching practice. All paper surveys have some pitfalls. To obtain data that will lead to positive change, it is important that the data result from issues rather than general feelings. Try to answer each question specifically without bias that arises from your own general feelings about the faculty member or from the faculty member's general reputation. Some questions may not apply to your class. If you do not have first-hand information about a particular question, it is O.K. to leave it blank. An example is question 29. If you have never been to the professor's office for help, you may not know whether or not the professor is actually available. **USE THE ANSWER FORM PROVIDED and DO NOT WRITE YOUR NAME OR ID NUMBER ON YOUR ANSWER FORM.** You may use pen or pencils to mark the form. We also encourage suggestions for improvement. You may write these in the blank space on the form that contains the words "Do not write in this space" (we've programmed the scanner so that writing in this space poses no problems in scoring). Please use the following scale for your response to each item

Very descriptive ----- Somewhat descriptive ----- Not at all descriptive
A (1) ----- B(2) ----- C(3) ----- D(4) -----E(5)

1. Discusses points of view other than his or her own.
2. Contrasts implications of theories.
3. Discusses recent developments in the field.
4. Gives references for more interesting and involved points
5. Generalizes from examples and specific instances
6. Uses examples and illustrations.
7. Stresses general concepts and ideas.
8. Is well prepared.
9. Explains clearly.
10. Gives lectures that are easy to outline (or provides prepared notes that adequately serve this same purpose).
11. States objectives of each class session.
12. Summarizes to emphasize major points.
13. Is able to clarify or improvise in awkward communication situations.
14. Makes a few major points during lecture rather than many.
15. Appears to know if class is understanding him/her or not.
16. Appears to know when students are bored.
17. Uses a variety of instructional media/resources (films, slides, overheads, guest speakers, etc.).
18. Uses a variety of teaching methods besides lectures (demonstrations, field trips, writing, group work, etc.).
19. Identifies what he or she considers important for purposes of testing.
20. Uses exams effectively for synthesis and understanding of course material.
21. Is fair and impartial in grading exams, quizzes, etc.
22. Keeps students informed of their progress.
23. Has students apply concepts to demonstrate understanding.
24. Encourages class discussion/participation.
25. Invites students to share their knowledge and experiences.
26. Invites questions, discussion or criticism about ideas presented in lecture.
27. Is able to accommodate and relate to students as individuals.
28. Asks questions of students.
29. Is accessible to students outside of class.
30. Has genuine interest in students.
31. Gives personal help to students having difficulty in the course.
32. Has a concern for the quality of teaching and learning.
33. Encourages/motivates students to challenge themselves to do high quality work.
34. Has an interesting style of presentation.
35. Gives interesting and stimulating assignments.
36. Uses a range of gestures and movement.
37. Has a sense of humor.
38. Appears confident.
39. Varies the speed and tone of voice.
40. Is enthusiastic.

(SEE OTHER SIDE!!)

Course Evaluation—Small-Group Activities - SIDE 2
(©1995, Office of Teaching Effectiveness, University of Colorado at Denver)

The preceding 40 questions on Side 1 were developed primarily through research on traditional lecture classes. If your course utilized small-group activities for a significant amount of total class meetings, please complete the following questions. Do not complete if small group activities were used only rarely. Mode of response is identical to that provided on side 1.

Very descriptive ----- Somewhat descriptive ----- Not at all descriptive
A (1) ----- B(2) ----- C(3) ----- D(4) -----E(5)

41. Working in small groups made the course more interesting than it would have been with lectures only.
42. Working in small groups provided an improved learning environment for the class.
43. I benefited in content mastery from working with other members of the group.
44. In testing, individuals remained accountable for demonstrating mastery of the material.
45. All members of the group were held responsible by the group for contributing to the group's efforts.
46. Small-group activities were an appropriate way to accomplish the tasks assigned.
47. Sizes of the groups were appropriate to the tasks performed by the groups.
48. Group activities were a good use of class time.
49. Instructor provided credit and/or showed appreciation for contributions of the groups to the class.
50. Instructor built upon groups' accomplishments to make the course more effective.
51. Instructor worked with individual groups.
52. Instructor gave helpful suggestions on how to make small-group work more beneficial.
53. Instructor often facilitated the sharing of a group's accomplishments with the entire class.
54. Students who had difficulty with material were helped during class by fellow group members.
55. Outside of class, fellow group members served as sources for assistance and support for subject mastery.
56. Members entered group activities, from the start, with good social and/or conflict-resolution skills.
57. Members' social and/or conflict-resolution skills in groups improved over the period of the course.
58. Small group activities helped build improved social support for group members.
59. In group learning projects, I could not easily succeed unless other members of my group succeeded.
60. In group projects, members either (a) had assigned role responsibilities or (b) a summary capstone for problem-solving sessions wherein all members reached general agreement on appropriate solutions and solution strategies.



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Create Your Early-Semester Feedback Form

(Using the ideas from the workshop and the sample evaluation forms begin planning an evaluation for your current course.)