Using Mid-Course Evaluations

Mid-course evaluations are an effective way to assess and improve a course while current students can still benefit from the changes. Use a mid-course evaluation to adjust your course mid-semester, gain valuable information about the direction your student ratings are heading, and demonstrate that you are responsive to your students' concerns.

Students appreciate knowing you are interested in their opinion and will feel more invested in a course if they have some input into its operation. Use a mid-course evaluation to adjust your course mid-semester, gain valuable information about the direction your student ratings are heading, and demonstrate that you are responsive to your students’ concerns. Anything from a quick in-class survey to a weekly self mastery check, evaluations can be personalized to be as brief or as detailed as you need.

Benefits of Mid-Course Evaluations
Mid-course evaluations can provide valuable information about the progress of your course and help you improve your teaching mid-semester.

Why should I consider doing a mid-course evaluation of my class?

- Students appreciate knowing that you are interested in their opinion about how the course is progressing.
- Students feel more invested in the course if they have some input into its operation.
- Conducting a mid-course evaluation provides you with information about student perceptions of the effectiveness of the learning activities.
- Conducting a mid-course evaluation provides you with information about the direction your student ratings are taking.
What can I do with the information that I learn from doing a mid-course evaluation of my class?

- Use it to assist you in making adjustments to your course practices that will result in greater student learning, such as changing the lecture routine; changing the nature, number, or content of lectures | lab time; or changing the out-of-class assignments.
- Use it as valuable information about what you can do to change the direction of your student ratings.
- Use it to demonstrate to your willingness and responsiveness to your students’ concerns about their learning experience.
- Use it to highlight a significant upward shift in student ratings when it is compared with the end-of-semester ratings.

How do I conduct a mid-course evaluation of my class?

- You can ask students to write an anonymous note indicating what they like and dislike about the course, or what learning activities they think produce the greatest amount of learning.
- You can ask students to suggest learning activities in which they would like to participate.
- You can ask students what they found to be most distressing on the assignments | projects so far.
- You can have the students complete an online survey.

Mid-Course Evaluation Techniques

Use these efficient techniques to determine how students perceive their learning.

Quick Survey

Conduct an informal survey to identify what students like or appreciate about the course (including content, activities, feedback, etc.) and what improvements they would like to see in the course. Students can respond to your questions via a 3×5 card or online survey. Student anonymity is best.
Sample questions may include:
The questions below were taken from a mid-course evaluation used by one CE instructor. They are presented here as examples only. In this particular case, the mid-course evaluation was actually presented to students in the form of a Survey Share hosted survey email to each student. This process allowed the instructor to quickly analyze the survey results. Consider utilizing the supplied Likert scale when indicating appropriate answers.

**Strongly Agree | Agree | Undecided | Disagree Strongly | Disagree**

- Question 1 Objectives for each assignment are clear
- Question 2 Assignments and class activities are clearly explained
- Question 3 Assignments are tied to lesson objectives
- Question 4 Opportunities are provided to apply concepts in actual or simulated problems
- Question 5 Instructor provides meaningful feedback on my work
- Question 6 I am encouraged to be an active participant in the teaching and learning process
- Question 7 Performance expectations are clearly presented for each lesson
- Question 8 Text and print-based support materials used for this course are appropriate and assistive
- Question 9 Lectures are meaningful and paced to allow for me to assimilate the content presented
- Question 10 Please comment on the strengths and the weakness of this course

**Self Mastery Check**
Just before students hand in their work, ask them to consider the following three statements (or three that you write to best reflect their tasks) and determine which one most closely describes how confident they are with the task they.

1. I am confident that I can do a similar task without referring to my notes or textbook.
2. I am fairly confident in doing this type of task, but I would need to refer to my notes, textbook, or ask for some help.
3. I do not know how to do this task, and I do not know what questions to ask.

Ask each student to write the number that corresponds to their self assessment on their assignment.
(There are two benefits to this self mastery check. First and foremost, it motivates the students to really consider owning their learning. They can tell if they have really learned or if they have just completed a requirement without any regard for learning. The students, over time, will be motivated to put a ‘1’ on their paper as often as possible. Students who respond with ‘2’ or ‘3’ will quickly realize that they have more to do with respect to their learning. The second benefit is that the instructor can quickly make adjustments in order to motivate and enable deeper learning among the students.)

“You Are Here” Course Map
This is a visual layout of the course including concepts, assignments, schedules, etc. that illustrates the flow of learning and activity through the semester up to the current time (e.g., the first class session at the beginning of Session 5 in the semester). As you show this to students, point out that the class has just completed four sessions of the course and that certain things should have been learned or completed. Ask students to identify what they have completed and what they may need help in understanding or completing. This type of assessment can be done in class or via online survey. By eliciting student response to this course map, you will be able to understand the students’ progress in their learning, and remind the students to stay motivated and on task as they accept more responsibility for their learning.