

Student Ratings Responses to the Following Questions:

1. Describe 3 specific ways you use student ratings to inform your teaching.
2. Identify the 3 most useful questions on our current form. Why?
3. Identify the 3 least useful questions on our current form. Why?
4. Identify 3 new questions that would improve our student ratings form.

RESPONSES SUMMARY(n=20)

1. Describe 3 specific ways you use student ratings to inform your teaching.
 - General information (identify strengths & weaknesses) and make changes as necessary
 - Classroom activities, discussion, etc.
 - Specific content (included and/or omitted)
 - Books and assignments
 - In class persona of instructor
 - Alignment between syllabus and class itself
 - Use of class time / pace of the course
 - Compare general numerical ratings between classes and from semester to semester.
 - Written comments much more valuable than the numerical ratings.
 - Use them to write the Faculty Update
 - Some use them very little

2. Identify the 3 most useful questions on our current form. Why?

# 1	√√√√√√√	7
# 2	√	1
# 3	√√√√√	5
# 4	√√√√√√	6
# 5	√√√√√	5
# 6	√√√√√	5
# 7	√√√	3
# 8	√√√√	4
# 9	√	1
#10	√√√	3
#11	√√√	3
#12	√√	2
#13		0
Instructor (open ended)	√√√√√√√	6
Course (open ended)	√√√	3

3. Identify the 3 least useful questions on our current form. Why?

# 1	√√	2
# 2	√√√√	4
# 3	√√	2
# 4	√√	2
# 5	√√√	3
# 6	√√√	3

# 7	√√√√√√	6
# 8	√√√	3
# 9	√√√√√√√√	9
#10	√√√√√√	6
#11	√√√√√	5
#12	√√√√√	5
#13	√√√√√√√	7
Instructor (open ended)	√	1
Course (open ended)	√	1

4. Identify 3 new questions that would improve our student ratings form.

DO STUDENTS SEE THE BIGGER PICTURE?

- The instructor's ability to help me connect the course material to the world around me was...
- The instructor's ability to help me connect the course material to myself was...
- Did they feel that the course helped them in their other courses (i.e. skills acquired).
- “The instructor promotes application of knowledge and skills in a real-world like scenarios/cases” – Application of information is crucial for students to make links on why the information learned is important.

COURSE EVALUATION

- Perhaps a question or questions about course materials would be useful.
- Alignment – objectives and assessment - Ask if assignments given helped achieve objectives, and maybe how often course objectives were discussed in the class. In other words, did the teacher try to draw connections between what was being done in class and course objectives as the class was in progress? Or only at the beginning, or only in the syllabus, or not so much?
- If this class is part of a combined lecture/laboratory, do they complement each other (do they reinforce material learned in both sections)
- The tests require the student to understand the material well.
- Is the material being covered effectively and completely in class? Or, are students being required to teach themselves?

STUDENT EXPECTATIONS/PERCEPTIONS

- Would they recommend the course/instructor to other students?
- This course met all of my expectations (based on course catalog description, syllabus, word of mouth, etc).
- Now that the course is almost over, are you glad to have take the course, or not? (As in, did this class teach you things you didn't know that you either enjoyed learning or feel improved your skills or broadened your mind.)
- I'd also like to see some opportunity for students to record how their attitudes toward the class might have changed over the course of the semester.

INSTRUCTOR ABILITY

- Maybe add a question about teaching effectiveness compared to other faculty in the department. This question would be helpful if it's students in the major evaluating you.
- The instructor recognized and addressed students' difficulties in understanding new material.
- Does the professor communicate both knowledge and enthusiasm in delivery of course content?

CLARITY

- The instructor presents concepts clearly.
- The instructor provided clear constructive feedback.
- Teacher has clear classroom procedures so students don't waste time.
- Teacher follows through with what he/she says. You can count on this teacher
- You could include a question about grading. That would be tricky, though. It would have to be something like "Are grading practices clear?"

AVAILABILITY

- The instructor was helpful when I had difficulties or questions.
- Was the professor available outside of class to meet with me, to answer my emails, posts, and other communications in a timely fashion?

RESPECT

- Does the professor demonstrate respect for students by managing time effectively and being prepared for class?
- Students in this class treat the teacher with respect.

PROMOTES CRITICAL THINKING

- Does the instructor provide opportunities for critical thinking in class?
- Does the instructor encourage students to ask questions and provide effective explanations?
- The instructor encouraged students to think independently, creatively and critically.

ACTIVE LEARNING / ABILITY TO MOTIVATE

- The instructor's ability to generate my enthusiasm for the course material was...
- How often were you bored in or by this class? (never / rarely / sometimes / often / always). If you were, was it because of the material, the instructor, or the environment (location or time of day) ?
- "The instructor incorporates teaching methods that promote active learning" – Active learning is best practice in higher education compared to passive learning. Student retention of knowledge is improved with active learning

USE OF TECHNOLOGY / RESOURCES

- Also, a question about the instructor's use of Blackboard and email could be helpful.

STUDENT INFORMATION

- What is your major / division?
- On average, how many hours per week outside of class did you spend preparing for this class? [I know this won't be included, but I bet there would be some interesting correlations between negative evaluations and the amount of time here.] / I'd also like to see some opportunity for the students to acknowledge how much work they put in compared to other classes and simply hours spent per week.
- What grade do you expect to receive in this course?
- Was this a class that you had to take (either because of major requirements or time/schedule constraints)?
 - i. If yes, were you looking forward to this course and what it promised to cover?
 - ii. If yes, are you glad to have take the course, or not? (As in, did this class teach you things you didn't know that you either enjoyed learning or feel improved your skills or broadened your mind.)
 - iii. If answer is no, are you glad to have take the course, or not? (As in, did this class teach you things you didn't know that you either enjoyed learning or feel improved your skills or broadened your mind.)
 - iv. If no, why were you not initially happy to be taking this course? (no interest in subject matter; subject matter too difficult; not happy with the choice of instructor)

OPEN ENDED

- Please think back on some of our specific class sessions/activities. Which had the most impact on your learning? Why? Which had the least impact on your learning? Why
- How could this course be improved? Is there anything that could be done to help you achieve a better learning experience? If you believe there are specific ways in which the instructor can improve his or her teaching, please state them here.

COMMENTS

- I think the order of the questions can be changed to emphasize the ones about course objectives and alignment of material.
- I'd use the word "alignment" instead of "agreement."
- I'd add one or two more to this section to ask if assignments given helped achieve objectives, and maybe how often course objectives were discussed in the class. In other words, did the teacher try to draw connections between what was being done in class and course objectives as the class was in progress? Or only at the beginning, or only in the syllabus, or not so much?
- I think the ratings should be done away with. I don't think they are reliable. I know administrators love those numbers... but they are really, just, useless unless a professor is not doing his job or is incredibly unfair. Instead, there should just be questions to skip or respond to. If I ruled the world, this would be the questionnaire I would give at the end of the semester. And no, there are no

numbers to crunch but these are answers I would really be interested in reading.

- I'd like to see some ranking of outcomes/objectives recognized. We often try to do many things in our classes, but not all of them are equally important.
- No new ones; less is better
- More importantly the entire process should be online (like our Professional Experience Program is already), and NOT interrupt class time.
- I almost don't care what the questions are- I just want ELECTRONIC evals!!!

RESPONSES BY DIVISION

DIVISION OF SOCIAL AND BEHAVIORAL SCIENCES (1)

1. Describe 3 specific ways you use student ratings to inform your teaching.
 - Identify strengths and weakness areas by finding common themes to pinpoint behaviors that I need to increase, maintain, or decrease.
 - The most common critical feedback that I have received is to incorporate more activities during the class. I have made an effort to build discussion or activities into each class period.
 - The actual ratings of the objective questions are less helpful than the written feedback. The numerical ratings give me an overall sense of the extent to which the students see how well the course is functioning, but they do not provide any course- or instructor-specific information.

2. Identify the 3 most useful questions on our current form (attached). Why?
 - #8 - Instructor's respect for students: I place a great deal of importance on students feeling respected and heard in courses because I do not believe that students will have the ideal environment to learn if they feel disrespected.
 - #1 - Promote effective teaching/learning atmosphere: I think this question is a good umbrella question to assess students' perceptions of how well the instructor performs overall.
 - #10 - Compared to other instructors...teaching effectiveness: I like this question in addition to question 1 because it provides students comparison points against which they can evaluate a particular instructor. Students might provide very favorable (or unfavorable) ratings across the other questions just due to a general response style or pattern. This question might break that pattern and allow instructors to determine how well they are performing compared to their peers.

3. Identify the 3 least useful questions on our current form (attached). Why?
 - #11 - Clarity of course objectives: I am uncertain about whether students know exactly what course objectives are. They might actually reference the course objectives established by the instructor at the beginning of the course, but I am uncertain how many students actually critically examine these objectives.
 - #12 - Agreement between course objectives and material: Once again, students might not be very familiar with the course objectives, and they might reference their own expectations for the course in evaluating how well the objectives aligned with the material covered. I might not be giving students enough credit here, though.
 - #13 - Opportunities for learning: This question seems redundant for some reason.

4. Identify 3 new questions that would improve our student ratings form.
 - The instructor's ability to generate my enthusiasm for the course material was...
 - The instructor's ability to help me connect the course material to the world around me was...
 - The instructor's ability to help me connect the course material to myself was...

DIVISION OF FINE ARTS AND HUMANITIES (9)

1. Describe 3 specific ways you use student ratings to inform your teaching.

- I regularly use the comments section to evaluate my teaching and adjust my practices. To give a few examples, I've tried to respond fairly to complaints about excessive reading, clarify assignment instructions, and tone down (or at least explain) my sarcasm.
- I have also used the comments to adjust my lecture style - slowing down, being more relaxed, as well as change the structure of my courses to include more discussion and activities.

- Specific feedback about books and assignments
- Helped me to see the benefit of interacting with the students on a more personal level .
- The final section has really helped me to see the need to teach the students about the connection between what's in the syllabus and what we are doing on a daily basis.

- to write faculty update
- to modify the *way* I teach
- I look at the comments far more than the numbers.

- I pay most attention to what the students actually write on the evaluations under good points of the professor/class and suggestions for improvement for the professor/class. If I see that more than two or three students are saying the same thing about a strong point or weakness, I stick with the positive thing and seriously reconsider whatever weakness they are talking about. However, whenever they are talking about workload, I have to seriously ponder this since I have noticed that many students choose classes based on which professors they perceive to be assigning less work or who are so-called "easy graders."
- I also look at my overall rating for a particular class. If it is below 4, I think about what could have garnered a less-than-stellar review by paying close attention to which criteria brought my overall rating down and addressing those criteria.

- Like most, I look for negative comments or improvement suggestions that appear more than once, although I have tried to address issues raised by lone students. Specifically, in composition classes over the past 5 years, I've adjusted the amount of peer review, the amount of in-class writing, the weight of drafts and revisions, and the number of models and examples used, all based on student comments. Perhaps it's because of the nature of comp classes that these course mechanics-type of issues come up, maybe because there's less lecture, less objective content. I tweak the courses each time they're taught, in part based on evals, in part based on instinct for what seemed to work for student learning, and of course the tweaks become more minor as I teach the class more often. But in general, student evals have driven many of the changes in structure of the course, as mentioned above.

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- I don't. I don't. And I don't. Now, when I was new.... I did. I noticed that I got a lot of "not organized," and could not understand why that was. The person reviewing me told me to give out more handouts rather than writing on the board and the comments would go away. I did, and they did. I do occasionally look at the ratings... but I am the sort who would not read her reviews. If there is a problem I figure the chair would talk to me. For the record, I have seen basically the same comments over and over during the years -- that I am very enthusiastic is often written down as a strength, and that I really know my subject matter. That has not changed. In a brand new course, however.... I would pay more attention to the comments. But, really... in a brand new course I really do try to monitor as I go along. If something is not working, I tend to the issue then.

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- I don't use student ratings--except as a check to see if I'm slipping somewhere. I've always received high ratings across the board. However, if students would indicate a problem area by giving me low ratings on that question, I'd certainly respond to that. Student evaluations are important in that respect. If I slip up in an area, students can call my attention to it.
 - Though I don't use the ratings per se (unless a problem area would be identified), I certainly use the students' written comments. These comments have given me lots of ideas for course improvements over the years. I read each comment carefully, and I sometimes make major changes in future iterations of a course based on them.

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- Revise assignments (reading and writing)
 - Scheduling/pacing
 - Classroom activities

2. Identify the 3 most useful questions on our current form (attached). Why?

- How the course / teaching could be improved (open-ended question)
- The strengths of the teacher and the course (open-ended question)

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- #11: The final section has really helped me to see the need to teach the students about the connection between what's in the syllabus and what we are doing on a daily basis.
 - #12: The final section has really helped me to see the need to teach the students about the connection between what's in the syllabus and what we are doing on a daily basis.

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- #3 I think I sometimes have a problem with this although again I look at comments.
 - #2 I'm always online for the students and reply rapidly as well as keeping office hours; if they rate me negatively on this--there's a problem.
 - #8. It's important--especially for first year students who are not expecting to see a white professor in their class; some of them are very sensitive and so I also need

to be more sensitive--this is particularly so in teaching writing and literature when very often the professor's reactions seems to appear totally subjective to the students. In writing course, I include grading criteria to offset this.

- the open questions about how the professor and class could be improved (2)
- what the major strengths of the class and professor are (2)

- Questions 3, 4, and 6 keep me on point.

- Besides the above questions, the question about the instructor's major strengths and how the instructor could improve have been useful.

- #11, the clarity of objectives
- #12, agreement between objectives and material, and
- Open Ended Instructor = the one asking for suggestions to improve teaching.
- The reasons are that 11 and 12 are central to the effectiveness of a course. If the objectives are clear and the material matches the objectives, then it would seem the course is pretty good, and that issues of range of student learning or experience would largely fall to the part of the student, or to issues of teacher style or delivery, and maybe issues of personality clash between teachers and students, all issues that to me are harder, and in a sense less necessary, to adjust for. The prompt to give suggestions to improve teaching leads to the most useful responses.

- #3
- #4
- #5

- #1
- #8
- #10 - But really, I think that 8 and 10 would be enough: respecting students is essential, and in a sense all the other questions are wrapped into #10. When I review faculty teaching, I always focus on 10--something that was recommended to me long ago by Sister Rosemarie Kleinhaus, our former VPAA.

- #3 - Instructor's management of class time.
- #4 - Instructor's preparation for class.
- #5 - Instructor's knowledge of subject matter.
- I want to know my students acknowledge and respect how much time I spend preparing for class and preparing a lesson-plan that is coherent and rational - that prepares them to or helps them meet the course objectives.

3. Identify the 3 least useful questions on our current form (attached). Why?

- # - 4

- # - 5
- # - 9

*Although generally I find the whole “instructor evaluation” section relatively unhelpful in improving my teaching.

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- #7: Students don't understand what we mean by enthusiasm.
 - #9: This is a question best suited to RateMyProfessor.com.
 - #13: This should be a useful question, but again, I don't think students understand what we are asking.

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- #10--not helpful and compared to whom?
 - #9--students often recommend faculty who are entertaining of easy graders (I know I've been a chair!)
 - #5 really?

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- #7
 - #9
 - #10.

*I think that enthusiasm can be hard for students accurately to gauge, as some professors might be enthusiastic about their subject but not perceived as such because they are not natural extroverts or people who are inclined to be effusive. I do not favor questions #9 and #10 because they make our profession into a sort of popularity contest, comparing one professor to another. Based on many conversations of students (overheard at the beginning of my classes during the pre-registration periods over the years), the most popular professors are those who require less work and who are perceived as very flexible with their grading, thus ensuring that the student will get an A with minimal work.

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- #11-13 - Answers to course evaluation questions don't really talk about the course overall (unless the students complain about having to take Freshman Seminar for 2 semesters). They usually talk about the instructor. Plus, evaluations of the actual course doesn't do much to help me as an instructor. Answers to course evaluation questions don't really talk about the course overall (unless the students complain about having to take Freshman Seminar for 2 semesters). They usually talk about the instructor. Plus, evaluations of the actual course doesn't do much to help me as an instructor.
 - #10. We're not in a competition.
 - #9. It's too subjective. Take this teacher because she's easy? Don't take this teacher because the coursework is demanding? Take this teacher because you'll learn a lot? Don't take this teacher because he expects you to be on time? Useless.

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- #13, opportunities for learning. I'm not sure students understand this question, and I'm not sure I understand it. It seems that even in a bad course with a bad teacher that there are opportunities for learning.
 - Course Open Ended - The two questions following 13, about the strengths of the

course and suggestions for its improvement, are less useful because students don't see a difference between the course and the teacher. They've already given their thoughts on tow responses in the instructor section, and these questions are often left blank for me.

- Contrary to some, I don't find #10 to be unfair, the "compared to other instructors" question. I think it's natural and useful for teachers to gauge how they're perceived in comparison with other teachers. Of course many factors can skew this response, but the same can be said for any question on the form.

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- everything else (not 3-5).
 - and 7 is ridiculous. not every professor comes across as bubbling with enthusiasm (though I do!)

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- Least useful: this is tough, because all of these questions are potentially useful, if they raise a red flag about one's teaching. But if forced to choose, I'd pick

- 3
- 7
- 9.

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- Enthusiasm. I'm enthusiastic.
 - Recommendation of this instructor to other students. Recommendation based on what criteria? Too hard? Too easy?
 - Compared to other instructors who have taught me. Opportunities for learning were... Compared to other instructors based on what criteria? Too hard? Too easy? Required class or elective? Major or minor? Level of interest? Other instructors of similar classes? Within the same department? Nice? Attractive? Bribes?
 - Learning opportunities? The ellipses is the problem. What? present? absent? spiritually connected? comical?

4. Identify 3 new questions that would improve our student ratings form.

- Would they recommend the course/instructor to other students?
- Did they feel that the course helped them in their other courses (i.e. skills acquired).
- What is your major / division?

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- Likert scale: This course met all of my expectations (based on course catalog description, syllabus, word of mouth, etc).
 - Please think back on some of our specific class sessions/activities. Which had the most impact on your learning? Why? Which had the least impact on your learning? Why
 - On average, how many hours per week outside of class did you spend preparing for this class? [I know this won't be included, but I bet there would be some interesting correlations between negative evaluations and the amount of time here.]

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- The instructor presents concepts clearly.
 - The instructor was helpful when I had difficulties or questions.
 - The instructor provided clear constructive feedback.
-
- students should have to state at the beginning of the evaluation what grade s/he anticipates getting in the class, as a lower grade can correlate with a lower teaching evaluation of the professor.
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- Perhaps a question or questions about course materials would be useful.
 - Also, a question about the instructor's use of Blackboard and email could be helpful.
 - Finally, you could include a question about grading. That would be tricky, though. It would have to be something like "Are grading practices clear?"
-
- I think the order of the questions can be changed to emphasize the ones about course objectives and alignment of material.
 - I'd use the word "alignment" instead of "agreement."
 - I'd add one or two more to this section to ask if assignments given helped achieve objectives, and maybe how often course objectives were discussed in the class. In other words, did the teacher try to draw connections between what was being done in class and course objectives as the class was in progress? Or only at the beginning, or only in the syllabus, or not so much?
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- How often were you bored in or by this class? (never... rarely/sometimes....often.....always). If you were, was it because of the material, the instructor, or the environment (location or time of day) ?
 - We all have to take classes we don't want to take, but have to. Was this a class that you had to take (either because of major requirements or time/schedule constraints)? If yes.... were you looking forward to this course and what it promised to cover? If yes Are you glad to have take the course, or not? (As in, did this class teach you things you didn't know that you either enjoyed learning or feel improved your skills or broadened your mind.) If answer to "a" is no ... Are you glad to have take the course, or not? (As in, did this class teach you things you didn't know that you either enjoyed learning or feel improved your skills or broadened your mind.) If no.... why were you not initially happy to be taking this course? (no interest in subject matter; subject matter too difficult; not happy with the choice of instructor)
 - Now that the course is almost over, are you glad to have take the course, or not? (As in, did this class teach you things you didn't know that you either enjoyed learning or feel improved your skills or broadened your mind.)
 - How could this course be improved? Is there anything that could be done to help you achieve a better learning experience? If you believe there are specific ways in which the instructor can improve his or her teaching, please state them here.
 - Anything you would like to add about the course?

*I think the ratings should be done away with. I don't think they are reliable. I know administrators love those numbers... but they are really, just, useless unless a professor is not doing his job or is incredibly unfair. Instead, there should just be questions to skip or respond to. If I ruled the world, this would be the questionnaire I would give at the end of the semester. And no, there are no numbers to crunch but these are answers I would really be interested in reading.

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- I can't think of any new questions. In fact, I'd favor just two:
 - respect and overall teaching (8 & 10).
-
- I'd like to see some ranking of outcomes/objectives recognized. We often try to do many things in our classes, but not all of them are equally important.
 - I'd also like to see some opportunity for the students to acknowledge how much work they put in compared to other classes and simply hours spent per week.
 - I'd also like to see some opportunity for students to record how their attitudes toward the class might have changed over the course of the semester. Was it required? Did they want to take it? Did they think it useless? Useful?

COMMENTS

*Notes that his responses to Q3 and Q4 are, in part, determined by the fact that these questions are more problematic for 1000-level classes. Students coming out of most high schools are still thinking about our classes the way they think about high school classes.

...just a follow-up in light of your recent reminder, but a thought I had while doing some reading this summer: Our current evaluations ask students to evaluate their professors based on the traditional sage-on-the-stage model. We are basically asking, "How good of a lecturer is this person?"

*Disclosure--taken from <https://teaching.berkeley.edu/course-evaluation-questionnaire-template>

** Often I would like students to respond to particular activities that we have done in class and I sometimes remind them of them but they still don't comment.

*I'd like to see one evaluation that is useful for both online and traditional classes. I know there are specific issues with online classes that need to be addressed, such as speed of broadband service, disruptions in internet, etc. But I see these issues as more and more relevant to traditional classes now, as most teachers employ some degree of hybrid model in their classes, even if it's just turning in assignments, online readings, or discussion boards. Online and traditional are moving closer to each other, and that's the approach I think we need to take regarding evaluations, to demonstrate an institutional understanding of the future model of instruction, where online and traditional inform each other. Another aspect of this involves alignment, which I think should be made more central in evaluations. As online courses strive for clear alignment between components of courses, out of the necessity driven by the nature of the online environment, this should naturally move traditional sections of the same courses toward a greater degree of alignment as well. On a departmental level, if a department is offering (and promoting) online versions of required courses, then it's up to the department to ensure as much consistency as possible in student learning and experience across the platforms. The most basic way to do this is through course objectives (or through CAS-based learning outcomes) which

should be continually strengthened, and consciously aligned with course materials and assignments. As one of the main online teachers in English, and through my position as Freshman Comp director, this is the tack I'm (so far unsuccessfully) pursuing in the department. Hopefully I can plant in this committee this singular thought: that the instruction model of the future is really the model of the present, and that all tools at our disposal, including and especially student evals, should foster and reflect our institutional understanding of this reality.

DIVISION OF BIOLOGICAL AND PUBLIC HEALTH SCIENCES (4)

1. Describe 3 specific ways you use student ratings to inform your teaching.
 - The questions I use the most are the short answer questions.

 - I use the comments more than the numerical rating to address issues with my teaching,
 - I have compared the numerical rating, especially from questions 1, 6 and 7, from semester to semester when trying out new teaching techniques in classes to determine what the students enjoy.

2. Identify the 3 most useful questions on our current form (attached). Why?
 - If students give feedback that's constructive and is consistent, I try to make that change to the course.

 - 1
 - 6 and 9.
 - Questions 3, 4 and 5 are also essential for the evaluation of faculty but are less useful for self-evaluation in my opinion.

3. Identify the 3 least useful questions on our current form (attached). Why?
 - I think you can do away with questions 11-13.

 - 10 because this is not applicable for freshmen, and even as sophomores and higher, it is not necessarily possible to compare instructors that are teaching different subjects with different requirements.
 - 7 because I typically receive the lowest scores in this category despite being highly enthusiastic about the subject material and attempting to convey this. Also apparent enthusiasm doesn't really have an effect on teaching effectiveness unless it is really low.
 - I think that 8 could be useful but I am not sure if students actually score instructors on their respect for students or their willingness to bend the rules for students.

4. Identify 3 new questions that would improve our student ratings form.
 - Maybe add a question about teaching effectiveness compared to other faculty in the department. This question would be helpful if it's students in the major evaluating you.

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- if this class is part of a combined lecture/laboratory, do they complement each other (do they reinforce material learned in both sections)
-
- The instructor encouraged students to think independently, creatively and critically.
- The instructor recognized and addressed students' difficulties in understanding new material.
- The tests require the student to understand the material well.

COMMENTS

*I'm really not so much concerned about either the content of the form or the mechanics/etc of the system by which the data are delivered. What I have been concerned with for some time is the way the information is used. Specifically, I suspect that too much weight is placed on this mechanism. I will never forget the experience of having served on rank and tenure, and in the midst of a particularly difficult case, I and another committee member felt like we should re-visit the handbook under the "teaching" category of evaluation to make sure that we weren't getting too far off into the weeds. We both expected to see (since neither of us had looked at it in a while, sadly..) that student evals would be at or near the top of the list of the criteria. Of course, they're not--they are almost dead in the middle, along with a whole mess of other stuff. But we had spent who knows how long arguing in committee around this person's numbers, student comments etc as if we were debating his/her standing relative to the number one teaching criterion.

It also provokes, when too much emphasis is placed on it, a kind of circular reasoning among especially junior faculty that goes something like this: I saw xyz on my evals, and so I did 1,2,3 and after a while I didn't see xyz anymore. To which in my opinion the most appropriate response is "OK, you've improved (or at least changed) your result on student evals, SO WHAT ELSE HAS IMPROVED?"

They are chiefly useful, from my experience as chair, in providing a convenient paper trail in the case of people who basically need to get fired. To what extent the mechanism meaningfully contributes to an improvement in student learning, I honestly don't know. I do know that these data are worse than useless unless interpreted very judiciously. And the nature of the mechanism itself often, I'm afraid, militates against this.

DIVISION OF EDUCATION AND COUNSELING (1)

1. Describe 3 specific ways you use student ratings to inform your teaching.
 - If students suggest that something is left out, example nutrition, I find a way to add this topic or activity without diminishing the course.
 - Since most of my courses are activities, I look and try different ways to communicate with students both as a group and as individuals.
 - Pinpoint my weakness and try to make more meaningful lectures, homework and safety tips.
 - My office hours are different every day; I put in writing the times I will be in my office.

2. Identify the 3 most useful questions on our current form (attached). Why?
 - #11 - The clarity of course objectives – all of my objectives make sense to me, student comments help me to understand where they are coming from thus I rethink and re-write objectives
 - #1 - The ability to promote effective teaching/learning atmosphere – helps me evaluate my teaching when I am by myself. Problem is- I really am not sure why they check poor, good or excellent? Thus- how do I make it better?
 - #7 - Teacher enthusiasm for teaching - At least I know they see something good.

3. Identify the 3 least useful questions on our current form (attached). Why?
 - #8 - The instructor respects students as individuals- because students will use one random “not so great” incident to evaluate a teacher’s effectiveness for a lifetime.
 - Instructor Open Ended - Give at least two suggestions as to how this instructor could improve this course because- they may say the course was weak? Useless? Great? But they never give any suggestions as to how to improve.
 - #6 - Instructor’s ability to communicate – because I will not talk when students are being rude, I cross my hands and wait for them to stop. They become embarrassed and I did it to them. I **will not** talk to a student about a personal problem in front of other students, I ask the student to come to my office after class or during my office hours. Thus I am acting rude..

4. Identify 3 new questions that would improve our student ratings form.
 - Teacher has clear classroom procedures so students don’t waste time.
 - Teacher follows through with what he/she says. You can count on this teacher
 - Students in this class treat the teacher with respect.

COMMENT

*At this time I personally think the evaluation is a waste of time. I hand the form out to the students, give the directions and leave the room. Thus the form becomes a conversation piece not an evaluation.

PHARMACY (5)

1. Describe 3 specific ways you use student ratings to inform your teaching.
 - To receive general feedback about the course and my teaching style

 - For me, the specific written comments are the most useful, as students often have either positive or negative feedback on activities and content delivery methods that I appreciate hearing.

 - I utilize the aggregate comments from the student evaluation to identify themes and patterns. These themes and patterns provide opportunity for me to improve my teaching methods or affirms my current teaching methodology.
 - I review the average ratings on each question and improve on questions with lower average scores.

-
- Refine my teaching methods to provide clarity of concepts
 - Fine tune speed of content delivery and use of class time
 - React to student comments and adjust teaching style to continue the "good" and discontinue the "bad"!
-

- indicate to me what is working;
- indicate to me what is NOT working; and
- to improve content delivery, ie, number all slides that are posted and used in lecture.

2. Identify the 3 most useful questions on our current form (attached). Why?

- Open Ended Instructor - What are the instructor's major strengths as a teacher?/Suggestions to improve.
- Open Ended Course - What are the major strengths of the course?/Suggestions to improve...and
- #10 - Comparison to others.

-
- #1
 - #6
 - #7, &
 - #8 – all give me the most confidence in the quality of my teaching and my ability to connect with students. This is how I feel successful as a teacher.
-

- Questions #1 – Learning atmosphere; because when instructors provide great learning atmosphere then students have increased motivation to learn.
 - Question #4 – Preparation for class; faculty are obliged to prepare for class and this must be perceived by the class.
 - Question #5 – Knowledge of subject matter; Ideally, instructors should have expertise in the area of subject matter that they are teaching.
-

- #4 – Instructor's preparation of class. The students are a good judge of this item. Unprepared faculty are a serious detriment to effective learning.
 - #1 – Instructor's ability to promote effective learning environment. This is critical in ensuring student engagement in class.
 - #6 – Instructor's ability to communicate. Critical to ensure student learning.
-

- #s 5, 6, and 7.
*Students come to Xavier to gain knowledge in a variety of disciplines. They expect (and pay for) professors that are knowledgeable, have the capacity to effectively communicate that knowledge to them, and with a reasonable level of enthusiasm (not put them to sleep in the process).

3. Identify the 3 least useful questions on our current form (attached). Why?

- Questions 1-7

- #9 In the college of pharmacy, students do not choose which section to take based on instructor preference. There is only one instructor for any given unit/content.

- Question #2 – My experience has been that students no longer use office hours. Most questions are answered via e-mail or blackboard thread, etc. Technology has made this question obsolete.
- Questions #11 – 13; should no longer be under section on course evaluation. These questions need to **focus on clarity of learning objectives for each content covered by faculty**, agreement with materials taught and these learning objectives, and opportunities for learning in the course as fostered by the instructor.

- My recommendation of this instructor to other students. Not much value in such a subjective evaluation.
- Instructor's knowledge of subject matter. Not sure students can judge this effectively, given their lack of knowledge of subject matter.
- Instructor's respect for students. May result in faculty lowering their standards and molly-coddling the students.

- #2 should query “is the professor available to students outside of class”.
- #9 asks if the student would recommend this professor to other students; this question should read “for this course content, does this professor demonstrate a command of knowledge on topics discussed?” or “compared to other faculty who teach this content” (but how could they effectively compare?).
- #10 is way too broad because like should be compared to like. I do not find that this question assesses that concept.

4. Identify 3 new questions that would improve our student ratings form.

- No new ones; less is better
- More importantly the entire process should be online (like our Professional Experience Program is already), and NOT interrupt class time.

- I almost don't care what the questions are- I just want ELECTRONIC evals!!!

- “The instructor incorporates teaching methods that promote active learning” – Active learning is best practice in higher education compared to passive learning. Student retention of knowledge is improved with active learning
- “The instructor promotes application of knowledge and skills in a real-world like scenarios/cases” – Application of information is crucial for students to make links on why the information learned is important.

- Is the material being covered effectively and completely in class? Or, are students

being required to teach themselves?

- Does the instructor provide opportunities for critical thinking in class?
- Does the instructor encourage students to ask questions and provide effective explanations?

- Does the professor communicate both knowledge and enthusiasm in delivery of course content?
- Does the professor demonstrate respect for students by managing time effectively and being prepared for class?
- Was the professor available outside of class to meet with me, to answer my emails, posts, and other communications in a timely fashion?