Collecting Mid-term Student Feedback

Either halfway through the term, or a third of the way in, we recommend that instructors collect feedback from their students about their experience in the course. There are several purposes for collecting mid-term feedback.

For Instructors
- Understand any changes to class instruction, materials, activities, and assignments that would benefit students' learning
- Make informed changes or improvements

For students:
- Reflect on their interactions with instructors, peers, and course materials
- Reflect on aspects that are facilitating and hindering their learning

Common ways to collect feedback are through a survey instrument (e.g. Qualtrics, Googleforms, surveymonkey) or through the ungraded quiz feature in Canvas. When in class, surveys may be distributed via paper. We strongly recommend that feedback be anonymous to help ensure that students feel comfortable providing feedback.

Broad questions include:
- What aspects of the class enhance your learning?
- What aspects of the class could be improved to enhance your learning?
- What can you do, or continue to do, as a student in the class, to enhance your learning?

Other open-ended questions might focus on the classroom environment overall. For example, the Critical Incident Questionnaire (CIQ) designed by Brookfield (2012) allows students critically to reflect on a given learning experience, rather than focusing solely on the instructor or instruction. The questions include:

- At what moment were you most engaged as a learner?
- At what moment were you most distanced as a learner?
- What action that anyone took in this session did you find most helpful?
- What action that anyone took in the session did you find most confusing?
- What surprised you most about the session?

The CIQ can be a useful alternative to a standard survey, because it can be adapted to a single session, course, or program.

Instructors might also ask open-ended or closed/Likert questions related to:
- Course design
- Course-specific components (e.g., labs, discussion-based, group-/project-based)
- Materials
  - Comprehension, Accessibility
- Course delivery
  - Accessibility
- Instruction
  - Improvements
- Student-faculty engagement
  - Students' participation
- Student-peer engagement
- Students' learning
  - What's more/less helpful from your instructor?
  - Self-assessment of their own learning

Process:
After you have decided on the type of feedback you'd like, we recommend the following process:[1]
- *Collect feedback*: Through anonymous Canvas survey or other online tool (or when possible, on paper in face-to-face setting)
- *Reflect on feedback:* Discuss with a friend or colleague in department or from the Searle Center. Sometimes a third person can be helpful to talk through context and maintain focus.
- *Respond to feedback:* Decide on a few key points to bring back to your students. Thank your students. Ask for clarification as necessary. .
- *Make a plan:* Think through (ideally, together with your students) any improvements or adjustments that can still be made during the quarter and what changes can be implemented in future iterations of the course.

---

[1] adapted from the Derek Bok Center for Teaching and Learning
(https://bokcenter.harvard.edu/early-or-midterm-feedback)