

Securing Student Feedback

The feedback students can provide on your instruction and the usefulness of class activities can be valuable in helping you improve and refine your teaching. By soliciting midsemester feedback, you can also make adjustments to your instruction and course activities while there is still time to meet student needs.

Before asking students for feedback on your teaching by using any of the following techniques, take the time to teach students about the importance of an honest critique as opposed to criticism. Modeling constructive feedback throughout the course when evaluating students' work will help them in providing beneficial critiques.

Suggestions for Designing Feedback Forms

1. Limit the number of questions.
2. Ask for feedback multiple times but not all the time.
3. Assess learner reactions to class activities and assignments.
4. Include both multiple-choice and open-ended questions.
5. Ask questions that assess teaching performance.
 - Example: What would you like the teacher to do that would facilitate your learning?
6. Provide these directions to students:
 - Give specific examples.
 - Focus on observable behaviors.
 - State alternatives and preferences.

The following techniques have been found to be helpful in gathering student feedback.

Stop-Start-Continue: Invite students to respond to questions in the Stop-Start-Continue format. By midway through the term, students are able to provide feedback about their learning experiences. Ask them to list anything they wish would be stopped in class. Examples can include the use of certain materials, activities, instructor behaviors, etc. Then have them post anything they think should start—for example, more time for discussion, papers being returned more quickly, or opportunities to earn bonus points. Finally, ask them to describe what is working well and should be continued. Collect students' responses and follow up with students as soon as possible to let them know what you learned from the feedback and what you intend to do with the feedback. (See the Instructor Resources in this module for a Stop-Start-Continue handout you can distribute to students.)

Point-of-View (POV) Postcard: Ask students to send an email at any time during the first half of the term with their point of view about the class. Assign a grade to make it clear this is an assignment. Suggest a prompt such as “I have learned the most in class when we...” or “My learning in this class could be improved by...”

Assignment Analysis: Ask students to provide feedback on individual assignments using an assignment analysis chart. (See the Instructor Resources in this module to download this chart.)

Small-Group Instructional Diagnosis (SGID) Sessions: SGID is a structured process for conducting a midterm evaluation. Joseph Clark and Mark Redmond designed the method in which an outside facilitator “takes student through a series of questions about the course, individually and in small groups” (University of Northern Iowa, n.d.). Four questions are suggested:

- What do you like most about this course so far?
- What do you like least about the course so far?
- What suggestions do you have for your instructor to improve your learning experience in this course?
- What might you do to improve your own learning experiences and those of other students in this course?

Read more about SGID on the University of Northern Iowa’s website at <http://www.uni.edu/provost/cetl/small-group-instructional-diagnosis>.