

## Expert Insights

**Trudy W. Banta, EdD, Professor, Higher Education, Senior Advisor to the Chancellor for Academic Planning & Evaluation, Indiana University-Purdue University Indianapolis** [00:00:00] I think that sources of feedback should be multiple. There should be student feedback for an instructor, and there should also be feedback from peers. And when one begins to hear some of the same things over and over, that is the time to take action.

**Narrator** [00:00:22] Sometimes it's obvious: that large lecture where fewer students attend as the semester goes on, or in a small class when two groups emerge, the participants and everyone else. Other times, it's a surprise. You think students are making progress, but then an assignment reveals that learning is not nearly what you expected. Consider these warning signs that some teaching adjustments need to be made. But what? Just as attendance and participation are prerequisites for learning, a simple mid-semester survey can identify how to make class time more productive.

**José Bowen, PhD, President & Professor of Music, Goucher College** [00:00:59] I'm a big fan of the midterm teaching evaluation, maybe twice during the semester. You don't want to over-survey your students. But this is now very easy to do in your course management system or you can do it on one of these online polls. You could even do it in one of these, you know, something like Socrative, where you do two or three things on your phone or in Kahoot. One of these online polling devices: was, was today's class activity more or less engaging? And then once or twice a semester, you should also do a more general feedback. How is the course going? What are the things you like best? What do you like the least? You need a little bit of both quantitative and qualitative because you'll get different kinds of information from them.

**Narrator** [00:01:42] For example, in the Stop-Start-Continue framework, students can anonymously share what they wish would stop in class, such as the use of certain materials, activities they find unproductive, or certain instructor behaviors. Then they should indicate what they'd like to see start, such as more time for discussion, papers returned more quickly, or opportunities to make revisions using feedback. Finally, ask students to describe what's working well and should continue. For all three they should provide a brief explanation why. The point-of-view postcard is a similar technique. During the first half of a term, ask students to send you an email that finishes the sentence: "I learn the most in class when we . . ." or "I'd learn more in this class if we . . ." Analyzing this feedback, discussing the trends with your students, and making adjustments signaled that you care about their learning. Plus, both exercises present an opportunity to set norms about constructive feedback, to explain why you use class time the way that you do, and to encourage students' own analysis of their learning process beyond what they merely like and dislike.

**José Bowen, PhD** [00:02:56] A really important relationship with your students is to admit that you're wrong. This is really important to say. I've gotten some feedback from you about the course. I'm going to make a change. I don't think this was working really well, I'm going to try this. Students will give you credit when you say, here's what I'm going to try, here's why I tried that, or here's why I'm going to try this. Brain research tells us this is how students learn. I've read this book, I learned a new thing, I'm going to try this. Think of all the things you're modeling. Your modeling that, wow, my teacher is learning new things. Maybe learning new things is a constant part of life. Maybe smart people have to keep learning.

**Narrator** [00:03:33] Patterns in achievement data should also inform how to adjust your teaching. Tallies of quantitative assignments can quickly identify common mistakes, as can a scan of written work from an entire class or a random sample of a large class. Now, four key questions should guide this analysis. First, what learning outcomes were you assessing? Second, what was your assessment method? Third, what did students learn and what did they miss, and fourth, going forward, what specific techniques or adjustments can you make to help students fully achieve your intended outcomes?

These steps create a data-informed process by which you can be even more intentional in your teaching. These techniques and others, like consulting with colleagues, administrators, or faculty development specialists, can set you on a path to being even more reflective about your practice.

**Trudy W. Banta, EdD** [00:04:27] Peer feedback is also important for instructors. They can find a peer who has a reputation for being an effective instructor and ask that individual to help them. Or they may be assigned a mentor and an instructor with a mentor can have a nice, trusting relationship that will permit the peer to observe the instructor teaching and provide feedback.

**Narrator** [00:05:02] To mark your own progress over time, consider keeping a journal with day-by-day insights about what went well and what didn't. You can even grade yourself too, giving each class meeting a score from 1 to 10. Not only will the journal be a tool for future planning, it will allow you to be a scholar of your own teaching.

**Trudy W. Banta, EdD** [00:05:23] I think journaling is a very good idea because it helps you remember details as you look back at an experience, and the more detail that you can give, the more likely you are to be able to see patterns in those details from one time to another. And looking back at a journal, looking at the details, what went on, what worked, what didn't work, and over time, you see more things in one category than another and that may also give you a clue as to where you need to begin to make some changes.