

# What do Students have to say? Developing, implementing and interpreting student surveys

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## Introduction

- Students have a great deal to tell us about how they experience our educational programs.
- This information can be used to enhance teaching and learning.
- How student surveys are developed, implemented and interpreted is especially important.
- If not done properly they can cause more harm than good.

## What can students tell us?

1. Course organization and planning
2. Clarity, communication skills
3. Teacher student interaction – rapport
4. Course difficulty, workload
5. Grading and examinations
6. Student self-ratings (motivation, effort, and learning)

## Effective Teaching

- Good organization of subject matter and the course as a whole
- Effective communication
- Knowledge of and enthusiasm for the subject matter and teaching
- Positive attitudes toward students
- Fairness in examinations and grading
- Flexibility in approaches to teaching

### Developing and Implementing Student Surveys

1. Identify key characteristics of teaching and learning – define good teaching ..
2. Create survey items
3. Field test the items
4. Plan a survey schedule
5. Implement, analyze, and revise

### Uses and Abuses of Student Surveys

1. Sole determinant of teaching effectiveness
2. Not used to support teaching improvement
3. Seen as inherently good or bad
4. Focus on inappropriate components
5. Overemphasized, overused, under utilized
6. Questionable administration procedures
7. Relative importance of items
8. Lack of evidence of validity and reliability

### Appraising Effectiveness: Beyond Student Ratings

1. Faculty self-report – instructional assignments and improvement
2. Peer evaluation
3. Faculty contributions
4. Supervisor evaluation

### Institutional Commitment

1. All members of the institution should be accountable for their activities and performance.
2. The conduct and utilization of credible evaluation programs have an important influence on the welfare and future excellence of the individual, the department, and the institution.
3. When improvement efforts are supported by institutional policy and guided by comprehensive and valid appraisals of current functioning, the well-being of the individual and of the individual and of the institution are positively affected.