

## Influences on Course Evaluation: Student and Faculty Perspectives

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### Overview

- What the literature tells us about course evaluations
- NSSE, FSSE, course eval items
- Overview of student responses
- Overview of faculty responses
- Student and faculty perceptions of influence
- Future research

### Course Evaluations

- Who uses course evaluation results (and why)?
  - Institutions
    - Promotion and tenure, teaching effectiveness
  - Faculty
    - Course structure and content, teaching improvement
  - Students
    - Course and professor selection

### Course Evaluations

- Student perceptions
  - Higher course evaluation results
    - Academic: challenges, above average workloads, more overall learning
    - Non-academic: Prior student motivation, personal qualities of instructor, overall likeability
  - Students do not believe course evaluation results inflate grades, contribute to tenure, or lead to course changes

### Course Evaluations

- Faculty perceptions
  - Students rate easy courses highly, do not take evaluation results seriously, negative results impact careers
  - Believe results are used to make course changes
- Faculty use
  - Few actually use results to make course changes
  - Supportive campus culture = effective teaching practices

### NSSE

- A snapshot of student experiences inside and outside of the classroom at four-year colleges and universities
  - Focus on behaviors (and some perceptions)
- Survey items represent good practices related to desirable college outcomes, focusing on indirect, process measures of student learning and development
- 2013: 613 institutions; over 364,000 first-years and seniors

## FSSE

- Designed to complement NSSE
- Gives a snapshot of
  - Faculty perceptions of how often students engage in different activities
  - The importance faculty place on various areas of learning and development
  - The nature and frequency of student-faculty interactions
  - How faculty organize their time in and out of class
- 2013: 146 institutions; over 18,000 faculty

## Course Evaluation Items

- NSSE: 44 institutions; 16,000 students
- FSSE: 83 institutions; 9,500 faculty
- NSSE-FSSE matched
  - 30 institutions
    - 28% doctoral-granting, 52% master's-granting, 20% bachelor's-granting; 77% public
  - 3,300 first-year and 5,600 senior students
  - 2,600 faculty

## Students

### First-Year Students

- 94% full-time enrolled
- 2% all courses online
- 13% started elsewhere
- 54% first-generation
- 36% male
- 82% 19 or younger
- 51% White
- 60% living on campus
- 29% STEM majors

### Senior Students

- 77% full-time enrolled
- 10% all courses online
- 55% started elsewhere
- 58% first-generation
- 35% male
- 49% 23 or younger
- 56% White
- 12% living on campus
- 21% STEM majors

## Eval Submission

- For how many courses did students submit
  - Institution-provided EOC evaluations
    - All: 54% FY, 57% SR
    - None: 12% FY, 5% SR
  - Alternative evaluation:
    - All: 9% FY, 6% SR
    - None 68% FY, 73% SR
- 55% complete EOC evals all online (FSSE)

## Satisfaction and Use

- Most students (68% FY, 66% SR) believe EOC evals allow them to give feedback that matters
- Fewer students believe EOC eval results are substantially (very much/quite a bit) used
  - To improve course content
    - 40% FY, 30% SR
  - To improve teaching
    - 39% FY, 30% SR

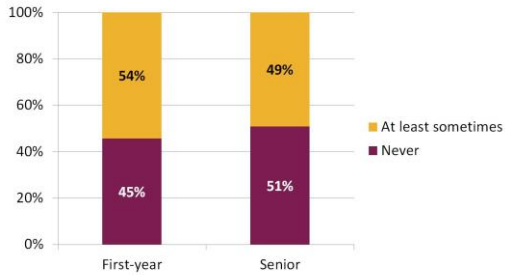
## Questions

**When choosing courses, do student more often use results from institution-provided EOC evals or alternate evaluation sources?**

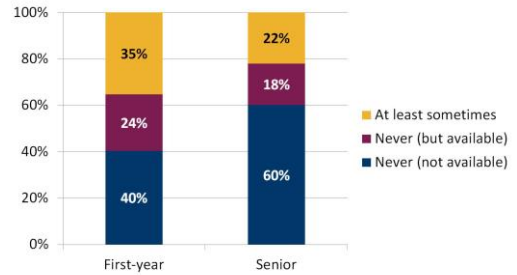
**What percentage of students use results from institution-provided EOC evals?**

**What percentage of students use results from alternate evaluation sources?**

## When Choosing Courses, How Often Students Use Alternative Evals



## When Choosing Courses, How Often Students Use EOC Eval Results



## Questions

**Is this a problem?**

**Should intuition-provided EOC results be made more available to students?**

**Are results available on your campus?**

## Faculty

- 22% Full professor, 25% Associate, 24% Assistant, 14% Full-time lecturer, 14% Part-time lecturer
- 38% tenured
- 61% doctoral degree
- 33% 44 or younger, 10% 65 or older
- 51% female
- 68% White
- 42% lower division, 52% upper division
- Taught for
  - 9 years or less: 36%
  - 10-19: 31%
  - 20-29: 18%
  - 30 or more: 15%
- 24% STEM appointment
- Average number of undergrad courses taught this year: 5

## Satisfaction and Use

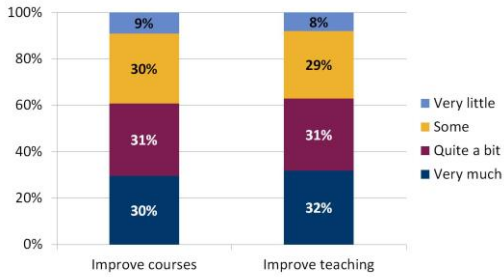
- 63% satisfied with EOC evals
- 33% are able to customize
  - 55% of faculty customize 'very little'
- 43% of faculty frequently use other methods for assessing their course (20% never do)
- 38% report students have access to results
- 70% report EOC eval results are substantially important for tenure and promotion

## Questions

**How much do you think faculty use EOC results to improve their courses and teaching?**

**What percentage of faculty "Very much" or "Quite a bit" use the results of formal EOC evals to improve their courses or teaching?**

## How Much Faculty Use Results



## Questions

What factors do you think most strongly influence student ratings on EOC evals?

What factors do you think least strongly influence student ratings on EOC evals?

## Greatest Influences

### Student Influences

- How clearly the instructor explained difficult material
- The instructors knowledge of course content
- How the instructor interacted with students
- The ease or difficulty of understanding the instructor

### Faculty Perceptions of Student Influences

- How instructors interact with students
- The ease or difficulty of understanding instructors
- How clearly instructors explain difficult material
- How much course sessions interest the student

## Smallest Influences

### Student Influences

- **Whether the course was required or an elective**
- The grade students expect to receive
- How much assignments interested students
- How much course sessions interested students

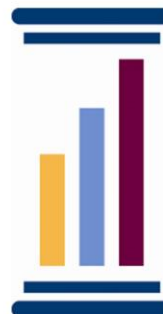
### Faculty Perceptions of Student Influences

- Other factors beyond the instructor's control
- **Whether the course was required or an elective**
- How much the student learned
- The feedback students received

## Questions

What else do you want to know about EOC evaluations?

How can our research help with the EOC eval problems or challenges on your campus?



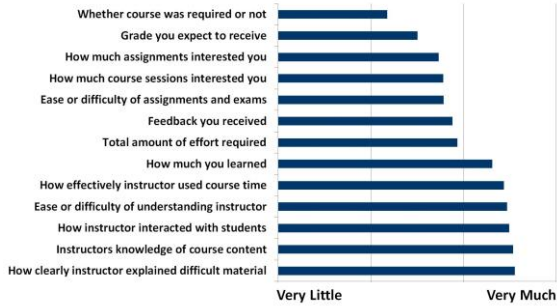
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## Senior Student Influences



## Resources

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