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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>First-Year Students</th>
<th>Senior Students</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>94% full-time enrolled</td>
<td>77% full-time enrolled</td>
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<tr>
<td>2% all courses online</td>
<td>10% all courses online</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13% started elsewhere</td>
<td>55% started elsewhere</td>
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<tr>
<td>54% first-generation</td>
<td>58% first-generation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36% male</td>
<td>35% male</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>82% 19 or younger</td>
<td>49% 23 or younger</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>51% White</td>
<td>56% White</td>
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<tr>
<td>60% living on campus</td>
<td>12% living on campus</td>
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<tr>
<td>29% STEM majors</td>
<td>21% STEM majors</td>
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</tbody>
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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?
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?
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?

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?
### Senior Student Influences

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factor</th>
<th>Very Little</th>
<th>Very Much</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Whether course was required or not</td>
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<tr>
<td>Grade you expect to receive</td>
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<tr>
<td>How much assignments interested you</td>
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<tr>
<td>How much course sessions interested you</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ease or difficulty of assignments and exams</td>
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<td>Feedback you received</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total amount of effort required</td>
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<tr>
<td>How much you learned</td>
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<tr>
<td>How effectively instructor used course time</td>
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<td>Ease or difficulty of understanding instructor</td>
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<td>How instructor interacted with students</td>
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<tr>
<td>Instructors knowledge of course content</td>
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<td>How clearly instructor explained difficult material</td>
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### Resources