



Teaching Concerns

Newsletter of the Teaching Resource Center for Faculty and Teaching Assistants

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September 1992

Teaching Tip: Course Evaluation

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Courses are evaluated during the final days of the class meetings; however, the results of the evaluation are often not made known to the professors until early the next semester. Thus, having the evaluative remarks and scores made known then is of no help to the current students in our classes. For many years, I have found that by doing several informal course evaluations, or at least one around mid-term time, I receive information that helps me adjust the climate of the course, resulting in my becoming a more effective instructor.

I usually use three or four open sentences for the students to complete, such as:

1. So far this semester, this class ...
2. I hope that in future classes ...
3. The assignments to date are ...
4. An important message I would like to give you is ...

Students have told me that by having informal course evaluations in addition to the final formal one, they believe that I do care about making the course one in which the students count, and they feel more invested in the class. Also, it's nice to get positive feedback along with the constructive criticism. Try it.