Applying What We Learn from Course Evaluations: 11 Evidence Based Best Practices

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1. Use multiple sources of data about a faculty member’s teaching if you are serious about accurately evaluating and improving teaching (Felder & Brent, 2004; Cashin, 1990).

2. Take into consideration the students’ motivation level when interpreting student rating data (Hoyt & Pallett, 1999; Cashin, 1990).

3. Contextualize results within their ongoing teaching development, highlighting areas of improvement or changes made to the course or teaching methods as a result of previous evaluations (Franklin, 2001).

4. Develop a teaching enhancement strategy that takes into accounts the evaluation feedback (Moore & Kuol, 2005).

5. Provide comparative data, preferably for all the items (Wright, 2006; Cashin, 1990).

6. For improvement, do not use a single, standard set of items for every class. Provide a pool of items or some kind of weighing system (Felder & Brent, 2004; Cashin, 1990).

7. Use the open-ended comments only for improvement (Cashin, 1990).

8. Ratings data must be summarized in formats that provides readers with essential information about the results (Theall & Franklin, 2001).

9. Since there is mounting evidence from this and other studies that prove that student evaluations are not a reliable and valid measure of teaching performance, student evaluations, including the numerical value and their comments, should be used only as a tool to provide formative feedback for the instructor (Zabelta, 2007).

10. Student ratings have been repeatedly shown to have a high level of validity and should be considered as an essential component of faculty teaching performance evaluation. Formative evaluation should be used to improve the teaching of the instructor (Felder & Brent, 2004).

11. The interpretations and conclusions that result must be evaluated and applied in the context of a well-constructed, comprehensive, and effectively implemented system for evaluating teaching (Algozzine, et. al., 2004; Franklin, 2001).

References:


