



Evaluating Teaching Effectiveness Task Force

December 30, 2015

Overview: Mid-Semester and/or Periodic Semester Reviews

Objective: Improve teaching effectiveness with the use of feedback during the semester

In order to determine whether students are learning throughout a semester, it is important to utilize various types of assessments. Formative assessments used throughout the semester are common measurements to help increase learning in undergraduate students (Feden, 2012). Assessments range from traditional multiple-choice tests to group work projects to less traditional assessments of essays, poems, etc.

The key to formative assessments is the act of “providing helpful information as *“learning occurs”* (McMillan & Hearn, 2008, p.42). Mid-semester reviews or periodic semester reviews allow the instructor to receive feedback and take action while the learning is happening to ensure student learning outcomes have a better chance of being achieved. Boyer (1990) understood effective teachers are constantly requesting feedback and by receiving feedback, they were learning along with the students, and thus more effective teachers. An effective teacher’s intrinsic desire to learn makes them more effective to teach students (Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, 1998; Czikszenmihalyi, 1982).

Factors to consider when utilizing mid-semester or periodic semester reviews:

- Small chunks of time can be utilized to gain valuable feedback
- A small number of pointed questions can deliver significant feedback to direct the rest of the semester activities
- Providing comments and corrective actions for the feedback received is a critical step
- Not all feedback will require or even allow a significant change to the syllabi or remaining course

Factors causing resistance for teachers to ask for feedback:

- The feedback loop may imply more work for the faculty member
- Feedback requires faculty to consider their goals and expectations when receiving feedback from students, which can be uncomfortable (Grassian, 2013)
- Feedback not acted on requires an explanation for the remaining activities and pedagogical activities

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