

Chapter 1 : Evaluation Strategies Course

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Paul Trout English Montana State University-Bozeman Always to avoid their wrath, always to court their favor, and sometimes to cajole them into a little learning--that is teaching. Larry Crumbley Although student-generated numerical evaluation forms or SNEFs are often used to determine whether an instructor is a bad, good, or excellent teacher, these forms, many experts contend, rarely, if ever, provide accurate assessments of instruction. If good teaching is correlated with, or defined in terms of, student learning, mastery, or cognitive growth, then SNEFs have severe limitations as assessment tools. According to John C. Damron, a Canadian sociologist who has examined the research on SNEFs, "the ratings yielded by virtually all teaching evaluation procedures bear only a modest or nonexistent relationship to the very quality effective teaching must promote: The problem, according to two experts who have studied the issue, is that "students are less than perfect judges of teaching effectiveness if the latter is measured by how much they have learned. If how much students learn is considered to be a major component of good teaching, it must be concluded that good teaching is not validly measured by student evaluations in their current forms" Rodin and Rodin, in Damron "Three" Ironically, some experimental studies revealed an inverse relationship between evaluation ratings and student learning. Sullivan and Skanes , for example, found a sizable group of instructors who facilitated high achievement in their students but who received low ratings from them, and a second group who prompted low student achievement but nonetheless received high ratings Damron "Three" 8. Many other studies have revealed the same unsettling correlation. So, when SNEFs are assumed to be "true" and "valid" assessments of pedagogical effectiveness, as administrators are too apt to do, they constitute what Damron calls "a major threat to college teaching, a prospect that surely counts as one of the more startling ironies of modern educational technology" Damron "Three" Erikson, two researchers at the Center for Research on Learning and Teaching, University of Michigan, recommend that colleges "eliminate the questionable practice of using the results of student ratings for purposes of administrative assessment" in Damron "Politics" Michael Scriven, who has conducted extensive analyses on faculty evaluation methodology, warns administrators against using such invalid forms for personnel decisions: All [SNEFs] are face-invalid and certainly provide a worse basis for adverse personnel action than the polygraph in criminal cases. Based on examination of some hundreds of forms that are or have been used for personnel decisions as well as professional development , the previous considerations entail that not more than one or two could stand up in a serious [legal] hearing. They serve, for example, a PR function. However fraudulent they may be, SNEFs allow administrators to tell students, taxpayers, regents and legislators that teaching is being evaluated and "good" teaching encouraged. Students want SNEFs because these forms enable them to compel professors to give the kind of course students prefer, which, to an increasing number of students, usually means a course that has few demands and high grades. SNEFs allow students to reward professors for doing the wrong thing Hocutt In this the interests of administrators and students coincide. Administrators want satisfied student consumers and happy parents and taxpayers. So administrators use SNEFs to make sure that classroom instruction does not seriously displease student "customers. SNEFs thus induce faculty to get "good" ratings by teaching in ways that please the students, but which may not educate them. This explains why SNEFs almost never ask students whether the course was demanding, the assignments difficult, the tests probing, the standards high all variables linked to increasing student learning , or whether they developed an ability to identify the main ideas and significant implications of a subject, or a respect for unconventional interpretations of material studied, or an understanding of the most fundamental or important ideas of the subject Renner The SNEF, as currently used in higher education, is a device for making classrooms comfortable for and marketable to students who are increasingly under-prepared for and disengaged from rigorous academic study. Consumer satisfaction trumps student achievement. As Haskell puts it, the SNEF is a "powerful tool in

assuring classroom changes that lead to the retention of student tuition dollars by assenting to student consumer demands and of parents who foot the tuition bill" Haskell 121; see also Damron "Three" Since faculty have had these fraudulent devices imposed upon them, they might as well exploit SNEFs for their own advantage. Haskell also seems to accept the calculated exploitation of SNEFs: Everyone knows that SNEF ratings are contaminated by all kinds of influences irrelevant or hostile to effective teaching see Renner for a partial list. But if you cannily manipulate these factors, you can boost your evaluation ratings without raising your workload. Should you feel ashamed about this, keep in mind that higher scores will make you happy, your chairperson happy, your Dean happy, your Provost happy, your President happy, and the taxpayers happy. In this regard, nonverbal communication may be more important than what you actually have to say. Students, you see, often arrive at summative judgments about us very quickly--well before we have a chance to tell them about our grading policy or course organization, and before we can display our knowledge or fairness. Ambady and Rosenthal, for example, "have shown that students arrive at opinions about teachers within seconds of being exposed to these teachers. According to Drew Weston, who summarizes these studies in *Psychology*: Here are some tips about how you should act and look as you enter the classroom for the first time to make a lasting impression that will improve those end-of-the-semester ratings. Increase your "immediacy" effect. A sense of "immediacy" is the result of behaviors which enhance closeness to and nonverbal interaction with another. You can enhance your "immediacy" effect and get higher evaluation scores by simply smiling, using gestures, being relaxed, moving among the students, and looking them in the eye. Morris found that clothing makes not only the man but the Excellent Teacher too. If you go "grunge," dressing in a T-shirt, ripped jeans, and gymshoes, students will find you more friendly, likeable, flexible, interesting, sympathetic, fair, approachable, and enthusiastic Use powerful words and a confident delivery. Do not use hedges, intensifiers, deictic phrases and hesitation forms such as "ah" and "uhm". Language without these characteristics comes across as powerful, and a powerful speech style will convince students that you are both attractive and competent, an impression that boosts your evaluation ratings Haleta Students assign more favorable ratings "to teachers who used a concise, direct style of language than to teachers who used a language style that contained multiple hesitations" A majority of students tested by Haleta rated powerful teachers more favorably in such categories as organization, professionalism, and knowledge of the subject This impression seems to be getting more and more important in the s. To get tenure, Peter Sacks recounts in *Generation X Goes to College* how he transformed himself, at least ostensibly, from a no-nonsense, straightforward serious-minded academic into a "teaching teddy bear. If they wanted their hands held, I would hold them. Willimon properly counsels professors who want good evaluations to "never overtly confront students about their class attendance, indolence, apathy, or impertinent behavior. Widmeyer and Low , in their "Dr. Jim Wilson" experiment, gave students a biographical sketch of an alleged special lecturer named "Dr. Jim Wilson" that emphasized that Wilson was a warm person while another group was given a sketch that described him as "cold. Students in the cold condition were also less likely than their counterparts to surmise that Dr. Once again, the benefits of the halo effect can be yours, if you know how to manipulate students. When teenagers were asked to describe their WORST teachers, eighty percent said "dull or boring" poor knowledge of the subject provoked least concern--twenty-one percent. Engulfed by a twenty-four-hours-of-amusement culture from their first days of watching "Sesame Street," students want to be entertained, which is why "fun" turns up so often on student evaluations of instructors. What students want are instructors who are "expressive" and "charismatic," regardless of whether they have anything to say the "Dr. Back in , Naftulin and his associates found that an entertaining, charismatic lecturer actually an actor introduced as "Dr. Fox" who spoke deliberate nonsense received surprisingly high evaluations from an audience of educators and mental health professionals. Recently, William Cenci has shown, through a successfully controlled classroom experiment in which the content of a course taught in two different semesters was identical in all salient respects, that an instructor, merely by speaking more "enthusiastically"--defined as varying voice pitch and using more hand gestures--can seduce students into rating every aspect of the instructor and course more highly than when the instructor spoke less dramatically, another powerful demonstration of the "halo effect. Moreover, thanks solely to the more enthusiastic delivery

used in the second semester, students in that course were seduced into thinking that they had actually learned more than students in the less animated course, when in fact they had not: Even if you have nothing to say, you can get higher scores by saying it charismatically! Be shrewd and let the Dr. Fox effect work for you! Chacko believes that "the most prominent bias in student ratings of teaching effectiveness is the evaluation a student receives from the instructors in the form of a grade" Vasta also believes that "the effect of grades on student evaluations of instruction must be interpreted as potentially quite powerful" A study of several thousand courses at my home university has recently confirmed what most professors have always suspected: The coefficient of correlation is a low but significant. This correlation might have been higher had the study considered not actual but expected grade. Their research confirmed earlier studies that showed that higher grades can contaminate evaluation ratings the "reward effects". And, thanks to that old halo effect, even evaluation items such as humor, self-reliance, and attitude toward students were affected. Similarly, Powell found that students rate instructors on the basis of a global impression which they form "liking" , and that the individual items on the evaluation form--no matter what they are--all reflect this impression to some extent. His findings showed that this impression, and the resultant evaluation scores, "are strongly influenced by the grade the student receives from the instructor" DuCette concluded from his experiments "that students do give better evaluations to an instructor if they obtain good grades" In some courses, DuCette speculated, instructors could "significantly" raise their evaluation scores simply by "using lenient grading standards" Worthington came to the same conclusion: But be on guard, there may also be a "grinch who stole Christmas effect. When teenagers were asked to describe their WORST teachers, 50 percent choose "expectations too high" poor knowledge of the subject mattered least! William McBroon, a sociologist at the University of Montana, found that when he eased course requirements dropping attendance and participation obligations , his course evaluations went up. He writes, "as requirements were set aside, evaluations of the content, instructor, and course became more positive. Professors know the score: Specifically, the amount of material covered was reduced by 22 percent of the faculty and expanded by just 7 percent, the the difficulty of course material was lowered by 38 percent of the faculty and raised by only 9 percent. Particularly notable was a finding on the rigor of course examinations: So go ahead, do it. All administrators care about are high ratings and satisfied students. Give them both and make them happy! Stroke the political biases of your students, especially if the evaluation form solicits information about the cultural, racial or gender biases of the instructor or course "classroom climate" questions. Stanley Coren "When" contends that when instructors present arguments and evidence on both sides of a controversial issue, such as cognitive differences between the sexes, they seriously endanger their evaluation scores. Coren discovered that a quarter of the students were apt to interpret the presentation of evidence about the genetic and racial differences in intelligence as motivated by racism, rendering the professor a racist for twenty-five percent of students When the subject of discussion was the cognitive skills of men and women, twenty-six percent deemed the instructor "sexist" and motivated by a desire to put down women, with ninety-four percent of female students thinking this. Even in law school it is becoming increasingly dangerous to teach controversial material in an even-handed way. Alan Dershowitz writes that a sizable group of law students were offended by his dispassionate examination of the legal issue of rape, and "used the power of their evaluations in an attempt to exact their political revenge for my politically incorrect teaching": One student said that I do "not deserve to teach at Harvard" because of my "convoluted rape examples. One woman purported to speak for others: Are other less established teachers being coerced into changing their teaching by the fear of negative evaluations, which can be fatal at tenure? You bet they are, and it poses a real danger to academic freedom and good education. Avoid problems and get those scores up by teaching only the "good news" that students want and expect to be told.

Chapter 2 : Improve Your Teaching Scores

They also face difficulties in persuading teachers to use assessments to improve their teaching. The contributors use a series of case studies to show how improvements in evaluation methods can help to shape better education policy.

Evaluation of Teaching and Learning Obtaining frequent feedback on your teaching Getting regular insight on student learning Soliciting student opinion during the term Assessing a course at the end of the term Educational researchers have found that effective teachers share several characteristics e. Two of these characteristics stand out: Through frequent assessment and feedback, effective teachers regularly assess what they do in the classroom and whether their students are really learning. They try to anticipate the topics and concepts that will be difficult for their students and to develop teaching strategies that present these topics in ways their students will best understand. Yet, teachers, especially new teachers, may sometimes be too overwhelmed by all that is involved with teaching to assess student knowledge and learning. Creating a syllabus, preparing assignments, developing lectures, designing laboratories, structuring discussions, and writing test questions all take time, thought, and planning. The following sections describe various assessment schemes for both you and your students. If students have a solid foundation, the new pieces fit together more easily. If the new material conflicts with earlier misconceptions or firmly held assumptions, the students Page 34 Share Cite Suggested Citation: Evaluation of Teaching and Learning. The National Academies Press. This suggests the following: What are the prerequisites for your course, and have all student taken the prerequisites? How do we know that? The diagnostic pretest might include a list of key concepts, facts and figures, or major ideas. Ask students to indicate their familiarity with each topic. During the term, frequent diagnostic mini-quizzes can help identify which students are keeping up and which need help. These quizzes also help students to identify the areas on which they need to work. Reading the quizzes will give the instructor a good indication of where to start the next class. Most undergraduate courses include students with a range of academic abilities, interests, skills, and goals. Differences in preparation, abilities, and learning styles are likely to be more noticeable when new information is abstract and complex. Individual students do not make uniform progress; sometimes a student reaches a plateau after a burst of learning. Try to sample how well your students are learning. Informal ways can be used to determine whether students are learning the material throughout the term. Some suggestions see, for example, Davis ; Silberman, to try are to: Ask questions during class. Give the students time to respond. Try to get a sense of whether students are keeping up by asking questions for which answers require students to apply a given concept or skill to a new context. Ask students for their questions. Rather than ask, "Do you have any questions? Give frequent, short, in-class assignments or quizzes. Pose a question or problem on an overhead or the board, give students time to respond, perhaps in writing, and have students compare answers with their neighbors. Open-ended questions such as "How does food give us energy? Page 35 Share Cite Suggested Citation: Reading these will help you to evaluate how well your students are grasping the material, and you can respond, if needed, during the next class period. Ask students to jot down three or four key concepts or real-world connections about a recent topic, then start a class discussion by having students compare their lists. Ask students to keep a learning journal in which they write, once or twice a week, about things they disagree with or how what they are learning is reflected in other things they read, see, or do. Collect and comment on the learning journals periodically. An alternative approach is to request informal constructive criticism throughout the term, when classroom presentations organization, pacing, and workload can be adjusted. Instructors can gather information about the effectiveness of their teaching strategies, the usefulness of instructional materials, and other features of the course e. Faculty who are teaching a course they have taught many times before may want to wait until midterm before asking for student assessments, although if feedback is solicited immediately after an exam, most of the comments will relate to the exam. If your students are having obvious difficulties with the material or with other requirements, try to find out why, using some of the quick techniques mentioned earlier. Many teachers now use electronic mail. Give students your e-mail address and ask them to mail questions, concerns, or comments about the course see Chapter 7 for more ideas. Other

faculty find it helpful to ask, after the first month, that students bring a sheet, which can be anonymous, with their answer to the question: In this situation, you might ask a colleague to collect the comments and summarize them for you. Some faculty members feel awkward soliciting feedback and reporting back to the class. Many find it helpful first to look over the positive things students have said about the course this step is reassuring and puts the negative comments in perspective. Then they consider the suggestions for improvement and group them into three categories: Other ways to respond to advice: If changes are to be made, give a brief account of which changes will be made this term and which will be used in future courses. Let students know what they can do as well. For example, if students report that they are often confused, invite them to ask questions more often. Consider making changes to your course or teaching methods based upon the feedback. Using a Portfolio to Assess Your Course Faculty members at some colleges and universities are beginning to experiment with teaching portfolios composed of work samples and self-evaluative commentary. Portfolios can also include a statement of your teaching philosophy. Advice on how to put together a portfolio can be found in Edgerton et al. Less comprehensive than portfolios are self-evaluations that ask faculty to comment on their courses: How satisfied were you with this course? What do you think were the strong points of the course and your teaching? What did you find most interesting about this course? What would you do differently if you taught this course again? In addition to evaluating your course using the fast-feedback methods or teaching portfolio described above, other powerful methods for evaluating your teaching include formal end-of-term student evaluations, peer review, and videotaping. Watching Yourself on Videotape What are the specific things I did well? What are the specific things I could have done better? What kept the students engaged? When did students get lost or lose interest? If I could do this session over again, what three things would I change? How would I go about making those changes? You can also check the accuracy of your perceptions of how well you teach and identify those techniques that work and those that need improvement. Many schools have professional development offices which can help with taping or assessing the tapes, but informal recording by the instructor can be useful and effective. However, you may want someone from the professional development office to view the tape with you to avoid focusing on your appearance or mannerisms. These programs work best when faculty members: Conduct visits as part of a consultation process that involves a pre-visit conference to discuss goals for the class, and a post-visit debriefing to discuss what happened. Combine classroom observation with other strategies that enrich the picture such as interviewing students, reviewing materials, and examining student work. Are self-conscious about the learning that can occur for the observer as well as the observed. Let the students know what is happening, and why. Are purposeful about who might best visit whom. Depending on their questions and purposes, they may want to pair up with someone from the same field who can comment on content; alternatively, if they are experimenting with a new teaching strategy, they might want to find a colleague who has extensive experience with that strategy. Keep track of how classroom observation is working, so they can learn from the process and improve it. How can you analyze your classroom interactions with students? As you watch the tape, try the technique of stopping every five seconds and putting a check in the following columns: Or look at your lecture in terms of organization and preparation: Did I give the purpose of the session? Emphasize or restate the most important ideas? Make smooth transitions from one topic to another? Summarize the main points? Include neither too much nor too little material in a class period? Seem at ease with the material? Begin and end class promptly? Although conceived as an effort to improve the quality of evidence about teaching in faculty tenure and promotion decisions, the project puts greater emphasis on faculty collaboration to improve teaching throughout their careers. Reciprocal classroom visits, mentoring programs for new faculty, team teaching, and departmental seminars about teaching and learning are but a few of the ways that faculty members work with colleagues to improve undergraduate education. These forms often are used by faculty committees and administrators to make personnel Page 38 Share Cite Suggested Citation: A substantial body of research has concluded that administering questionnaires to students can be both valid and reliable, providing faculty and administrators with a wealth of knowledge about the attitudes, behavior, and values of students Hinton, Advice on how to design, administer, and interpret evaluation forms can be found in Cashin , Theall and Franklin , Davis , and Braskamp and Ory However, Arons observes that

many vacuous courses in science have been developed which students have rated highly, describing them as fun and exciting. Subsequent testing indicated that these students learned very little. This does not suggest that student perspectives are unimportant. However, before distributing the evaluation forms, many instructors tell students the purpose of the forms.

The goal of effective evaluation remains to implement what is known about the efficacy of evaluation methods, measures, and tools; weigh the pros and cons, benefits and barriers of each; and acknowledge the required compromises for feasibility, practicality, and affordability.

What makes a good evaluation? A well-planned and carefully executed evaluation will reap more benefits for all stakeholders than an evaluation that is thrown together hastily and retrospectively. Though you may feel that you lack the time, resources, and expertise to carry out an evaluation, learning about evaluation early-on and planning carefully will help you navigate the process. MEERA provides suggestions for all phases of an evaluation. But before you start, it will help to review the following characteristics of a good evaluation list adapted from resource formerly available through the University of Sussex, Teaching and Learning Development Unit Evaluation Guidelines and John W. Good evaluation is tailored to your program and builds on existing evaluation knowledge and resources. Your evaluation should be crafted to address the specific goals and objectives of your EE program. However, it is likely that other environmental educators have created and field-tested similar evaluation designs and instruments. Rather than starting from scratch, looking at what others have done can help you conduct a better evaluation. Good evaluation is inclusive. It ensures that diverse viewpoints are taken into account and that results are as complete and unbiased as possible. Input should be sought from all of those involved and affected by the evaluation such as students, parents, teachers, program staff, or community members. One way to ensure your evaluation is inclusive is by following the practice of participatory evaluation. Good evaluation is honest. Evaluation results are likely to suggest that your program has strengths as well as limitations. Your evaluation should not be a simple declaration of program success or failure. Evidence that your EE program is not achieving all of its ambitious objectives can be hard to swallow, but it can also help you learn where to best put your limited resources. Good evaluation is replicable and its methods are as rigorous as circumstances allow. A good evaluation is one that is likely to be replicable, meaning that someone else should be able to conduct the same evaluation and get the same results. The higher the quality of your evaluation design, its data collection methods and its data analysis, the more accurate its conclusions and the more confident others will be in its findings. How do I make evaluation an integral part of my program? Making evaluation an integral part of your program means evaluation is a part of everything you do. You design your program with evaluation in mind, collect data on an on-going basis, and use these data to continuously improve your program. Developing and implementing such an evaluation system has many benefits including helping you to: Couple evaluation with strategic planning. As you set goals, objectives, and a desired vision of the future for your program, identify ways to measure these goals and objectives and how you might collect, analyze, and use this information. This process will help ensure that your objectives are measurable and that you are collecting information that you will use. Strategic planning is also a good time to create a list of questions you would like your evaluation to answer. Revisit and update your evaluation plan and logic model See Step 2 to make sure you are on track. Update these documents on a regular basis, adding new strategies, changing unsuccessful strategies, revising relationships in the model, and adding unforeseen impacts of an activity EMI, Build an evaluation culture by rewarding participation in evaluation, offering evaluation capacity building opportunities, providing funding for evaluation, communicating a convincing and unified purpose for evaluation, and celebrating evaluation successes.

Chapter 4 : Methods of Evaluating Teaching | CRLT

Evaluation of a Method for Improving the Teaching Performance of Attending Physicians KELLEY M. SKEFF, M.D., Ph.D. Stanford, California.

Greater student interaction is encouraged, the boundaries of authority are being broken down, and a focus on enjoyment over grades is emphasised. It puts a greater level of responsibility on creating lesson plans that truly work. Here are three teaching methods that are making an impact. Spaced Learning Teachers have reported amazing results when it came to spaced learning. Spaced Learning is a learning method in which the condensed learning content is repeated three times, with two minute breaks during which activities such as physical activities are performed by the students – I think, that PE and lessons can be combined. Spaced learning involves encouraging students to quickly switch through activities. For example, providing ten minutes of knowledge on the nervous system with a PowerPoint presentation and then having 15 minutes of basketball would be the way to get the better grades. The key is in the brain cells. It helps them to create the connections that they need to actually remember the knowledge. Furthermore, it has the additional benefit of allowing people to relax. The concept of Flexible Fridays is that an in-depth session of a subject can be acquired by simply having a whole day of mathematics or some other subject. Somebody repeats, somebody learns. It makes it more convenient for students as now they can focus on one thing while in school. Teachers also find it easier as they can keep their lesson plans and simply go over them again with a more personal touch. Flexible Friday lessons are more in-touch with students and gives focused study time that can help students grasp difficult concepts. Teachers are also able to aid students by simply having fast-track weeks. Having a whole week of mathematics or English can help students to get through the subjects in a shorter amount of time. Business studies are where this new focus of engagement occurred at the Leasowes Community College in Dudley. Instead of conventional teaching methods, students were taken to visit local businesses where they were able to witness how the knowledge that they were learning applied to the real world. Multiple days were set aside for this practice and all students were required to wear business suits in order to attend. The idea is to get students engaged and to connect their learning to the real world. If teachers can show them how what they are teaching connects to the real world then their own brain cells are going to connect them and associate them. The results are there for all to see because before this new method was introduced only 40 percent of students achieved grades of A-C across both years 10 and 11. Under the new teaching method the institution reported that the numbers had shot up to a massive 91 percent of students achieving A-Cs in years 10 and year 11. New methods of teaching have the purpose to improve the quality of education and involve students in educational process. Innovations mean a progress and development. Photo Courtesy of BigStock.

Chapter 5 : Social Research Methods - Knowledge Base - Introduction to Evaluation

Continuous Improvement as an Ideal for Improving Teaching and Teaching Evaluation Kirsten Kainz, Lora Cohen-Vogel, Christopher Harrison In Donald Berwick published a seminal article that sparked an improvement revolution in.

Summaries of Research on Student Evaluations Talking with Students about Evaluations To motivate students to complete end-of-course evaluations and to provide useful feedback through those evaluations, the Vanderbilt Center for Teaching recommends instructors talk with their students about the importance of course evaluations and how those evaluations are used. Designate time in class for students to complete evaluations, and let your students know why and when. See below for more on this advice. Tell your students that you value their honest and constructive feedback, and that you use student feedback to make improvements to your courses. If possible, share examples of how you have changed your courses as a result of student feedback. Let your students know that you are interested in both positive and negative feedback on the course. What aspects might be changed to help future students learn more effectively? Describe the kind of feedback you find most useful. In most cases, specific feedback with examples is more useful than general statements. Remind students that evaluations are designed to be completely anonymous and that you will not be able to see any of their evaluations until after final grades have been submitted. Let students know that you are the primary audience for their feedback, but that others will potentially read their evaluations, including department and school administrators. Course evaluations play a role in personnel evaluations and in curriculum planning. Consider including language in your syllabus that addresses student evaluations. This alerts the students to the fact that they should also pay attention to their learning experiences throughout the semester and makes them more mindful of their responses in the course evaluations. She was asked if she thought her students took course evaluations seriously. Yes, I do think my students take them very seriously. I think they do in part because I tell them that I take them seriously. I tell them that I read every comment and find the comments extremely useful in thinking about and improving my own teaching. So yes, I get very substantive feedback, which I really value. Their feedback can be very, very helpful to thinking about what I might do differently in the course. I think emphasizing that we take student comments very seriously, and find them very helpful, simply increases the likelihood of getting very useful feedback from all students. Why is it better to include time in class for student evaluations? By setting aside 20 minutes during class for students to complete course evaluations, just like the custom when evaluations were done with pencil and paper, instructors are not only increasing the overall student response rates, but they are also increasing the likelihood that students have time to think through their responses. As a result, students will have the opportunity to produce less rushed, more thoughtful feedback, especially if this strategy is combined with the other recommended strategies below. Using class time thus may be a way for instructors to differentiate the type of serious, considered input appropriate for course evaluations from common brief and off-the-cuff input on social media, customer feedback, and other online forums. Finally, setting aside class time communicates to students the importance of evaluations in the teaching mission of the university. It should also be noted that when setting aside time in class for students to complete course evaluations, instructors should leave the room to help ensure that students feel free to provide authentic responses. Along with the fresh start of the new year, many instructors will receive an opportunity to assess their teaching skills when they receive student evaluations of their Fall courses. Making sense of student feedback can be challenging so we offer the following tips for examining evaluations. When considering student evaluations: Take your experience into account. If you are new to teaching, the school, or even the course, you may still be learning about various aspects of being a professor, such as course design, teaching skills, student interaction, and departmental expectations. Take the context and characteristics of your course into account. Research shows that student evaluations often are more positive in courses that are smaller rather than larger, and elective rather than required. Also, evaluations are usually more positive in courses in which students tend to do well. When dealing with negative student feedback: Know that almost all faculty members receive negative feedback at some point in their careers, including those who are senior and highly successful. Allow yourself to

acknowledge that it can feel hurtful or make you angry, but also provides a pointer toward important areas for your continued development. When deciding how to further your development as a teacher: Bear in mind the most frequently mentioned areas for teaching improvement in analysis of student evaluations within and across universities: Consider scheduling an appointment at the Center for Teaching for a consultation to help you interpret your evaluations. Research suggests that teachers who consult with someone about their evaluations are more likely to score higher on the next set of evaluations than others who do not discuss them with anyone. To schedule a consultation on student evaluations, call the Center for Teaching at [phone number]. When planning steps to improve the feedback you receive in evaluations, consider the following options: Use one minute evaluations at the end of selected class sessions, asking students to note the main idea they learned that class, or two ideas about a major construct considered, or a question about content, and so forth. Talk with the class about their interim feedback, and explicitly put into practice one of their suggestions. Before the final course evaluation, explain to the class the importance you place on their input. Gathering Student Feedback There are multiple opportunities to solicit student feedback throughout the semester. The feedback students provide about your teaching on their end-of-semester course evaluations is the most identifiable form of feedback and can be valuable in helping you improve and refine your teaching. The CFT offers a service called a Small Group Analysis, which is a method of gathering anonymous feedback from students about what is helping them learn and what is not, in a course. Lastly, for soliciting informal feedback from students on their learning throughout the semester, consider adapting some classroom assessment techniques CATs from our CATs teaching guide that best fit your classroom. One example of a CAT is the minute paper, during which time students take one minute to write a response to a question or statement prompt. This can be especially illuminating if the prompt is intended to collect feedback on their learning experiences in the course. Other Mechanisms for Improving Teaching The process of incorporating student feedback towards the improvement of your teaching can sometimes seem like a daunting process. The CFT can serve as a support system for you in this process through the following: We are available for consultations on any teaching questions or topics you might like to discuss. The CFT offers classroom observations as a mechanism for instructors to get individualized feedback for a particular class. A CFT staff member can work with you to review your syllabus and consider how well your course design is accomplishing your goals. CFT staff members can also consult with you around particular teaching questions, such as effective discussion approaches or assessment options. If you are interested in adopting particular pedagogies, such as case-based learning, service-learning, or team-based learning, the CFT can work with you to adapt that approach to your class. The CFT hosts the Open Classroom each fall, a multi-day teaching visit event, featuring opportunities to observe and discussion teaching practices around campus. The CFT also hosts learning communities on various teaching topics. These communities provide Vanderbilt educators opportunities to learn from and with each other as they develop their teaching skills. Outside the CFT, peer evaluations are another way to get valuable feedback from colleagues and to potentially create a community of teachers in your department. For more information, please see our guide on the Peer Review of Teaching. Techniques and Strategies for Interpreting Student Evaluations. Issue Edited by Karron G. What are the conditions that foster that learning and the later use of that skill for feedback to instructors? All users should understand what the numbers mean and how they should and should not be used. Student Ratings and Beyond. In this article from the Center for Teaching newsletter, a Vanderbilt faculty member and teaching assistant discuss their perceptions of student course evaluations, and how to effectively use them. In this article from the Center for Teaching newsletter, eight Vanderbilt undergraduates share their experiences with student rating forms. Benton and William E. That literature is extensive and complex; a paper this brief can offer only broad, general summaries and limited citations. Theall, a research expert in instructional design, development and evaluation, explores the myths and truths behind Student Ratings reprinted with the permission of the Brigham Young University Faculty Center. What have we learned, and what has happened as a result? Mets and Constance E. What do student ratings tell us about teaching effectiveness? This article was originally published in the Association for Women in Mathematics Newsletter. Female professors also appear to be evaluated according to a heavier set of expectations than are male professors, and these expectations affect student ratings. This article provides

research findings on interactions between instructor gender and student ratings of teaching. Student Evaluations and Gendered Expectations: Scholars who have attempted to answer this question are divided in their findings. Arming Athena Sage Publications,

Chapter 6 : 3 New Teaching Methods Improve the Educational Process

Over time, using several methods from this list will ensure that you obtain diverse but complementary perspectives on many facets of teaching and/or curriculum. Student evaluation and feedback Student feedback is a rich and valuable source of information for both formative and summative purposes.

Evaluation utilizes many of the same methodologies used in traditional social research, but because evaluation takes place within a political and organizational context, it requires group skills, management ability, political dexterity, sensitivity to multiple stakeholders and other skills that social research in general does not rely on as much. Here we introduce the idea of evaluation and some of the major terms and issues in the field.

Definitions of Evaluation Probably the most frequently given definition is: Evaluation is the systematic assessment of the worth or merit of some object This definition is hardly perfect. There are many types of evaluations that do not necessarily result in an assessment of worth or merit -- descriptive studies, implementation analyses, and formative evaluations, to name a few. Better perhaps is a definition that emphasizes the information-processing and feedback functions of evaluation. For instance, one might say: The latter definition emphasizes acquiring and assessing information rather than assessing worth or merit because all evaluation work involves collecting and sifting through data, making judgements about the validity of the information and of inferences we derive from it, whether or not an assessment of worth or merit results.

The Goals of Evaluation The generic goal of most evaluations is to provide "useful feedback" to a variety of audiences including sponsors, donors, client-groups, administrators, staff, and other relevant constituencies. Most often, feedback is perceived as "useful" if it aids in decision-making. But the relationship between an evaluation and its impact is not a simple one -- studies that seem critical sometimes fail to influence short-term decisions, and studies that initially seem to have no influence can have a delayed impact when more congenial conditions arise. Despite this, there is broad consensus that the major goal of evaluation should be to influence decision-making or policy formulation through the provision of empirically-driven feedback. They encompass the most general groups or "camps" of evaluators; although, at its best, evaluation work borrows eclectically from the perspectives of all these camps. Four major groups of evaluation strategies are discussed here.

Scientific-experimental models are probably the most historically dominant evaluation strategies. Taking their values and methods from the sciences -- especially the social sciences -- they prioritize on the desirability of impartiality, accuracy, objectivity and the validity of the information generated. Included under scientific-experimental models would be: The second class of strategies are management-oriented systems models. Both have been widely used in business and government in this country. It would also be legitimate to include the Logical Framework or "Logframe" model developed at U. Agency for International Development and general systems theory and operations research approaches in this category. Two management-oriented systems models were originated by evaluators: These management-oriented systems models emphasize comprehensiveness in evaluation, placing evaluation within a larger framework of organizational activities. They emphasize the importance of observation, the need to retain the phenomenological quality of the evaluation context, and the value of subjective human interpretation in the evaluation process. Finally, a fourth class of strategies is termed participant-oriented models. As the term suggests, they emphasize the central importance of the evaluation participants, especially clients and users of the program or technology. Client-centered and stakeholder approaches are examples of participant-oriented models, as are consumer-oriented evaluation systems. With all of these strategies to choose from, how to decide? Debates that rage within the evaluation profession -- and they do rage -- are generally battles between these different strategists, with each claiming the superiority of their position. In reality, most good evaluators are familiar with all four categories and borrow from each as the need arises. There is no inherent incompatibility between these broad strategies -- each of them brings something valuable to the evaluation table. In fact, in recent years attention has increasingly turned to how one might integrate results from evaluations that use different strategies, carried out from different perspectives, and using different methods. Clearly, there are no simple answers here. The problems are complex and the methodologies needed will and should be varied. Types of

Evaluation There are many different types of evaluations depending on the object being evaluated and the purpose of the evaluation. Perhaps the most important basic distinction in evaluation types is that between formative and summative evaluation. Formative evaluations strengthen or improve the object being evaluated -- they help form it by examining the delivery of the program or technology, the quality of its implementation, and the assessment of the organizational context, personnel, procedures, inputs, and so on. Summative evaluations, in contrast, examine the effects or outcomes of some object -- they summarize it by describing what happens subsequent to delivery of the program or technology; assessing whether the object can be said to have caused the outcome; determining the overall impact of the causal factor beyond only the immediate target outcomes; and, estimating the relative costs associated with the object. Formative evaluation includes several evaluation types: These are considered within the framework of formative and summative evaluation as presented above. In formative research the major questions and methodologies are: Formulating and conceptualizing methods might be used including brainstorming, focus groups, nominal group techniques, Delphi methods, brainwriting, stakeholder analysis, synectics, lateral thinking, input-output analysis, and concept mapping. Where is the problem and how big or serious is it? The most common method used here is "needs assessment" which can include: How should the program or technology be delivered to address the problem? How well is the program or technology delivered? Qualitative and quantitative monitoring techniques, the use of management information systems, and implementation assessment would be appropriate methodologies here. The questions and methods addressed under summative evaluation include: What type of evaluation is feasible? Evaluability assessment can be used here, as well as standard approaches for selecting an appropriate evaluation design. What was the effectiveness of the program or technology? One would choose from observational and correlational methods for demonstrating whether desired effects occurred, and quasi-experimental and experimental designs for determining whether observed effects can reasonably be attributed to the intervention and not to other sources. What is the net impact of the program? Clearly, this introduction is not meant to be exhaustive. Each of these methods, and the many not mentioned, are supported by an extensive methodological research literature. This is a formidable set of tools. But the need to improve, update and adapt these methods to changing circumstances means that methodological research and development needs to have a major place in evaluation work.

Chapter 7 : Student Evaluations of Teaching | Center for Teaching | Vanderbilt University

Read chapter Chapter 5: Evaluation of Teaching and Learning: Effective science teaching requires creativity, imagination, and innovation. In light of conc.

Chapter 8 : Recent Studies in Educational Evaluation Articles - Elsevier

Types and Uses of Evaluation In order to plan the evaluation in accord with the most appropriate evaluation method, it is necessary to understand.

Chapter 9 : Evaluation: What is it and why do it? | Meera

2 INTRODUCTION The OECD's Education Policy Committee launched the Review on Evaluation and Assessment Frameworks for Improving School Outcomes in to provide analysis and policy.