

Student Evaluation of Teaching – Recommended Reporting Practices

Although not free of controversy, student evaluation of teaching, or ratings, have been demonstrated to be a valuable component for judging instructor effectiveness. Teaching portfolios submitted for external review should include student evaluation data, including the four following components.

1. Quantitative summative data

Summative data, presented in either numerical or graphical form, distills down a potentially very large amount of evaluative information, in a manner similar to the familiar GPA statistic. To be useful, this information needs to be provided in the context of local outcomes. Several other caveats apply:

- Summative data from multiple classes have been shown to be more reliable than evaluations from a single class; this is particularly true if the class size is small.
- Data should be presented in conjunction with student compliance information (number & percent of enrolled students responding; hours of instruction evaluated). Student response rates should support the premise that the presented data is representative.
- Data should be presented in the context of local outcomes (e.g. college or departmental means +/- SD).
- Surveys should be anonymous with an expectation of student compliance.
- In some instances, broad categories of expectations (e.g. exceeds/meets/does not meet) may have more overall utility than a numerical scale.
- Data should be presented with a brief description of the local student evaluation process:
 - Are these the results of a standardized college-wide process?
 - Are students in any way trained to provide feedback?
 - Are students educated to how their data is used?
 - Does the instructor gather and use any other student generated data?

2. Summary of student narrative comments

Student-derived narrative comments are important as these help to specifically guide course/instructor improvement. The absolute reliance on summative/numerical ranking data alone often fails to address specific instructional features perceived by the students to be either outstanding or weak. However, it is not practical to include all of an instructor's narrative evaluations. Moreover, a self-selected sampling of student comments is often viewed as "testimonials" that may not be representative. Therefore, some selection/compression is necessary. Unfortunately, this process of selection places the evaluated instructor in a conflict of interest.

Instructors are encouraged to explore creative ways to summarize and present student narrative data in as compact and unbiased a manner as possible. Examples (see next page) include lists, bar or pie charts that might identify the most common positive and negative student comments in unambiguous ways. Each category would include the average number of times students made this particular comment. For example, the instructor could provide the top 5 most common positive comments and top 5 most common negative comments, including the number of times each comment occurred.

3. Instructor reflection on student evaluations

Instructors are encouraged to provide a reflective statement (≤ 1 page) that explains how she/he views and uses student evaluations. Specific examples are also encouraged – notably examples of how the instructor has used student feedback to improve his/her teaching and/or address perceived problems.

4. A list of student selected teaching awards

The instructor is encouraged to provide a list of such awards, including year and criteria for the award. This list may be reiterated or otherwise placed elsewhere in the dossier, annual review document, and/or CV.

Page 2: Examples of methods to summarize student narrative reviews:

TABLE:

Most common positive student comments-	Most common negative student comments-
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Instructor is approachable (32) • Instructor challenged me to think (22) • course was well organized (14) • Instructor has a good sense of humor (12) • Instructor cares about students' well being (7) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exams were too hard (13) • Exams were too long (11) • Talks too fast (7) • Often does not finish on time (6) • Drinks too much coffee during class (3)

PIE CHARTS:

