**Focus on Teaching and Learning | Fall 2021 Lunch and Learn Series**

**I’ve got mid-course feedback: What do I do with it?**

**Guide for interpreting mid-course feedback**

[Center for Teaching & Learning Excellence](https://provost.syr.edu/center-for-teaching-and-learning-excellence/)

[CTLE Assistance Request Form](https://provost.syr.edu/center-for-teaching-and-learning-excellence/assistance-request-form/)

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[Institutional Effectiveness and Assessment](https://effectiveness.syr.edu/)

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**Session Outline**Welcome and introduction to the process

Individual work looking at results using this guide

Small group discussion of 2-3 instructors, sharing one thing from this process (e.g., about the process, about the results, next steps)

Closing thoughts

**Step 1. Look at feedback on teaching that you have received this semester.**

Read through the following statements. Can you identify with any of them? How might you adapt them? What else might you add?

* Overall, I’m pleased with student responses, but there are a few areas I’d like to improve.
* Compared to past feedback I have gotten, I think my teaching is improving.
* I think student responses were negatively impacted by a few critical students.
* I feel student resistance to course content or design.
* Some of the student comments really surprise me.
* I’m overwhelmed by student responses, and I don’t even know what to think.

What else would you say about your experience?

**Step 2. Do a quick analysis using the first three rows of the table below (the other rows are integrated in the next steps).**

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| --- | --- |
| Throw out the off-the-wall comments that do not provide you with useful information and forget about them. | “She needs a haircut and a new pair of shoes.” |
| Set aside the positive comments that don’t tell you anything specific. | “Best class ever.” |
| Divide the negative comments into two groups: those you can change and those that you cannot change. | **Can Change:** Redistribute the points for different assignments because of the amount of work that they perceived was required for each assignment.  **Cannot Change:** Let students out of class early. Don’t meet on Fridays. Don’t meet in the morning. Choose a room with windows. |
| Work on perceptions and learn to be explicit. | As we look at our student feedback, we often think, “But I do that!” If we feel we are doing the things that students say we are not doing, then it may be that we need to explore students’ perceptions or our own. It may also be that we need to be more explicit when we do these things. |
| Savor the comments that are meant to be negative, but let you know you are doing your job. | “She made us think.” “Dr. S. is a very influential teacher, but I didn’t come to college to be influenced.”  “We have to read a lot to do well in this course.” |
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Adapted by the Center for Teaching Excellence, Duquesne University, from Buskist, C & Hogan, J. (2010). She needs a haircut and a new pair of shoes: Handling those pesky course evaluations. *Journal of Effective Teaching 10* (1), 51-56.

**Step 3. Affirm the positive within your students’ responses.**

What student responses do you find most rewarding and uplifting?

In what ways do these responses resonate with who you see yourself to be as a teacher?

**Step 4. Explore the negative within your students’ responses.**

What student responses discourage you? Why?

In what ways do these responses contradict who you see yourself to be as a teacher?

**Step 5. Situate your students’ responses in the context of this semester.**

What is this semester like generally? What is the context of your specific courses? Your and your students’ life situations?

List factors that might help you interpret the responses. For example: What is the effect of the pandemic? What is the format of your course – asynchronous, synchronous, face-to-face, or blended?

Our purpose is not to dismiss student responses, but to situate the responses and make meaning of them.

**Finally, implement the changes after you have interpreted the responses.**

How will you communicate with students what you learned, and what you can/will change?

Plan a brief explanation of those things you cannot or will not change, and why.

As you make changes, remind students of why you’re doing it and get further input (sometimes we swing too far and need to adjust).

In the future, start the course with a few comments about how valuable previous student input has been. Give specific examples of how you have responded.