
Using Intentional Student Feedback to Sustain My Teaching

2010 Teaching and Learning Symposium

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Management & Quantitative Methods

Sustainability

- Many definitions:
 - Seeking to provide the best outcomes for the human and natural environments both now and into the indefinite future
 - I like this better than the more typical “capacity to endure”
 - Implies continuous improvement
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Continuous Improvement

- Earlier career in business
 - If businesses do not continuously improve, they cease to exist
 - Application of continuous improvement to teaching
 - I ask my students “How are we doing?”
 - Their responses cause me to reflect and contemplate “How can we improve?”
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Setting Expectations

- Syllabus Reference to College of Business Professional Standards
 - All students in this course are expected to be familiar with the "College of Business Standards of Professional Behavior and Ethical Conduct." (Please refer to the following URL: <http://www.cob.ilstu.edu/professionalstandards>). Please note that only bottled water may be consumed in the classroom wing of the College of Business Building and that all cell phones and other electronic devices should be turned off and stored away during classes, unless permission is otherwise granted by the instructor.
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Setting Expectations

- Standards are discussed on the first day of class
 - Students should expect me to live up to faculty expectations
 - I expect them to live up to student expectations
 - We will return to these expectations around mid-semester to see how we are doing
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Intentional Feedback

■ Blackboard Assessment Tool

□ Anonymous/Asynchronous

□ Four open-ended questions

- Of the standards that your instructor has met, please comment on those that have most positively influenced your satisfaction with this course.
 - Of the standards that your instructor has not met, please comment on those that have most negatively influenced your satisfaction with this course.
 - Of the standards that you and your peers have met, please comment on those that have most positively influenced your satisfaction with this course.
 - Of the standards that you and your peers have not met, please comment on those that have most negatively influenced your satisfaction with this course.
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Intentional Feedback

- Survey response rates very high, near 100%
 - Rich qualitative responses
 - I look for common themes, but also pay attention to outliers
 - Report common themes back to the students
 - Opportunity for dialogue
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How Can I Improve?

- Honestly, I can only find one expectation that he does not do extremely well on: "develop meaningful assignments that contribute to student mastery of course and program competencies." Personally, I have a difficult time with the problems he assigns for homework because he assigns them before he teaches us how to complete them. A great example is the AON and AOA network diagrams. We had to complete homework before he went over them in class, thus making it so most of the students did them wrong (or not well). Also, I felt that the test questions pertinent to homework problems, were not well represented in the homework. An example of this is that we had to draw an AON diagram that had two start activities. However, we never had a homework problem in which to practice this type of diagramming on. I would just appreciate a chance to learn how to do these problems before I spend hours being frustrated.
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How Can I Improve?

- This is a tough one because I believe that Professor B. meets all the faculty expectations. If I have to get picky, I guess there were a few items on the test for which I was not well prepared. Specifically, I would have liked some more practice on network diagrams and Gantt charts. We had a few homework problems, but I could have used more problems. Maybe in the future he could post the answers to the other problems at the end of chapters so that even if he does not assign them, we can get some more practice. Other than that, he is doing really well!
 - Write exams that fairly reflect the course content and coverage. I felt a couple test questions were not covered well in class. The network diagrams on the test were significantly harder than any we went over in class.
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Personal Reflection and Contemplation

- Students are not able to apply sample solved problems to homework problems
 - Students are not able to apply a process to a new, slightly different problem
 - Are my expectations realistic?
 - How can I improve their problem solving ability without giving them the answers?
 - How can I incorporate these improvements into my class?
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Concluding Thoughts

- Seeking intentional feedback can be a difficult
 - You don't always want to see what your students think
 - You have to separate the wheat from the chaf
 - The step from intentional feedback to improvement can me huge
 - The potential benefits offset the difficulties
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