Strategies for Increasing Response Rates

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Our campus is working together to increase response rates, because we know how important this feedback is for instructor evaluation and to inform curricular decisions.

Student communications have been updated to emphasize the importance of the course evaluation process and more strongly encourage participation. The invitations have also been updated to reduce the number of clicks for students to enter the evaluations. For non-responders, the system automatically generates reminder emails every three days during the survey window.

In addition, this semester the Office of the Provost is sponsoring an opportunity drawing to encourage student response. For each evaluation a student completes, they will receive one entry in an opportunity drawing for one of ten (10) $100 Amazon gift cards. The Office of Communications and IITS are providing additional support by including reference to course evaluations and the opportunity drawing in end of semester emails to students and on desktop backgrounds in campus computer labs.

Below are some additional strategies that faculty may wish to use to increase response rates in their courses:

1. Instructors can advise their students ahead of time that evaluations will be going out, and can let students know once the evaluations have launched. This encourages students to be on the lookout for emails from the Class Climate system (cc_admin@csusm.edu). Faculty will receive an email once their evaluation has been created, which contains the open and close dates for the evaluations.

   Faculty will also receive an email one week before the end of the semester with their response rates up to that point. At this time, faculty can assess whether they might want to offer an additional in-class reminder or encouragement for students to complete the evaluations.

2. Faculty may still wish to reserve class time for students to complete course evaluations, just as they would when administering paper evaluations. Course evaluations can be accessed via PC, tablets, and mobile devices.

   Faculty who achieved high response rates in their courses using this method have shared that they reserve time at the beginning of class, rather than the end of class. If time is allotted at the end of class, students may be less likely to stick around to provide feedback.

3. Faculty can discuss the importance of the course evaluations and how they utilize the feedback for assessment purposes (e.g., noting that input from the current class can help them to understand the student experience and make adjustments that will further enhance student learning in the future). Specific examples of past curricular changes informed by course evaluations may be particularly compelling to share.

4. Faculty could consider adding a statement to the course syllabus that explains what course evaluations are, why they are conducted, and includes the timeframe in which course evaluations will be available. In this syllabi statement, faculty may also wish to emphasize their desire to receive

student feedback and provide an example of pass curricular changes informed by course evaluations. Sample framing language can be found on the Institutional Planning & Analysis website.

5. Faculty may offer a nominal amount of extra credit to students who provide evidence that they have completed their course evaluation, and/or offer extra credit to all students in the class if response rates cross a predesignated threshold.

Institutional Planning & Analysis and the Office of the Provost continue to consult with Academic Senate and other campus partners regarding strategies for improving response rates to electronic evaluations. Have an idea you'd like to share? Please email us at ipa@csusm.edu