Suggestions for Increasing Response Rates for Online Course Evaluations

1. Communicate with the students why it is important to get their feedback. Tell them directly that course evaluation is being done for the course and that you value and use their feedback. Share with them how you have incorporated past feedback into your courses. Let them know that it is important to you.
   - Students should believe that an instructor will take their feedback seriously and specific actions will be taken to solve the issues raised.
   - Assure them that all ratings and comments are anonymous and that instructors do not see results until after final grades have been submitted.
   - Not all feedback is constructive but there are times when there is something that comes out as useful. Share that experience.

2. Remind students in class or by email.
   - Announce the deadline date that the evaluation is closing
   - If by email also include the URL (my.gwu.edu/mod/evaluations)

3. Schedule the beginning of one class as designated for completing the course evaluation.
   - Some instructors ask students to bring in a laptop.
   - Others have their class scheduled in a computer lab for that day.

4. Add completing the course evaluation as part of the responsibility of the course (similar to a homework assignment) in the syllabus. Include the dates the evaluation is available. This sets the tone for how important it is to you as an instructor.
   - Explain in the course syllabus the importance of student input for course improvement and that their evaluations are taken seriously and do effect change.

5. Check your response rate via Blackboard or my.gwu.edu/mod/evaluations.
   - Let your students know what percentage of the class has responded and that your goal is to receive feedback from everyone.

6. Offer extra credit using the Blackboard tool (only available in the 2-week evaluation period).
   - We have seen that this can increase the response rate by 20%.
   - Some instructors say if 70% of the class completes the evaluations, then everyone in the course gets 2 points. Instructors should pick their own percentage and points.

7. Activities for increasing response rates from the Office of Survey Research and Analysis
   - Sending out emails to instructors and students.
   - Sending out reminder emails to students who have open evaluations.
   - Sending out reminder emails with response rates to instructors.
   - Online ads on my.gwu.edu, gwired.gwu.edu, gwhatchet.com, and facebook.com.
   - Rotating ad in Academic Technology’s computer labs.
   - Posters given to departments and schools.
   - Posters posted in residence halls.

In the end, it is the interaction with the instructor that can drive the response rate. Office of Survey Research and Analysis sends out periodic reminders, but it cannot be a replacement for the instructor. The instructor has the most critical role in motivating the student to respond.

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