Instructor and Institutional Assessments of Teaching Effectiveness: Faculty Views

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What sources of assessment information are used?

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<th>Sources of Assessment Information</th>
<th>Used by Institutions</th>
<th>Used by Faculty</th>
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<td>Student Evaluations of Teaching: All structured collection of student evaluative feedback about a course</td>
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<td>Peer Observations of Teaching: Having peer faculty or university administrators sit in on an instructor’s course and provide feedback (often through written reports and sometimes verbal feedback in a face-to-face meeting)</td>
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<td>Teaching Portfolios: Having instructors self-report how they teach, sometimes providing references to the literature about the evidence for the success of the instructional methods they are using</td>
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<td>Research-based assessments: Typically involving pre-test/posting through the use of MC conceptual inventories</td>
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<td>Student Performance on Exams, Quizzes, or Homework: Using students’ performance on exams, quizzes or homework and taking this performance as an indicator of the success of the instruction.</td>
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<td>Systematic Formative Assessment: Gathering a sampling of students’ performance on an in-class task as an indicator of teaching effectiveness (e.g., having students submit votes, walking around the room and observing the solutions of multiple groups)</td>
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<td>Informal Formative Assessment: All other forms of formative assessment, such as verbal comments in class or office hours, the look of confusion in students’ eyes, whether or not students are awake, or whether or not students are asking questions</td>
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<td>Informal Post-course Feedback from Students: Spontaneous informal comments from student(s) semesters or years after the student(s) have left the class with feedback on the course or the instructor</td>
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How do faculty evaluate assessment practices?

The researchers holistically assessed whether the interviewee felt positively or negatively about how well they are able to evaluate their own teaching effectiveness. Similarly, the researchers holistically assessed whether the interviewee felt positively or negatively about how well they think their institutions are able to evaluate teaching effectiveness.

In the results, we find that faculty have a significant preference for SETs over other sources of assessment information, with more than 50% of faculty reporting that they use SETs. However, there is a significant divide among institutions in how they use these sources of information, with some institutions relying heavily on SETs while others use more diverse methods.

Implications for PER

Faculty seem to have more confidence in their own assessment practices than they do in the assessment practices of the institution.

Many faculty seek out and value formative assessment sources—this may be a powerful lever for change agents. Faculty find what students do and say in class as compelling evidence of teaching and learning.

References & Acknowledgements


How do faculty evaluate assessment practices?

Faculty seem to have more confidence in their own assessment practices than they do in the assessment practices of the institution.

Of the 30 faculty who discussed institutional assessment, one third said their institution uses only one measure of teaching effectiveness. SETs were reported to be the most common single source that institutions relied upon (8/10).

An additional 15 faculty described their institutions as only relying on two assessment measures for judging teaching effectiveness. The most common combination of two assessment measures for institutions was SETs paired with peer observations (12/15).

Our preliminary findings suggest that even institutions that use multiple measures tend to give significant (or sole) prominence to SETs over other sources.