



Talking to Students about Midsemester Feedback

Instructors are the most important determinant of student participation. Students are more likely to submit feedback if they know that instructors value their feedback and use it to make improvements in the course. Below are suggestions for how you might discuss mid-semester feedback with your students.

Before you collect feedback

Share with students why their feedback is important and how you might use it as an instructor:

- Mid-semester feedback is important because it allows me to understand your experience in this course and make potential changes to improve your learning. Now that you have experienced several weeks of this course, I want to hear from you about your learning experience so far.
- Collecting mid-semester feedback from you gives me insights into your learning experience in this course. I will look for common themes in your responses and based on those common themes, I will make decisions about potential changes.
- Your responses help me understand how you approach your learning in this course in terms of the practices you are using to engage with the material. Based on your responses, we can discuss different kinds of strategies that might help you learn in this course.

Let students know what to expect:

- The feedback you provide is anonymous, and I am the only person who can see your feedback.
- The mid-semester feedback form is the same for all courses and asks you about what you have found helpful in this course so far, if you know what you are expected to learn, if you find that our classroom environment is welcoming and inclusive, and if you know how to get in touch with me. In addition, the survey asks you if you have encountered any difficulties in terms of your learning so far and how you approach your learning in this course.
- It will take you about 10 minutes to complete this feedback form, and I will give you that time in class next week to complete the survey.
- Your responses to the questions or your decision not to complete the survey will not impact your grade in this course.

Share with students what makes feedback particularly helpful:

“In your open-ended responses, it is helpful for me if you can provide examples. It’s great to hear when you say that you enjoy the course, but I would appreciate more specific details. What specific aspects of the course help you learn and why? Likewise, if there is an aspect of the course that is not helpful for your learning, try to provide some details or ideas about what would make that aspect of the course more helpful for your learning. “

Closing the loop: debriefing feedback with your students

Thank students for their feedback and also let them know what kind of feedback was particularly helpful.

“Thank you for your thoughtful feedback, it has helped me understand your learning experience in this course so far. I appreciate that you made an effort to provide specific feedback about aspects of the course that are helpful or difficult.”

Share common themes that emerged and how you plan to address them.

“A few common themes emerged from your feedback, and I want to share those themes with you and let you know what we will do differently moving forward. [I will also share with you my rationale for not making changes to certain aspects of this course.]”

Invite students to share additional feedback.

“Please talk to me about any additional comments, questions, or concerns you would like to bring up.”

If you would like to discuss how to interpret or respond to student feedback,
please reach out to SITE@psu.edu