

# Student Evaluation Faculty Input Luncheon

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## *Group Discussion Summary*

### **1. Why do you think students don't complete evaluations?**

- Out of sight –Out of mind!--Although you remind the student of the importance of the evaluations in class, they do not remember to go back and complete the evaluation.
- Students tend to only do those things that are in their best interest, and they don't see any return on taking time to do this.
- Timing –the end of the term is so busy, this is at the bottom of their priority list.
- Students do not believe the evaluations are anonymous.
- Students don't think that what they say makes a difference (i.e. instructor doesn't change course as a result of feedback.)
- Students may also lack evidence that their feedback is valued and important.
  - This can be mitigated by publicizing the availability of results. Following submission, the system should provide a notice to the students stating that the results of this and other evaluations will be available after grades are reported at [evaluations.ufl.edu/results](http://evaluations.ufl.edu/results). Perhaps would also be helpful to send the student an email receipt for the submitted evaluation.
  - Statements aimed at students from high level administrators such as the Provost, Deans, or even the President indicating the importance of evaluations.
- Lack of some college's upper administration (Dean and/or Chair) to emphasize the importance of the evaluations promotes apathy in faculty in turn not expressing to the students the need for them to participate.'
- There are a lot of questions on the evaluation.
- Students are constantly inundated with requests for input and feedback. Students may suffer from survey fatigue.
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### **2. Are there question(s) you like to see on evaluations (that aren't there now) that you feel are important to the overall student to faculty feedback process?**

- Although "Facilitation of learning" could be similar---a suggested rewording to state, "Do you feel the style of the instructor met your needs?" Or "Was the instructors teaching style consistent with an effective learning method." Often the different style of teaching can be the cause for a student's unenthusiastic review.
- Two most helpful questions on "Rate your professor" site asks about the ease of the course and the amount of work load. The question in Phase II- "Amount of effort required" could be rephrased.

### **3. What do you think can be done to increase the response rate on evaluations?**

- Primary suggestion---The process for increasing evaluations needs to be handled at a central location (central administration or at least at a central college level) and not the responsibility of the faculty to "beg" for participation. This theme came up in two out of three discussion groups.

- University-wide policies and practices should be adopted so that students receive a single, unified message related to faculty evaluations. Such a unified message will not only reduce confusion among students but will also provide a firm foundation upon which a broad culture of evaluations can be built.
- Strategies employed by individual departments and instructors are great and should not be discouraged, but there should be a baseline of effort at the university level to insure that acceptable response rates are achieved as widely as possible.
- Rely less on department admins for creating and scheduling messages. A baseline level of messages applied to every evaluation which departments can modify or augment.
- The instructors need to put themselves out there and communicate to their students the importance to them of this feedback . Give examples of how course has changed as a result of student evaluations.
- Provide a mobile application for students!!!—Some discussion as to how to encourage them to provide comments instead of the “check the circle” but general consensus the mobile application would be the most valuable. *(NOTE from Donna Johnson: The online evaluation is available as a mobile application. For more info see: <https://evaluations.ufl.edu/info/Student-View.ashx> .*
- At conclusion of the evaluation on-line have a surprise pop up to allow them an opportunity to win sporting or event tickets. Some sort of flashing “prize” promoting participation with a chance to win!
- “Gameify” – Example: If an instructor is teaching more than one section, he can share the response rates of all of his sections with the students in each section. The sections can then compete with against each other with the section attaining the highest response rate by a certain date winning some prize (e.g. donuts in class).
- It would be helpful to collect and publish a number of successful strategies that have been employed at various levels so that departments and instructors can compare their own practices and get ideas for how to increase rates.
- Online video feed from either the Associate Provost or Provost to emphasis importance once the student clicked on the evaluation link. Short blurb!
- Incorporate the UF Online Evaluation into Sakai. During the evaluation period whenever student goes to their course in Sakai generate a popup for completing the evaluation. Have the pop-up stop displaying once the student has completed the evaluation for the course.
- Make the evaluations required for all students. (Suggestion was made that perhaps UF could start this way and once there had been a “culture change” from students about evaluations the requirement could be dropped. ) Creating a culture change for both faculty and students is the way to go, not mandatory. Majority of group favored the latter approach.
- Publicize to instructors and department admins the activities of Alpha Productions such as when and where they are going to be tabling.

**4. What is your general position about making faculty evaluations required for students?**

- The University places too much emphasis on the evaluations and they should not be required.

The value placed on these for Promotion and Tenure is much too significant for the fact most students that take the time to evaluate are either very happy or very unsatisfied. It does not allow for an accurate review of an instructor's performance.

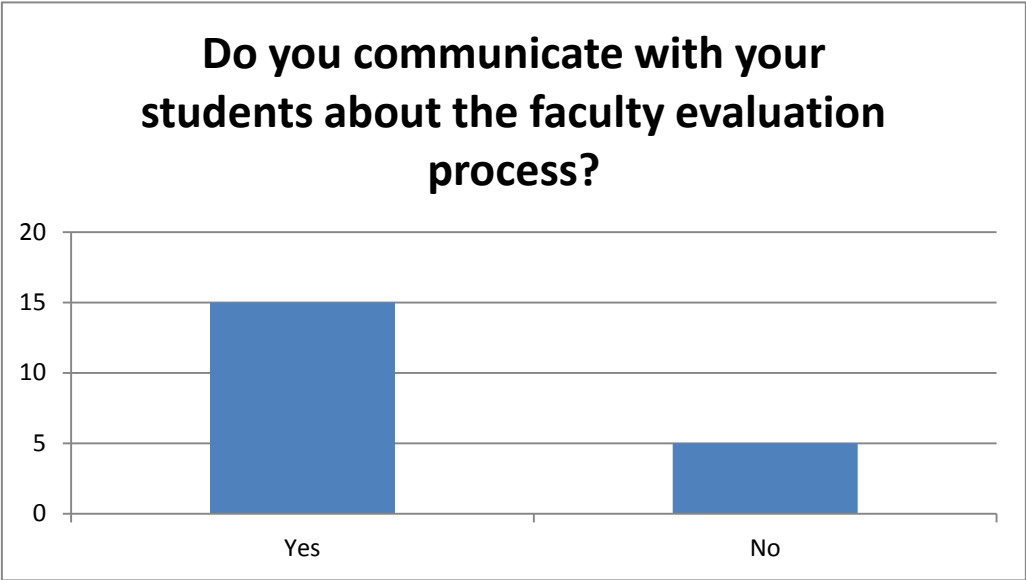
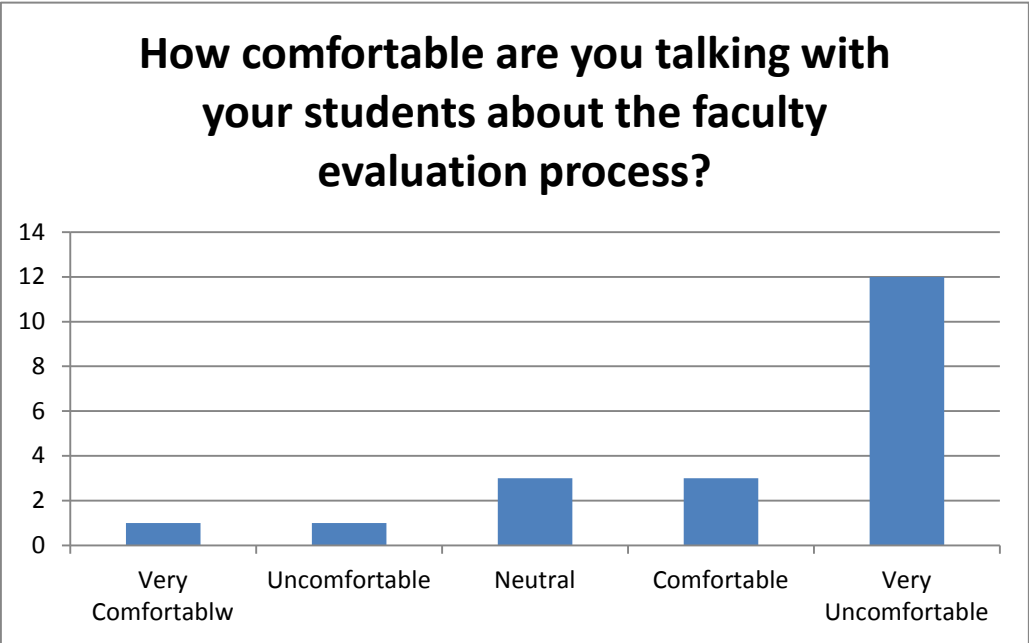
- The only way to make sure you are getting feedback from all segments (satisfied/unsatisfied, students with high/low grades etc.) is to require the evaluations.
- Statistically half the faculty will rate below average.
- Evaluations should not be required.

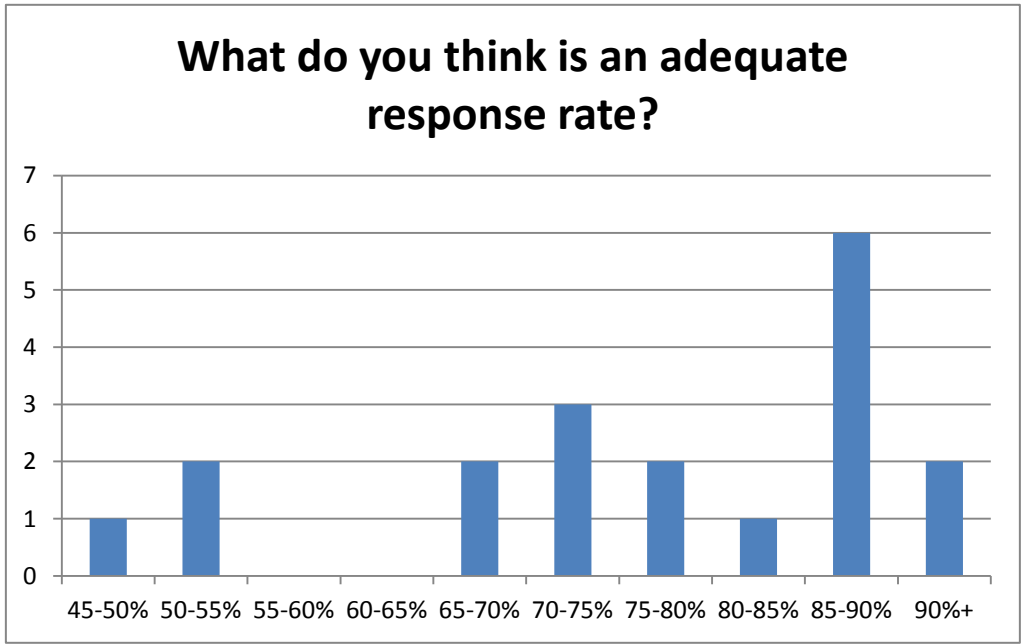
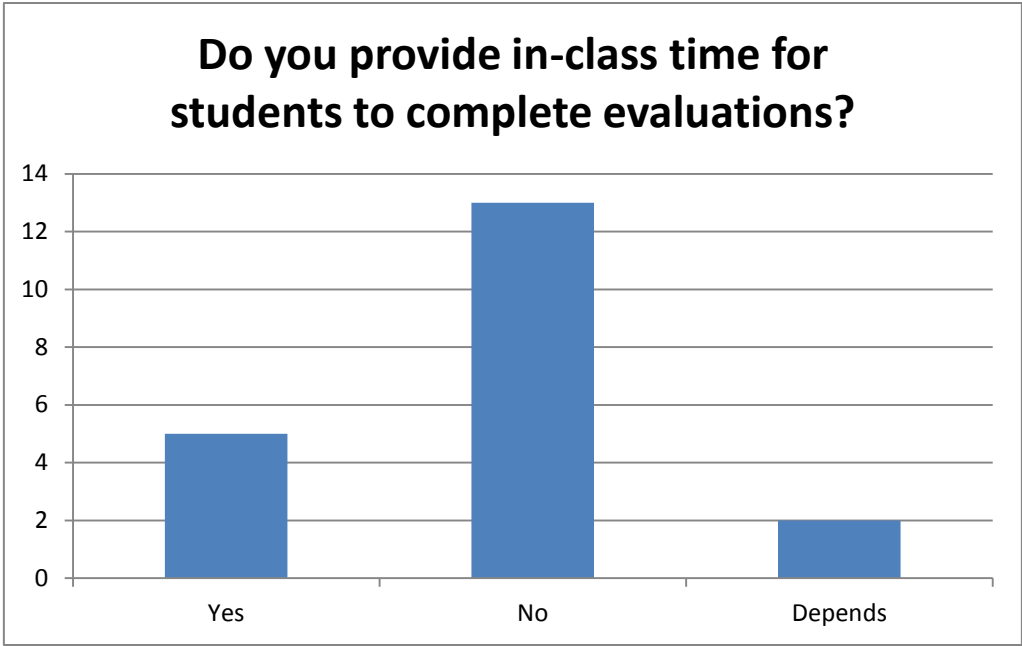
**5. What ideas do you have as the "requirement" concept for evaluations (Conversation starters below if needed.)**

- Delay access to official grades for those who don't complete evaluations?
- Cancel advanced registration if evaluation isn't completed>
- Require evaluations be completed to participate in UF activities (purchase tickets for sports and other events?).
- This group did not believe a requirement should be made but to reduce the emphasis and focus on alternate evaluation methods for instructors.
- They also pointed out the value of the students responses should not be uniform across levels. Undergrads tend to be less likely to evaluate and more critical of an instructor compared to graduate students. This should be weighed when evaluating the students feedback.
- This group generally didn't think evaluations should be required. Some members felt that requiring evaluations would provide more valid feedback than the current voluntary system.
- A policy similar to how holds are placed on students records for financial reasons. A standard policy such as no evals – no early grades.

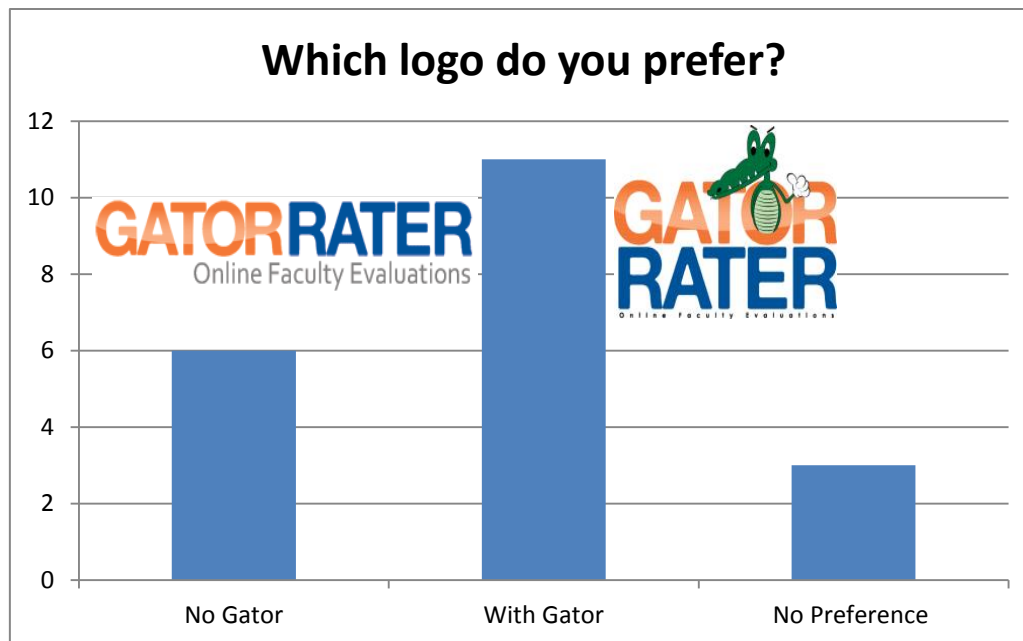
# Mini Survey Results

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Note from Donna Johnson: This questions was not as clear as it should have been. Perhaps better: What response rate do you think is adequate for providing reliable evaluation results?



## What questions would you like answered about evaluations?

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I've provided the complete list of questions so everyone can get a sense of what the participants had on their minds about evaluations. I've added responses where I have input.

- How do instructors access the percentage of responses once evaluations open so they can determine if they need to encourage participation?
  - See <https://evaluations.ufl.edu/info/faq-instructors.ashx> first question on the FAQ list.
- How do the students' performance/grade in class correlate to their evaluations? (asked 2 times)
  - This topic came up for discussion in one group. There was definitely not consensus. There were those who felt this information should not be provided at all as it really wasn't relevant to the evaluations provided by the students. There were others who felt equally as strongly that this was important in order to try to determine if there was any correlation between the student's evaluation and the grade they received in the class.
  - Note from Donna Johnson: Providing this type of information would result in loss of anonymity of the student.
- What are they used for?

- Varies from department to department, but are used as part of the UF Tenure and Promotion process.

- How to increase response rate? (asked 4 times.)
- Why do them?
- What is the extent that we need to be promoting the online evaluation system to our students?
  - See the notes from the group discussions.
- How is reliability measured?
  - I'll add some information to the FAQ. The reliability testing was done a number of years ago while the majority of evaluations were done using paper forms. The research I have reviewed indicates the reliability is not impacted by a change from paper to online.
- How to improve implementation.
  - Not quite sure what the questioner was trying to learn. If the intent was improving response rate, see the notes from the group discussions. If something different, email more info to [evaluations@ufl.edu](mailto:evaluations@ufl.edu) for a personal response.
- Amount of work load?
  - Not quite sure what the questioner was trying to learn. Email more info to [evaluations@ufl.edu](mailto:evaluations@ufl.edu) for a personal response.
- What is their "real" value/in the online context?
  - Not quite sure what the questioner was trying to learn. Email more info to [evaluations@ufl.edu](mailto:evaluations@ufl.edu) for a personal response.
- How are the non-respondents different from the respondents?
- Why are they so overrated at UF?
- How can we add a dimension to evaluations that transcends student opinion?
  - Note from Donna Johnson: Great questions, but not something to which I can readily respond.

## Other Comments, Suggestions

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- Several had difficulties locating the remarks provided by students and these comments are more important forms of personal critique than the 10 basic questions. Make this process easier!
  - See <https://evaluations.ufl.edu/info/Instructor-Overview.ashx>. If you are the supervisor of an instructor you may be having difficulty because your College has not authorized the written comments to be shared with anyone other than the faculty member. The UF policy on written comments is available at:  
[https://evaluations.ufl.edu/info/Policies.ashx#BE\\_Access\\_to\\_Written\\_Comments\\_from\\_Students\\_3](https://evaluations.ufl.edu/info/Policies.ashx#BE_Access_to_Written_Comments_from_Students_3)
- I feel course evaluations are really more important than faculty evaluations.