



avenue  
to learn

## Collecting Midterm Student Feedback

Larger Course (~60+ students) and Smaller Course (<100 students)

Platform: Avenue to Learn

Collecting feedback from your students in the middle of the term allows you to understand how students are responding to your pedagogical approaches, reflect on their suggestions while your experience is fresh, and subsequently implement changes to your course or teaching that can enhance student learning.

In using this document, you will:

- Learn about the process of collecting student feedback (why, how and when)
- Determine how to set up a course feedback survey using an Avenue to Learn survey template
- Assess whether you want to customize your feedback form with your own questions

# Midterm Student Feedback

Recommendations for educators of synchronous or asynchronous courses

## Where to start:

Consider what exactly you want to know from your students – are you looking for general feedback, or is there something about the course you'd like to check in on specifically? Decide on the survey questions you will use, and when you will implement the feedback survey. We normally recommend some time at the mid-point of the course to allow time for you to review the feedback, and implement a few changes to respond to the feedback.

It is best to design a process that ensures students' comments are anonymous.

*Check out links to templates and sample surveys below!*

## A recommended process: Collecting, Reflecting, Debriefing

### Collecting:

For a synchronous course, reserve a few minutes in class for students to fill out the survey. Do this at the beginning of class as students will be motivated to stay to learn, whereas if left for the end of class, you may find students leave once the day's teaching is completed. For both synchronous and asynchronous courses, send an announcement to students about the survey, as well as reminders.

When you open the survey, preface the exercise as follows:

- Explain to students why you have decided to collect feedback, how feedback will be collected (making note of anonymity, if applicable), and how their feedback will be used.
- Request that students explain the 'whys' underlying their feedback to the best of their ability and provide suggestions to address any challenges they have identified, as that will make the process most effective.
- Let students know that you intend to follow up with them soon about what you learn from their feedback and what changes they can expect moving forward. If students feel confident that their voices will be heard, it will encourage them to take the time to provide feedback.

Leave your survey open for at least a couple of days, and no more than a week. Be mindful that if you collect feedback just after a midterm exam or an assignment, you will receive more assessment-related comments.

### Reflecting:

After the survey has closed, give yourself a few days to read and digest student comments.

- You may want to create a tool or chart to help you organize the feedback and categorize results.
- Recognize that you may experience some emotional reactions. Having a colleague with whom you can discuss these concerns may be helpful.



- Pick out comments that seem to be the most constructive and the most frequent amongst your students and focus on those. Remember to focus just as much on positive comments as the constructive comments; it's important to maximize strengths as well.
- Finally, consider what changes you can and cannot make this semester. Don't feel you need to respond to all comments or suggestions. Often a couple of small changes makes a world of difference to students.

For a synchronous course, jot down your thoughts or create a few slides so that you're prepared to talk about it with your class. For an asynchronous course, draft a reflection, post, or an announcement.

If you'd like to discuss any changes you plan to make to your course or teaching, please reach out to you your [Faculty Liaison Contact](#) in the MacPherson Institute.

#### Debriefing:

At the next available opportunity, thank students for their feedback. Explain what you learned, what changes they can expect, and what changes you cannot make and why. Students will see evidence that their voices were heard and may participate more readily in your course after that!

### Survey templates: Ready to use!

Two survey templates have been created in Avenue to Learn. One template is recommended for small classes (less than 60 students) and the other is recommended for larger classes (more than 60 students); of course, feel free to make use of these as you see fit. These templates are also available in the Learning Object Repository on Avenue to Learn.

#### Customize your feedback survey

The templates above have questions that will generate broad and general feedback on your course. If there is something in particular you'd like feedback on, design a question you can add to the template. Below are some examples you might consider adding. Be careful about presenting too many questions; if the survey becomes too long, students may not complete it.

1. Overall, how would you rate the pace of learning in this course?  
(*Way too slow*) 1-----2-----3-----4-----5 (*Way too fast*)
2. Overall, how much do you think you are learning in this course?  
(*Nothing*) 1-----2-----3-----4-----5 (*A lot*)
3. How would you rate the usefulness of the textbook in helping you learn?  
(*Not at all useful*) 1-----2-----3-----4-----5 (*Very useful*)
4. Are the course syllabus and reading assignments clear?  
(*Not at all clear*) 1-----2-----3-----4-----5 (*Very clear*)
5. Do you find my teaching-style suitable for this class?  
(*Not at all suitable*) 1-----2-----3-----4-----5 (*Very suitable*)

6. Do I encourage questions, involvement and debate?  
(*Not at all encouraging*) 1-----2-----3-----4-----5 (*Very encouraging*)
7. Do I answer questions effectively?  
(*Not at all effectively*) 1-----2-----3-----4-----5 (*Very effectively*)
8. Please suggest actions I could take to enhance your learning in this course. Consider the above criteria that you rated a 3 or lower, or anything else that comes to mind.  
[Open short answer response]

## Other survey examples

Start Stop Continue:

*Please consider and comment on what I could start, stop, or continue doing, or what could start, stop, or continue happening in this course in order to better support your learning.*

1. Start
2. Stop
3. Continue

## Setting up your survey using Avenue to Learn

There are three basic steps to this procedure, downloading the import package, installing and configuring the survey and gathering reports on the results of the survey.

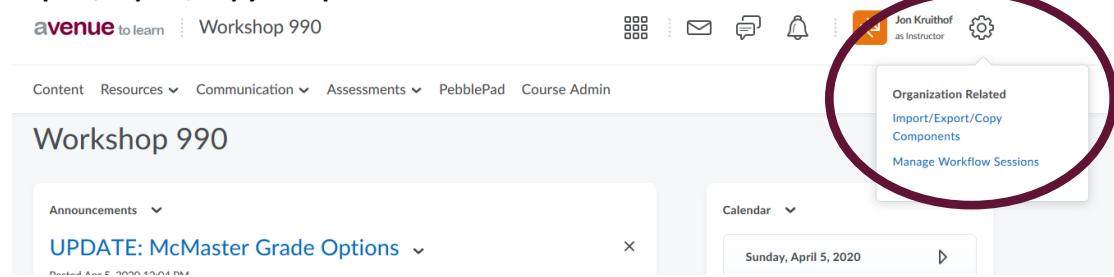
1. Determine whether you prefer to use the survey for the large class or small class:
  - a. Large class – more ‘point-and-click’ questions; easier to process
  - b. Small class – more open-ended questions; longer to process, but richer information
2. Download the import package.
  - a. Large class –  
[https://avenue.cllmcmaster.ca/shared/survey/midterm\\_student\\_feedback\\_survey\\_large.zip](https://avenue.cllmcmaster.ca/shared/survey/midterm_student_feedback_survey_large.zip)
  - b. Small class –  
[https://avenue.cllmcmaster.ca/shared/survey/midterm\\_student\\_feedback\\_survey\\_small.zip](https://avenue.cllmcmaster.ca/shared/survey/midterm_student_feedback_survey_small.zip)

A download should start immediately. It is a small file, about 4 KB in size, so it should be able to be downloaded even under low bandwidth Internet connections. If you have difficulty downloading this file, please connect with Avenue to Learn support by putting in a ticket here: <https://avenue.mcmaster.ca/support/> to have the file added to your course on your behalf.



### 3. Install and Configure the survey

Once you have downloaded the package, you will need to import this into your course in Avenue. Underneath the gear wheel in the top right hand corner, select **Import/Export/Copy Components**.



The screenshot shows the Avenue course interface for 'Workshop 990'. At the top right, there is a user profile for 'Jon Kruithof as Instructor' with a gear icon. A red circle highlights a dropdown menu that appears when the gear icon is clicked. The menu is titled 'Organization Related' and contains three items: 'Import/Export/Copy Components' (which is highlighted in blue), 'Manage Workflow Sessions', and 'Import/Export/Copy Components' (repeated). The main content area shows an announcement titled 'UPDATE: McMaster Grade Options'.



4. Select the last option **Import Components**, then click **Start**.

Content Resources ▾ Communication ▾ Assessments ▾ PebblePad Course Admin

## Import/Export/Copy Components

What would you like to do?

Copy Components from another Org Unit  
[What is an Org Unit?](#)

Course to Copy:

Include protected resources

Copy Components from Parent Template  
[What is a Parent Template?](#)

Include protected resources

Export as Brightspace Package  
[Should I include course files?](#)

Include course files in the export package

Import Components

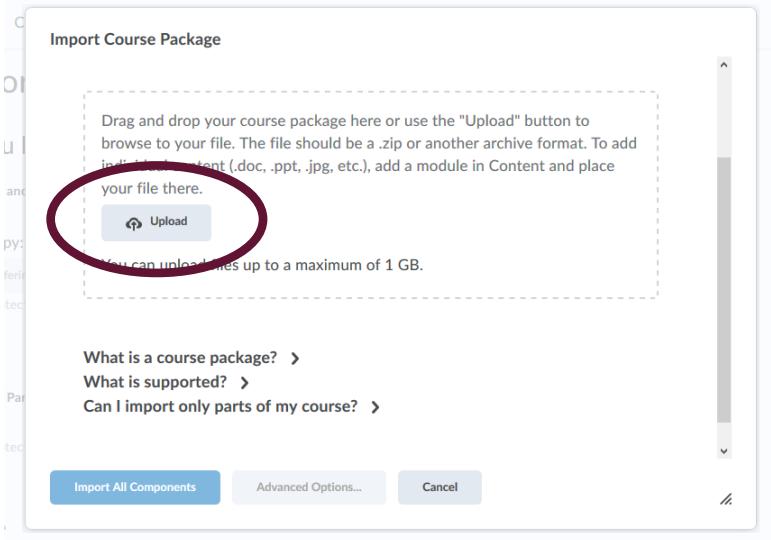
Select a component source:

from Learning Object Repository

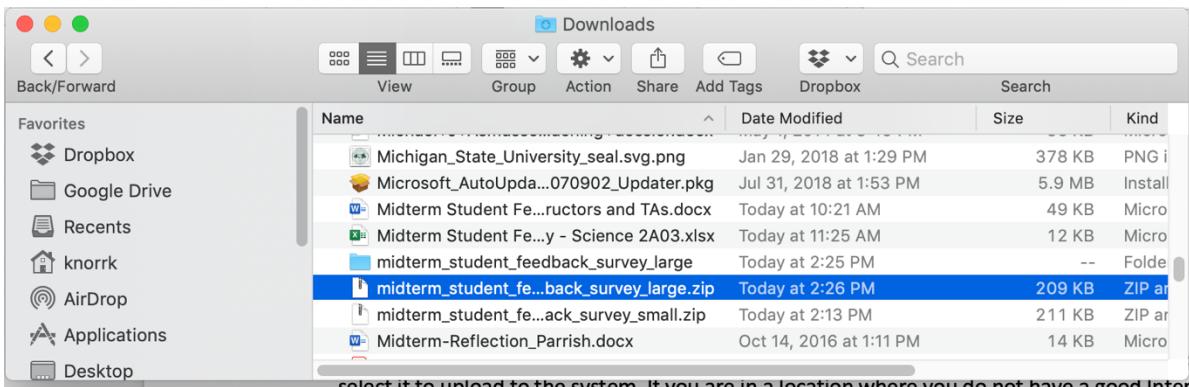
from a course package



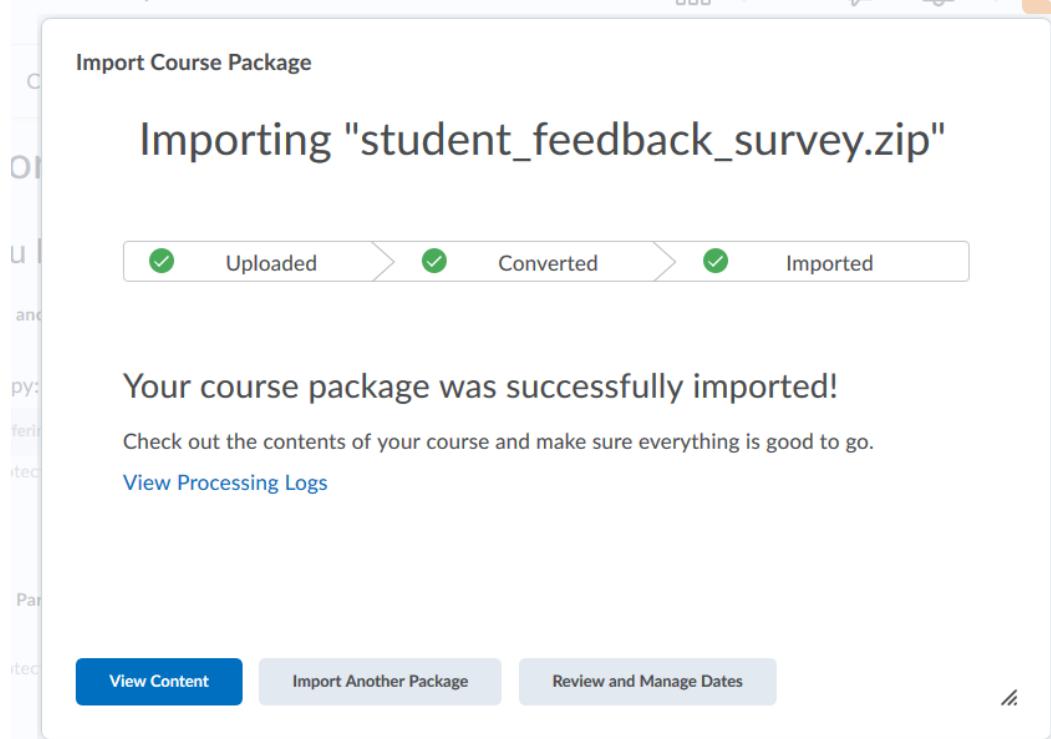
5. In the pop up box, click the **Upload** button.



6. Navigate on your computer to where you downloaded the file (student\_feedback\_survey.zip) and select it to upload to the system. If you are in a location where you do not have a good Internet connection or cannot upload this file successfully, please go to <https://avenue.mcmaster.ca/support/> and put in a ticket asking us to do this for you.



7. When the upload finishes click **Import All Components**. Shortly after importing you should see a message indicating that the import was successful.



8. Click **View Content** to navigate back to the course. Once there under **Resources**, select **Surveys**.

The screenshot shows the course navigation bar with links: Content, Resources (dropdown), Communication (dropdown), Assessments (dropdown), PebblePad, and Course Admin. The 'Resources' dropdown is open, showing options: Calendar, Checklist, Course Builder, FAQ, Glossary, Locker, Surveys (which is circled in red), and Attendance. On the right, there is a 'Table of Contents' section with a 'Surveys' item under 'lecture/ppt slides'. There are buttons for 'Import Course' (dropdown), 'Bulk Edit', 'Related Tools' (dropdown), 'Upload / Create' (blue), and 'Add Existing Activities' (grey).

9. Once you are in **Surveys**, you should see *Collecting Midterm Student Feedback – Large Class/Small Class*. By default this survey is Anonymous, so if you want to offer a non-anonymous version, you do have the questions available, simply delete this survey and create a new survey with the questions of your choice.

Content Resources ▾ Communication ▾ Assessments ▾ PebblePad Course Admin

Manage Surveys Question Library Help

New Survey Edit Categories More Actions ▾

Preview: By Availability Apply

Bulk Edit

<input type="checkbox"/>	Current Surveys
<input type="checkbox"/>	Midterm Student Feedback Survey - Small Classes <span>▼</span> <span>🔗</span>

10. Next, review the questions by scrolling down the Properties page. To read the full question as it would be shown to students, click the question. If you would like to alter, edit or change the questions, you can do so by following the steps on our support page at this address: <https://avenuehelp.mcmaster.ca/exec/quizzes-and-question-library/> - surveys and quizzes are created in the same way, so if you are familiar with the quiz tool in Avenue to Learn, you will also be familiar with how to manage questions in a survey.

11. Before the survey can be completed there are three steps you should complete, setting the visibility of the survey to public, entering a start and end time (the period of time the survey will be able to be completed) and setting the number of attempts this survey will allow. Click on the **Restrictions** tab.

### Edit Survey - Midterm Student Feedback Survey - Small Classes ▾

Properties Restrictions Objectives Reports Setup

Hide from Users

**Availability**

Has Start Date 10/1/2020 3:00 PM Now

*Canada - Toronto*

Has End Date 10/5/2020 6:00 PM Now

*Canada - Toronto*

Display In Calendar

12. While you are free to configure the settings for this as you please, we suggest the following changes; deselect **Hide From users**, select **Has Start Date** (and select your date and time of choice), select **Has End Date** (and select your date and time of choice), select **Display in Calendar**, and finally under Attempts Allowed, select **Single attempt that is editable**.

## Edit Survey - Midterm Student Feedback Survey - Small Classes ▾

Properties   **Restrictions**   Objectives   Reports Setup

Hide from Users

**Availability**

Has Start Date  
10/1/2020   3:00 PM   Now  
Canada - Toronto

Has End Date  
10/5/2020   6:00 PM   Now  
Canada - Toronto

Display In Calendar

**Additional Release Conditions**

Attach Existing   Create and Attach   Remove All Conditions

There are no conditions attached to this item.

### User Responses

Attempts Allowed

Single attempt that is editable ▾

13. When finished, scroll to the bottom and select **Save**.

14. Next you will have to make the report visible to yourself. To do this – click the Reports Setup tab.

## Edit Survey - Midterm Student Feedback Survey - Small Classes ▾

Properties   **Restrictions**   Objectives   **Reports Setup**

### Reports

Add Report

To recover responses to the survey, you will need to release the report to Instructors, to do this, click on the name of the report then scroll down to ensure that Instructor is checked. If so, you can navigate elsewhere. If not, select Instructor then click **Save**.

15. You are now able to inform your students that they can complete the survey.



16. Once the survey date passes, you can access your complete survey responses through the Reports. From the drop down menu at the end of the survey's name, select **Reports**, then click on the Report title.

This will open the Generate Report screen and give you three options for reporting output: CSV, Excel, and HTML. Due to a bug we've noticed, if you do not generate an HTML report first, you may generate an empty report. So, click **Generate HTML**.

## Generate Report

Generate CSV    Generate Excel    **Generate HTML** (circled)

### Feedback on Teaching

For attempts completed

From  Now

To  Now

**Done**

Once the report has been generated in HTML, you can click any of the three options (Export to CSV, Export to Excel, Print Report) to export the data for easier analysis.

17. If you'd like to speak to an Educational Developer about what you've learned from your feedback, or any changes you might make to your course or teaching, please feel free to reach out to your [Faculty Liaison Contact](#) in the MacPherson Institute.

