



Collecting Midterm Student Feedback

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

Platform: Microsoft Forms

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 a Microsoft Forms 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 your 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!

The following two survey templates, created with Microsoft Forms, are available to you to copy, modify, and implement in your courses. One template is recommended for small classes (<https://tinyurl.com/MSF-Small>) and the other is recommended for large classes (<https://tinyurl.com/MSF-Large>); 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 template 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 Microsoft Forms

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. Navigate to the template you wish to use. You may need to log-in using your McMaster credentials
 - a. Large class – <https://tinyurl.com/MSF-Large>
 - b. Small class - <https://tinyurl.com/MSF-Small>
3. Select the ‘Duplicate It’ button at the top of the screen
4. Retitle the survey by clicking on the existing title: *Midterm Student Feedback Survey - Template Recommended for Small Classes (Copy)*
 - a. You may simply want to replace ‘*Template Recommended for Small Classes (Copy)*’ with your course code
5. Review the questions. If you wish to customize the survey, click the ‘Add New’ button at the bottom of the screen to add additional questions

6. When you have finished preparing the survey, select the 'Send' button at the top of the screen. Generally, using a [link](#) is the easiest way to share the survey with your students. The link icon looks like this:



Use the 'Copy' button to copy the link to your clipboard. Paste the link in a communication to your students. Let the students know how long the survey will be available.

7. Once the survey date passes, navigate back to the survey link you shared with your students. You may need to log in with your McMaster credentials again
8. At the top of the page, you should see a 'Responses' tab with a number in it indicating how many responses have been received. Click this tab. You may wish to view the results in this window by clicking the 'View Results' button. If you have a larger number of results (>20 responses), you may wish to download the responses to Excel for easier analysis. To do this, simply click the 'Open in Excel' button.
9. 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.