

Improved Scores on End of Course Evaluations

Several of the faculty noted a jump in their end of course evaluation scores after their course projects. For some, it was an unexpected bonus.

Beth Cudney, associate professor of engineering management and systems engineering, has always had teaching evaluations above the campus average, usually 3.1 and 3.2, she said, but since the course redesign, they jumped to a 3.7 or 3.8.

“The students can tell that a lot of thought has gone into the redesigned course,” she said. “I think it’s about really understanding their motivation, how they learn. Making sure that you have an effective approach that doesn’t target just one type of learner, I think, has really resonated well, and they’ve recognized that.”

Nishant Kumar, associate teaching professor of mechanical engineering, said that his teaching evaluations have gone up a half a point in the last four years – from 3.1 and 3.2 to 3.6 and 3.7 -- since he started implementing the educational research projects in his courses.

Jossalyn Larson, assistant teaching professor of English, was pleasantly surprised by the jump in her scores. “My number one ROI that I didn’t even realize existed until I was asked was the bump in my course evaluation scores,” she said. She didn’t anticipate that coming from the students. “I can’t say what caused them to give me that higher score, but there was something about that that made them want to give me a higher score. But they definitely felt connected to me ...” Her scores jumped on average 1.1 points from the mid-2s to more than 3.5.

Nick Libre, assistant teaching professor of civil engineering, notes that his course evaluations have improved over time as has his development of new interventions in the classroom. He also has seen specific positive comments from students on the end of course evaluations about the app that he developed to help students with prerequisite material.

Fiona Nah, professor of business and information systems, did before and after statistical analysis of her course evaluations and noticed a significant change after the first semester. She continued to tweak the course in subsequent semesters, and “we maintained a pretty high teaching evaluation,” she said.

Greg Story, associate professor of physics, has made the list of highest scoring teaching evaluations on campus for a long time. He was aware going in to the project that normally an intervention -- especially one that makes students work harder -- has push-back and often there is a dip in course evaluations. Instead, his already high scores improved, which was very gratifying to him.