

Survey Results: Impacts of Mid-Course Feedback on Course Experience at UBC

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1 Overview

This report summarizes the results of a survey run by the AMS to evaluate the impacts of Mid-Course Feedback (MCF). The survey was circulated to students from mid-November to mid-December 2014. It was designed as part of an ongoing collaboration with UBC's Centre for Teaching, Learning, and Technology (CTLT) to encourage instructors to collect MCF in their courses. Further information and past research on this initiative is available at <http://midterm.teacheval.ubc.ca>. Questions or requests for data can be directed to the AMS Vice-President, Academic and University Affairs at vpacademic@ams.ubc.ca.

The survey investigated whether MCF impacts several aspects of students' course experiences: their perceptions of their instructors, their level of interest and engagement in a course, and their level of stress or anxiety related to a course. The survey was targeted at all UBC students, both those who had and those who had not participated in a course where MCF was collected during Winter Session 2014 Term 1. This allowed for comparison between the course experiences of students who had and who had not experienced MCF. Students in courses where MCF was collected were also asked about various aspects of this process and of their course experience more generally, to compare experiences of courses where MCF was collected in different ways.

The Survey was circulated to students through various channels, including promotion by instructors who had collected MCF and through AMS and Undergraduate Society social media. 144 responses were received. The survey was anonymous, and students were not asked to provide identifying information about themselves or their courses.

2 Limitations

Due to several limitations, results should not be interpreted as statistically significant conclusions about MCF, but as suggestive of some of its broad impacts on students' experiences of their courses and instructors.

- The sample size of respondents was small: out of 144 total respondents, 93 students had participated in MCF and 51 had not.
- UBC Faculties have differing policies on MCF (e.g., they are mandated in the Faculty of Commerce). Given that no demographic or course information was collected, there is no way to determine whether the experiences reported are representative of all courses and Faculties.

3 Results

Conclusions

Survey results suggest the following conclusions about how MCF impacts students' experiences.

Perception of Instructor	Students are most likely to experience a positive impact when instructors collect feedback and then use it to engage in follow-up discussion and action. Students may experience a negative impact if instructors collect feedback but don't follow up on it.
Interest and Engagement	MCF can impact many students' interest in and engagement with a course. This is especially true when instructors use feedback to make immediate improvements to their courses, or to start a dialogue with students which helps them better understand the rationale behind a course's structure and delivery.
Stress or Anxiety	MCF can reduce some students' course-related stress and anxiety, particularly when instructors use feedback to make immediate improvements to their courses, or to start dialogue with students which helps them better understand the rationale behind a course's structure and delivery.

For all of these conclusions, it should also be noted that survey questions were not designed to measure the *degree* of the impact MCF had on students. Results are thus intended to show simply that MCF is one of a range of tools instructors can use to improve students' course experiences.

Recommendations arising from the results

The following recommendations for instructors can be made based on these conclusions:

- Given limited class and instructor time, instructors collecting feedback should devote more time and effort to ensuring their follow up is effective, as opposed to focusing the most time on crafting questions and collecting feedback in class.
- While the way feedback is collected should always be based on individual course and teaching needs, it may be beneficial to save time on the collection process, and thereby reserve more time for follow up, by using or adapting the Mid-Course Feedback Survey Template available for download at <http://midterm.teacheval.ubc.ca/resources/>.

Survey results also suggest the following recommendations for the AMS:

- The AMS should continue to engage instructors to encourage the use of MCF; messaging should emphasize the importance of effectively leveraging MCF as a tool for follow up pieces like engaging students in dialogue about a course and making changes to a course based on feedback.
- In cases where it fits their needs, the AMS should ensure instructors are aware of the Survey Template as a tool to expedite the process of collecting MCF.