

2017 Fall Pilot on Improving Response Rates in Course Surveys

Does using in-class time to complete end-of-course surveys improve response rates?

Yes.

Comparing pilot course sections (n=49) to all other course sections (n=735)

2017 Fall Semester Pilot Response Rate	74.46%
2017 Fall Semester non-Pilot Response Rate	39%

Does using in-class time to complete end-of-course surveys improve response rates for the same faculty from fall to fall?

Yes.

Comparing a subset of pilot courses to previous fall course sections by the same faculty (n=17 faculty)

2017 Fall Semester Pilot Response Rate	76.3%
2016 Fall Semester "control" Response Rate	50.8%

Of the 24 volunteers who agreed to participate in the pilot project, 17 faculty members were included in an analysis to determine if response rates were significantly higher when surveys were completed during class time rather than in the traditional out-of-class online format. Those who were omitted from the analysis did not have comparable response rate data to support a direct comparison between their fall 2017 pilot classes and "control" courses from the fall of 2016. Those who devoted class time to allow students to complete the course survey saw significantly greater response rates than in their previous fall semesters. Among these 17 faculty members, the results of a repeated measures ANOVA indicated that mean response proportions for their classes in the fall of 2016 ($M = 50.8\%$, $SD = 13.6$) were significantly lower than their 2017 fall pilot project classes ($M = 76.3\%$, $SD = 15.6$), $F(1, 16) = 30.14$, $p < .001$, $\eta^2 = .65$. On average, faculty members in the pilot group saw an increase of over 25% in their response rates when surveys were completed in class.

Additional questions asked of the data

Do more students add open-ended comments when in-class time is given to complete end-of-course surveys?

Yes, a little.

Comparing a subset of pilot course sections to previous fall course sections by the same faculty (n=23 course sections)

2017 Fall Semester Pilot Responses with No Comments	21.29% have no comments
2016 Fall Semester “control” Responses with No Comments	24.68% have no comments

Does the mean rating change when response rates increase?

No. There is no significant difference.

Comparing a subset of pilot course sections to previous fall course sections by the same faculty (n=23 course sections)

Question	Fall 2016 (control) mean (stdev)	Fall 2017 (pilot) mean (stdev)
“Overall I rate this course as”	4.28 (.37)	4.21 (.44)
“Overall I rate this instructor as”	4.40 (.51)	4.44 (.44)
“Overall in this course I learned”	4.41 (.32)	4.32 (.36)

Performing an item analysis on a de-identified data set we examined the mean ratings of the three “overall” questions noted in the table above. We identified 23 pilot project participants who had taught a section of a particular course in both survey windows. The identity of the course and the instructors was not included in the dataset or any analyses. As indicated above, the ratings received between semesters did not themselves differ significantly, and a repeated-measures ANOVA indicated no overall difference between ratings before and after the manipulation, $F(1, 20) = 1.18$, $p = .29$, $\eta^2 = .05$. Course survey ratings may have differed in ways that were undetectable by this analysis. The pilot survey group generally had very high ratings on the selected questions, although this tends to be the case university-wide.