



FACULTY CENTER FOR IGNATIAN PEDAGOGY

Promoting Excellence in Teaching and Learning

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COURSE EVALUATIONS: ONLINE VS. PAPER

With the advent of more online courses and the ubiquitous nature of online resources, many universities are investigating a move to online course evaluations. Some institutions have complained that the return rate for online evaluations falls short of that for traditional evaluations with the online average of 50% compared with a 75%-85% for paper evaluations (Kulik, 2009). Many of the studies that cite low response rates are quoting statistics from 1998 and the early 2000s. More recent polls indicate an increased awareness of the need to improve return rates and outline strategies for getting students to comply (Cornell University, 2010).

The value of having electronic results of course evaluation data adds to the appeal of collecting comments online. Institutions planning to use the data for comparison to other surveys (as the National Survey of Student Satisfaction, NSSE) can provide useful information about progress toward goals of the strategic plan, for example. Additionally, research suggests that students who complete an online evaluation are more likely to include substantive comments that include specific reasons for their judgment (Donovan, 2010). While the return rate may be lower, the quality and usefulness of responses improves.

Institutions that have gone to online course evaluations (SUNY, Cornell) have shared suggestions for increasing student participation in the online course evaluation process. The most important suggestion is articulating to students the value of course evaluations and an explanation of how the data supplied are used by the faculty member, department, and institution. When students see the results of their evaluations in action, they are more likely to contribute to the process. Northwestern University boosted their online return rate from 50% to 73% when they provided access to all course ratings to any student who submitted evaluations for all semester courses (Kulik).

Inviting students to bring computers and complete the evaluation during class can also boost rates. Having the evaluation available for mobile delivery and response would also encourage participation. Posting reminders online (perhaps also on the electronic boards on campus) would remind students evaluations are open. Providing instructions for accessing the online system and pushing the link to the surveys can also encourage student participation. For online courses, one FCIP staff member suggested having faculty provide the link to the evaluation in the required, live, online session and then provide time for students to complete the survey during online class time.

As Loyola moves into the debate regarding online vs. traditional course evaluations, we need to be mindful of the potential that the online format can offer. One advantage to any change in course evaluations is the reconsideration not just of the delivery method but of the content on the evaluation itself: Do the questions adequately reflect what we want to know? Is the information we are collecting useful to help us move forward? The FCIP and IR are happy to address any questions your department might have on evaluation formats.

Cornell University Center for Teaching Excellence (2010). "Increase response of online evaluations." <http://www.cte.cornell.edu/faculty/onlineevals.html>

Donovan, J. Mader, C. Shinsky, J. (2007). "Constructive student feedback: Online vs. traditional course evaluations." *Journal of Interactive Online Learning* 5(3): 283-296.

Kulik, J. (2009). "Response rates in online teaching evaluation systems." University of Michigan. <http://www.umich.edu/~eande/tq/ResponseRates.pdf>

SUNY Orange Institutional Research. "Strategies to increase response rate of online course evaluations." <http://www.sunyorange.edu/ir/olcourseeval/strategies.shtml>

THE FLIPPED CLASSROOM

The Faculty Center for Ignatian Pedagogy is always looking for strategies and techniques to help create more engaged learning experiences for Loyola students. A technique we are frequently hearing about is instructors "flipping" their course structure so that traditional didactic lecture material is made available to students, usually online through a recording or a podcast, before the face-to-face class time. Class time can then be used for more interactive activities such as question-and-answer periods, group work, or other one-on-one time between the instructor and student.

Several instructors at LUC have adapted this style of teaching and felt that students were more prepared when they came to class, and it gave the instructor the time necessary to address questions or further explain concepts that students may not have understood based on the lecture alone. Instructors reported that they and the students felt more satisfied with the flipped classroom style of teaching than with the traditional model. While instructors must invest some time in recording materials ahead of time, most feel that the investment is well worth the effort.

If you are interested in learning more about the flipped classroom, you may find this online article of interest: <http://www.thedailyriff.com/articles/the-flipped-class-conversation-689.php>.

The staff of the Faculty Center are also available to help you explore flipping for upcoming classes. Contact us at facultycenter@luc.edu. FCIP has a variety of tools available that can help you re-envision the way you are teaching.

<http://luc.edu/facultycenter>

TASKSTREAM - PART 2

By Ashley Kehoe, ePortfolio Program Manager, Center for Experiential Learning

This is the second of a three-part series about TaskStream, Loyola's new ePortfolio system.

The ePortfolio Program at Loyola University Chicago is designed to support students, faculty, and staff in the process of creating dynamic, engaging ePortfolios as a tool for teaching, learning, reflection, transformation, and assessment. Loyola has been innovative in its approach to implementing ePortfolios – not only as a teaching and learning strategy, but also as a valuable professional development tool for students. In addition to presenting the opportunity for authentic, actionable assessment and engaging pedagogy, ePortfolios also empower students to create a high-impact product that they can share with prospective employers, graduate school admissions offices, and/or professional networks.

The value of ePortfolios for students is that they provide a strategy for effectively demonstrating and sharing skills, abilities, and experiences. From an educational perspective, the process of building an ePortfolio requires students to make the connection between their academic work and the practical implications of that work when they graduate. ePortfolios can bring the learning process to life by reinforcing the value of what is being learned, as they provide a real-world application for academic work. Assignments can be framed less as requirements and more as opportunities to demonstrate proficiency, which is of value to students when engaging in an employment search or admissions process. Creating an ePortfolio also facilitates integrative and reflective learning, which can enhance students' abilities to articulate the value of their education and the connections among academic and co-curricular experiences. A student who has created an ePortfolio may have an advantage in an interview, for example, because in the process of building an ePortfolio, that student would have reflected deeply and critically on his or her skills, abilities, accomplishments, and experiences. As undergraduate Loyola business student Michael C. Zacher describes, ePortfolios are "... another tangible step towards bridging the gap between academics, and actually entering into the career world."

Faculty and staff at Loyola are welcome and encouraged to build their own professional ePortfolios as a way to actively understand the process and the impact ePortfolios can have. Resources are available at www.luc.edu/eportfolio to guide faculty and staff through the process of creating a professional ePortfolio, which is a key first step to supporting students in their academic and professional development.

Upcoming Events

Focus on Teaching and Learning
Thursday, August 16, 2012

Summer Online Teaching Certificate
Starting Mid-September

Register online at www.luc.edu/fcip/register

MICROSOFT OFFICE 2010

The migration to Windows 7 is underway at Loyola. Along with the new Windows 7 expect to see Microsoft Office 2010. Office 2010 includes updated versions of Word, Power Point, Excel, Access, and Publisher. The basic functions haven't changed for any of these programs but there are some great new features that will make using and learning them fun and easy.

It may look a little different to begin with but all of the programs in Office 2010 allow you to create a customizable tool ribbon. The customized ribbon can have as many or as few of the tools. Add the tools you use most often to create a comfortable work environment.

Grab the attention of your students with pictures. Adding pictures to your Word documents, Power Points presentations, and Excel spreadsheets is easy. The built-in screenshot tool can easily capture any image from your desktop in seconds. You just click on the screenshot tool then select the area you want to capture. Your picture is then automatically inserted into your document.

Office 2010 also has tools to edit your photos once they are inserted into to a document. You no longer need expertise with photo editing software like Photoshop. Easily remove the background from any picture with a click of a button. Create silhouettes or place yourself in a different background. There are also artistic effects that you can apply to make your pictures look like a pencil sketch or any of the other 23 effects available. Complete a unique look by adding one of the 28 different picture styles that allow you to customize your photos with different frame shapes and borders.

In addition to the photo editing capabilities more SmartArt has been added in Office 2010. Use one of the 130 SmartArt templates to easily create flow charts, diagrams, and timelines for your documents and presentations. Select a SmartArt template and fill in the blanks.

Enhance your Power Point presentations with video. The insert video tool allows you to copy and paste embed code from YouTube videos directly into your presentation. Remember you need internet access to play the videos during class. Or record your presentation as a video. You can now record your entire slideshow as a Windows Media Movie and share it on Ignation or YouTube with your class.

Office 2010 also lets you collaborate on documents with colleagues by sending your files to the cloud. Microsoft's Skydrive provides an online version of Office 2010 for you to edit and share your documents online.

You can find more information about Windows 7 and Office 2010 visit http://www.luc.edu/its/microsoftmigration/migration_windows.shtml.



Example photo edited in Microsoft Word 2010