

Recommendations for Administering Online Instructor Evaluation Questionnaires¹

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Since going to an online Instructor Evaluation Questionnaire (IEQ) format in 2008-2009, response rates have remained in the 70 percent range.

While there is no definitive research-based set of guidelines for “best practices” for administering online IEQs, there is empirical evidence about *effective* practices, though the *most effective* practices for ensuring high response rates may NOT be feasible, desirable, or judged to be ethical, such as

- withholding grades;
- mandates (i.e., requiring students to provide “proof” of completion);
- incentives (i.e., providing extra credit / course credit; bringing a notecard to the final; faculty providing incentives and rewards, including food or other treats); or
- publication of faculty IEQs.

Penn State’s Schreyer Institute for Teaching Excellence undertook a study of those faculty members who received at least a 70 percent response rate and identified nine recommendations that have received broad recognition (*see below*). Many institutions have established guidelines for good practices they deem appropriate and feasible in their local context.

Penn State’s Schreyer Institute of Teaching Excellence

Recommended Faculty Strategies for Encouraging Students to Complete Evaluations (*adapted*)

1. Mention improvements made to the course in response to IEQs
2. Guide students about how to write helpful feedback
3. Build rapport with students throughout the semester
4. Create a culture of feedback in the course (e.g., collect other types of feedback during the semester)
5. Reserve a room or a block of time when students can complete the IEQs
6. Provide reminders when the IEQs are active
7. Make clear that you value student feedback
8. Make sure students are aware of IEQs
9. Explain the IEQ process to students

<http://www.schreyerinstitute.psu.edu/increasesrteresprate>

Selected references

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¹ * This information has been compiled by Leslie Ortquist-Ahrens, Judith Weckman and Clara Chapman. FSC extends our appreciation to them for helping us think through these important issues.