

Students' Input into the Evaluation of their Educational Experience

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Issues to be discussed in the presentation

- ❑ The students' perspective as unique and necessary input
- ❑ Relationship between students and professors
- ❑ Different kinds of students' input
- ❑ Ways of securing a reliable input and evaluating its validity
- ❑ Confidentiality, anonymity, etc.
- ❑ Respecting student inputs and dealing w/ students' complaints as separate issues
- ❑ Students' input to external evaluation

The students' perspective as unique and necessary input

- ❑ Students are recognized as active members of academic community
- ❑ Students are the beneficiaries of higher education
- ❑ The standards for institutional quality assurance include many aspects concerning students:
 - ❑ Student progression and success rates
 - ❑ Students' satisfaction w/ their programmes
 - ❑ Effectiveness of teachers
 - ❑ Employability of graduates

Students' input is a necessary
feedback



Relationship between students and professors

- ❑ Traditional perception of roles is still an impediment to achieving full respect of students' complaints
- ❑ Some professors are sceptic towards the idea of being evaluated by students
- ❑ Some professors fear the changes that will result from evaluation
- ❑ A significant number of students lack the initiative to point out problems
 - ❑ fear of being discriminated on the grounds of their opinion
 - ❑ Are not convinced their reaction will result in positive change

Different kinds of students' input

- ❑ Feedback at different levels:
 - ❑ Feedback at the programme level- evaluating complete student experience – long term, cycles
 - ❑ Feedback at the level of each course – medium term, one year
 - ❑ Feedback at the level of each course short term, day- to- day improvement

Ways of obtaining different kinds of feedback (1)

- Meeting with students
 - How have the students been appointed for this meeting? Are they true representatives?
 - Is it well designed (methods)? Do the questions cover all aspects of quality? Do students get to point out additional issues
- Questionnaire

Ways of obtaining different kinds of feedback (2)

- Student-prepared reports
- Asking graduates to comment on their experience
- Including students in different boards and teams e.g. teams for curriculum development etc.
- Who prepared the report? Are those persons competent? How were they appointed to that duty
- Is this information outdated?
- What is the ratio of students to other staff members?

Different kinds of students' input-present situation (1)

- ❑ Feedback at the programme level-
 - ❑ Office for quality promotion- programme evaluation from the students' perspective- a questionnaire
- ❑ Feedback at the level of each course- numerous attempts - questionnaires
 - ❑ most of them not carefully designed
 - ❑ lack of uniformity
 - ❑ questions sometimes ambiguously set

Different kinds of students' input-present situation (2)

- ❑ Feedback at the level of each course

- ❑ Some suggestions:

- ❑ Assessing the knowledge of students at the beginning and at the end of each lecture- the efficiency of the lecture

- ❑ Questionnaire immediately after each lecture/seminar as a part of the lecture

Ways of securing a reliable input and evaluating its validity

- Attend to the form of input appropriate to what has been judged
- Careful design of questionnaires if applied
- Number of students who turn out for the questionnaire
- Careful timing
- Input obtained should always result in improvement
- Number of students included in different boards should be sufficient to make an impact

Confidentiality, anonymity, etc.

- ❑ Anonymity should be provided whenever required
- ❑ Anonymity: students are more willing to voice in opinions
 - ❑ the negative aspect: some may approach the problem with less responsibility

Respecting student inputs and dealing w/ students' complaints as separate issues

- ❑ Students' input as a part of internal evaluation
- ❑ Considering students' input when making changes, and v.v.: students' opinion as initiative to make changes
- ❑ Feedback at the level of each course and at lecture level should be widespread, institutional and used to make positive day-to-day changes
- ❑ Student representatives at faculty meetings: solving current problems
- ❑ Student members of university Senate- involvement of students in decision-making

Students' input to external evaluation

- ❑ Students' views as a part of external evaluation process- end of each cycle
- ❑ Suggestions for curriculum modification should be highly influenced by students' views
- ❑ End of one cycle is the beginning of another- the methods used to obtain students' opinion should also be reconsidered.

Conclusions

- ❑ Students' input is crucial feedback for quality assurance
- ❑ There should be a wide spectrum of feedback mechanisms which assure continuous improvement
- ❑ Each attempt to obtain students' opinion should be carefully designed so that information provided is reliable
- ❑ Students' anonymity should be provided whenever it is evident that it would benefit the reliability of information and enhance the turnout
- ❑ Students are active and equal members of the academic community and their problems should be respected as problems of the university. Also, they should be actively involved in decision making.
- ❑ Periodic external evaluation will include students' review of programmes, which should be considered in curriculum revision

Thank you!