

How Do Instructors at Lehigh Increase Response Rates for Course Evaluations?
Key Findings from Spring 2022 Survey

After the Spring 2022 semester, OIRSA asked faculty at Lehigh University what, if anything, did they do to encourage students to participate in course evaluations. Our analyses of the responses revealed that instructors who used *any* strategy had on average a 22.5% higher response rate than those who reported that they did nothing to encourage students to complete evaluations.

When we compared different approaches and combinations of strategies, we found that:

- Providing extra time during class to participate resulted in a 20.3% increase in response rates
- Reminding students to participate in evaluations resulted in an additional 6.7% increase
- Emphasizing the confidentiality and explaining the use of the evaluation data also increased participation
- The use of collective incentives (small extra course credits or dropping homework for the entire class when a certain response rate threshold was met) to motivate students also produced substantial gains.

These effects were independent of class size, and our sample of instructors who participated in the survey did not differ notably from the entirety of evaluated spring term courses with regard to teaching mode (online/in person), class size, instructor type (teaching assistant/principal instructor) and average response rate.

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