

Slide 1:

Introduction.

- Hello, fellow students. I'm _____. I'm a 3rd year, Public Health major at UC Merced.
- I am one of the interns with the SATAL Program, which stands for students assessing teaching and learning. The presentation you are about to watch is the result of a research project entitled "Students helping students provide valuable feedback on course evaluations"
- We put together this short video with the purpose of helping you provide valuable feedback on course evaluations.

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The outcome of this presentation and by "outcome", we mean what you'll be able to do at the end of this presentation is:

- You'll be able to provide valuable feedback to your instructor on mid or final course evaluations.

We'll end this presentation with an activity to give you a chance to practice what you learn today.

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As students, we're requested to provide feedback to our instructors in the form of "course evaluations" at the end of the semester and sometimes in the middle.

- The purpose of the course evaluation is to inform instructors what is working and what is not working, so they can make adjustments to their course to help us succeed.
- New: "course feedback is like the paddles to a boat". If you're out on a boat and you let go of the paddles, the boat is going to go depending on the current. Now that may feel a little bit rocky depending on what the current is. Your feedback will move the course in the right direction and help you engage and achieve the outcomes for the course."

Remember: course learning outcomes are what you are expected to know, do and value at the end of the course.

- In Course evaluations, we are often just asked to rate instruction on a scale. However, some course evaluations also include open-ended questions.
- This is what this presentation is focusing on: providing feedback on these open-ended questions so that your input is valuable, useful, and informs teaching and planning for the class.

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- What are the benefits of completing a course evaluation?
 - 1) Our detailed feedback is valuable insight to what the instructor can do to improve our learning experience

- 2) It is an opportunity to reflect on our own engagement in the course and connect with our instructors and vice versa.
 - 3) We contribute to the university learning environment as a whole.
- This is why it is essential that we know how to leave useful feedback to our instructors.

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What do you think about the following comment: "This class is too early". In your view, is this feedback helpful? (*Pause*)

- The feedback isn't related to teaching or learning.
- It does not offer a solution or a suggestion
- The class schedule is not under the instructor's control
- The comment doesn't refer to a course learning outcome. The instructor doesn't know whether you are able to analyze a reading for a writing class or create a prototype for an engineering class.

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- Now, let's look at a second example which offers more actionable information, "Having more group work in class will keep me more alert in this early class." See how it suggests an activity and the reason this activity would be helpful to the student?

Slide 7: (rubric)

Next, let's consider the items in this rubric. Feel free to print it for easy access.

- The rubric is a guide /listing some criteria on how to provide valuable feedback on course evaluations/ and examples for you to follow /to communicate your learning experience in the course.
- In particular, the rubric elaborates on what information makes a comment /highly useful, somewhat useful or not useful for instructor to act on.

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- Instructors value all comments/ but value them even more /when they see how it informs their teaching and your learning in the course. Feedback is valuable and useful when

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- You offer commentary on attributes of the learning environment. What is it about the class that makes you learn and care about your learning?

For e.g., "I find the instructor very caring and that motivates me/ to try harder."

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- 2. When you focus on description/ rather than judgment. Comments should be...
 - Non-judgmental

- Descriptive
- Specific

For instance, "Now I am more confident in my work. I know what I'm doing well/ upon receiving prompt feedback from my instructor."

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- 3. When you attribute positive or constructive feedback to specific aspects of the course /and use examples that support your answer to the question.

Here is an example: " I now know how to draft a research paper correctly /and how to follow the MLA format/ based on the in-class peer review session."

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- 4. When you focus on the course and the quality of instruction given /by providing specific information about the activities which helped you achieve the course learning outcomes.

For e.g., "Group discussions led me to compose an argument and find ways of integrating evidence for the papers"

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- 5. When you offer suggestions that are relevant and plausible to the course or instruction, and why you think they would help your learning.

For e.g., "More journal writings or just open-ended writing assignments would help us analyze readings and develop a topic"

Here's an opportunity to apply the information we just went over. Let's practice by responding to these three multiple choice questions.

- Remember: Highly useful comments /inform teaching and examine learning by being specific and offering examples.

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Q1. How would you describe your writing ability now compared to the beginning of the semester?

In your view, which is the most useful comment:

- a. My writing ability has improved considerably. Now I can organize my paragraphs better to support my thesis.
- b. My writing ability has improved due to applying the writing process.
- c. My writing ability has improved considerably. (pause)

If you selected Option A you chose the most appropriate feedback as the most valuable comments are specific and offer an example. They refer to the activities that lead to the achievement of the course learning outcomes.

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- Q2. Identify and evaluate aspects of this course that have been especially helpful to you.
- a. The portfolio activity should include better instructions. I had to redo some assignments.
 - b. The portfolio took time out off other class assignments.
 - c. The portfolio was a waste of my time.
- The most useful feedback focuses on the course and quality of instruction. The correct answer is option A. This option also gives positive feedback about a specific aspect of the course,

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- Q3. Describe aspects of this course that you would change, if you had the opportunity.
- a. We don't apply the readings we are asked to do for the class. I wish we were quizzed on them, so everybody would read them.
 - b. I don't do the readings because I don't get credit for doing them
 - c. The readings are too long. Some of us don't do them.

Option A offers a reasonable suggestion and explains why it might be helpful.

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Now after this brief video, we hope you will provide valuable and useful feedback on your next course evaluations. By completing the final course evaluations, you'll contribute to the school learning environment as a whole.

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Feel free to share your input about this presentation at satal@ucmerced.edu