

Student Feedback

- Evaluations are anxiety-inducing, not least because of all the implicit biases that we know disproportionately impact women and faculty of color
- Sense of vulnerability, whether on the tenure track or contingent.
- How to distinguish between constructive and unconstructive feedback?
- It's easy to be distracted by the one student who says you're terrible, even if the others say you're great.
- And if a class legitimately doesn't go well, how to address that with one's colleagues, especially in terms of formal review processes.
- FEAR
- Good measure of how we react to student evaluations: complaints/wound-licking tends to be all over Facebook
- Sometimes student "evaluations" come out through the rumor mill rather than formal, written evaluations
 - Solution: go talk to the conductors, the applied faculty, and ask how you can integrate what they do into your classroom - essentially to curry favor with them, but also to head off the rumor mill
- Student-as-customer mentality plays a big role in both how we respond to students and how administrators factor student evaluations into reviews
- Many of us make concessions that we think makes our teaching worse, but that guarantee positive student responses
- So even when we know lecture isn't as effective as active learning in helping students learn, they often prefer lecture and will ding us on evals if they think we're not lecturing enough
- One step to take is to solicit feedback at the midterm point, especially using your own questions rather than the standard evaluation forms that the institution requires.
- Sometimes students are afraid to be candid on midterm evals because they think there will be grade repercussions. But end-of-semester evaluations, grades are already in, they feel less vulnerable and are willing to be more candid.
- It's worth telling students exactly how important evaluations are, letting them know what the stakes are.
- Louis has an "anonymous anytime feedback" Google form set up so that students can declare immediately if they'd like to see a change, or if something happened in class that was either very positive or very negative
- You can also report back to students about what their midterm feedback showed, and ideally students will disagree about what they want to see in your teaching, which you can use to convince them that there isn't a single "right" way to do things, and you're going to have to split the difference in terms of appeasing various factions.
- If your institution uses end-of-semester evaluations in formal review processes, you might think about petitioning your institution to solicit separate feedback, disconnected from specific classes, at review times - so that students who've worked with you *in the past* can evaluate you, but they'll have had time to reflect on their experiences.
- It's super important to be transparent with our students about why we're doing what we're doing. Basically giving them insight into our teaching philosophy can facilitate tolerance of riskier teaching methods, where "risk" is defined as "might upset students even if it's good for them"
- It can be a good idea to give students a "win" - to let them decide a change to the class after it's well underway, to give in once or twice when they ask for less work or for a deadline to be moved.
- How do you deal with the visceral experience of looking at evals?
 - Wine
 - Ice Cream

- Think about “how will this help me become a better teacher” rather than “what am I doing wrong”
- Have someone else look through the evals for you and reorder the evals so that all the negatives aren’t together, or to summarize what THEY notice. Maybe ask someone in your teaching and learning center to pull out the patterns or to try to read between the lines on your behalf.

Professional Development

- Panel on new technology that might be useful in teaching music history (editor’s note: we had something like this at last year’s AMS, but it should probably be an annual offering!)
- A list of good webinars or TED talks that are available online.
- Lists of pedagogy-oriented books to read. Or, pedagogues from other fields to lead workshops/teaching “masterclasses.”
- Mentoring! Training for mentoring grad students and undergrads
- Public-facing assignments and civic engagement
- Workshops/spaces that offer hands-on development
- Grant/fellowship opportunities - applying, figuring out what’s there
- We already do resume-improvement workshops. What about assignments, syllabi, cover letters - drop-in hours to meet with volunteers who are willing to peer-review that stuff on the spot.
- How to network to generate interdisciplinary/team projects
- Going after funding, even if it’s outside of your wheelhouse
- Even research-oriented abstracts could be encouraged to acknowledge the pedagogical implications of the presentation
- Panel on whole-class projects (as opposed to lots of small projects)
- Bringing together music educators, test administration companies, state testing boards to determine the relationship between undergrad music history curricula and student success on state licensure exams
- Connecting with high school educators. What are our students being prepared to do? What can we reasonably expect of them in our classes?
- Student panels? That could be problematic.
- Or recent graduates who feel more comfortable reflecting on their experiences without any situational power issues.
- Have students submit written responses to some questions about their experiences in their programs, publish the responses, then have a panel devoted to discussing the student feedback
- Connecting research and teaching to departmental/institutional strategic plans
- Developing local/regional partnerships (local archives, institutions) for teaching and research
- Panel on working with staff on advising (and also recruiting, and maybe even a sub-panel on the ethics of recruiting)
- Getting international panels to present on musicological perspectives outside of the US.