



ST. ELIZABETH UNIVERSITY OF HEALTH AND SOCIAL WORK, BRATISLAVA

THE CONCEPT OF STUDENT ASSESSMENT OF TEACHING

Home

The assessment of teaching by students at Slovak universities is carried out according to Act No. 131/2002 Coll. on Higher Education and on Amendments and Supplements to Certain Acts § 70 (1) (h), which states the possibility for students to express their opinion on the quality of teaching and teachers at least once a year in the form of an anonymous questionnaire.

Ensuring that students assess their learning is a professionally very demanding and responsible task. Although there is a long tradition of doing so in some countries, such as the USA, there is still a lively debate in professional and scientific circles about the fundamental issues surrounding student assessment of teaching. A number of renowned experts and academic officials reject student evaluations of teaching altogether. Their most common objections are that students are not competent to evaluate their teachers, that student evaluations of teaching encourage mediocrity, that they restrict academic freedom in universities, denigrate teachers, and contribute to the deterioration of relationships in the academic environment. One critic of student evaluations of teaching points out that these evaluations do not contribute to increasing student influence and power, but rather promote the influence and power of bureaucrats.

But even those who support and put student evaluations of teaching into practice recognize the complexity of the issue and encourage caution in the use of these evaluations. For example, a guide to evaluating teaching effectiveness at a major American university where teaching evaluations are carried out stresses that it is 'only a crude instrument and its results are not to be regarded as very reliable. It should be borne in mind that it is only one source of data for the evaluation of teaching'. The author of the Czech manual for the evaluation of teaching by students, in turn, stresses that "the basis for summative evaluation of

departments, subjects and teachers should not be too detailed for global decision-making in the faculty, as this brings risks for teachers. People who make strategic decisions may form a distorted view of some teachers based on irrelevant details.

Thus, if student evaluation of teaching is to take place at our college, it is imperative that all professional and ethical principles regarding primary data collection, processing, evaluation, interpretation, and practical use are adhered to.

The submitted proposal was developed on the basis of previous knowledge and experience from the evaluation of teaching by students at our university, at other Slovak universities, at foreign, especially American universities and knowledge from domestic and foreign scientific studies devoted to the topic.

The present proposal includes the objectives and principles of student evaluation of teaching, organisational arrangements and a questionnaire to collect primary empirical data.

1. Objective and principles

The purpose of the Student Assessment of Teaching Survey is to obtain empirical data characterizing students' ratings of important aspects of teaching and ratings related to their professional growth. This is data that specifically characterizes the evaluation of individual courses. In practice, the results of a student assessment of teaching survey can serve:

- individual teachers for self-reflection and optimization of their work,
- school managers in evaluating and guiding staff, in other management, organisational and conceptual work and, in some cases, in deciding on staffing issues relating to teachers' time and pay.

Principles

1. Student evaluations of teaching must never be the only stand-alone basis for evaluating teaching effectiveness. Data obtained from student evaluations must be interpreted in conjunction with data obtained from other methods of evaluation, specifically data from colleagues, supervisors, independent experts (peer evaluation), and data from the teacher's self-evaluation.
2. Students should not be asked questions that they cannot answer correctly. For example, students should not be asked to judge whether the materials used in teaching are up-to-date, or the extent to which the teacher knows the subject he or she is teaching. On the other hand, students should be asked to comment on such things as the teacher's ability to communicate with students, the teacher's ethical and

professional conduct, the teacher's efforts to stimulate student interest, or the teacher's adherence to the time allotted for instruction.

3. Ensuring student anonymity. It is important to ensure that no one can in any way identify students with their assessments. Otherwise, objective and unbiased answers are unlikely to be obtained.
4. To ensure the credibility of the assessment, it is necessary to obtain evaluations from at least 75% of the students enrolled in the course. If students are divided into groups, it is usually from more than one group.
5. The form for the evaluation of teaching by students should include open questions.
6. Individual teacher evaluation data shall be provided to those teachers and to designated school administrators. They shall not otherwise be disclosed. Data without individual identification of the teachers concerned may also be provided for comparison to external requesters, for example from another school site.
7. Department heads monitor student evaluations of individual teachers and provide consultation or other assistance to teachers as needed.
8. If the results of the evaluation are to be used to make personnel decisions, evaluations must be obtained for multiple semesters and in multiple courses taught by the teacher.
9. It is important that students have feedback that their assessments are not based on them, but are taken seriously by teachers and school leaders and used in their work.

2. Organisation of the evaluation of teaching by students

The field collection of primary empirical data by means of a questionnaire, their processing, evaluation and archiving are provided by coordinators who are designated for this activity at the individual basic organizational units of the school providing teaching, i.e. at the departments, detached workplaces, institutes (hereafter referred to as workplaces). The coordinators are appointed by the Rector of the St. Elizabeth University of Health and Social Work in Bratislava on the proposal of the heads of the departments from among the teaching staff working at these departments.

The field collection of primary empirical data is done using a questionnaire after the end of the teaching in a given semester. In addition, the head of the department may suggest conducting further student evaluation in other ways, for example, if he/she wants to investigate certain facts in more detail. He/she shall submit his/her proposal to the relevant Vice-Chancellor for Teaching.

The coordinator is responsible for ensuring anonymity and for following all professional and ethical rules in the collection, processing, evaluation and archiving of primary empirical data.

Within three weeks of the completion of the field collection of primary data, the coordinator will submit the evaluation of the student assessment to the head of the relevant department. The coordinator shall provide each teaching staff member with the results of his/her teaching evaluation. In the event that the Head of Department also teaches in the department, the Coordinator shall also forward the evaluation of the student evaluation for the Head of Department to the appropriate Vice-Provost for Instructional Activities.

Individual teaching staff members confront the results of student evaluations of their teaching with their own knowledge, experience and intentions and can use these results to further improve their work. Individual teaching staff may consult the results of assessments with experienced colleagues or other professionals to optimise their own teaching.

The Head of Department monitors the results of the evaluation of teaching by students and confronts them with his/her knowledge, experience and intentions, in particular with the results of evaluations of teaching staff carried out by other methods, i.e. with data from his/her own evaluations of teaching staff under his/her supervision, with data from colleagues of teaching staff being evaluated, with evaluations from independent experts (peer evaluation) and with data from self-assessments carried out by the teaching staff concerned.

The head of the department uses the results of student evaluations in his/her management and conceptual activities, in the guidance of teaching staff, in the organisation of teaching, etc. Where necessary, he/she shall cooperate with the relevant Vice-Rector for Teaching, for example when serious deficiencies are identified which would require further in-depth examination or when the results of student teaching evaluations should be used to make decisions on staffing issues.

The Head of Department informs students of the use of the results of student evaluations of teaching.

The Vice-Chancellor for Teaching coordinates the evaluation of teaching by students in the region. He/she monitors the results of student evaluations of the teaching of leaders in the region and contrasts them with his/her own knowledge, experience and intentions, and specifically with the results of evaluations carried out by other methods. Where appropriate, it shall request evaluations of selected teaching staff from the heads of department.

The Vice Provost for Instruction shall produce an annual summary report of student evaluations of teaching in the region. Where necessary, he/she organises further in-depth reviews of teaching effectiveness in selected departments. In doing so, he/she shall cooperate with the Faculty of Health and Social Work in Bratislava (hereinafter referred to as the Commission).

The Commission shall be appointed by the Rector of the St. Elizabeth's University of Health and Social Work in Bratislava. The Commission is composed of three members and consists of renowned scientific and pedagogical staff of the School.

Dear Student,

We would like to ask you to fill in this questionnaire regarding your evaluation of teaching at our university. The assessment of teaching by students is carried out at Slovak universities according to Act No. 131/2002 Coll. on Higher Education and on Amendments and Supplements to Certain Acts, which states in § 70 (1) (h) that students have the opportunity to express their opinion on the quality of teaching and teachers at least once a year in the form of an anonymous questionnaire. The knowledge gained from student evaluations of teaching is one source of information in the overall assessment of teaching effectiveness.

The questionnaire is anonymous. The Student Assessment Coordinator who has submitted this questionnaire to you will ensure that you complete it in such a way that no one can identify you in any way with the assessment you give in the questionnaire. The data will be statistically processed and the coordinator will ensure that all professional and ethical rules are followed in the collection, processing and evaluation of the data. The results of your evaluation will be shared with the individual teachers whose teaching has been assessed and designated school leaders. You will be informed about the practical use of the results of your assessments by your Head of Department, or a detached unit, institute of our School.

We trust that you will give us an open and truthful answer to each question.

Thank you for your understanding and cooperation.

Department or detached workplace (name, location):	Subject No. 1 (title):	Subject No. 2 (title):	Subject No. 3 (title):	Subject No. 4 (title):
Degree of study Bc. <input type="checkbox"/> Mgr. <input type="checkbox"/> Year: 1. <input type="checkbox"/> 2.				

<input type="checkbox"/> 3. <input type="checkbox"/> Form of study: full-time <input type="checkbox"/> external <input type="checkbox"/>		Name of the teacher:	Name of the teacher:	Name of the teacher:	Name of the teacher:
P.no.	Question	Answer	Answer	Answer	Answer
1.	At the beginning of the semester, the lecturer familiarised you with the course information sheet, explained clearly the aims and content of the course, what literature you would need and how you will be evaluated.	1 2 3 4 N	1 2 3 4 N	1 2 3 4 N	1 2 3 4 N
2.	The teacher explained the material clearly and stimulated students' interest in the subject.	1 2 3 4 N	1 2 3 4 N	1 2 3 4 N	1 2 3 4 N
3.	The lecturer communicated appropriately with the students and had a professional approach to the students.	1 2 3 4 N	1 2 3 4 N	1 2 3 4 N	1 2 3 4 N
4.	The teacher encouraged discussion during the lesson and guided the discussion appropriately.	1 2 3 4 N	1 2 3 4 N	1 2 3 4 N	1 2 3 4 N
5.	The teacher answered the students' questions appropriately	1 2 3 4 N	1 2 3 4 N	1 2 3 4 N	1 2 3 4 N
6	The lecturer showed interest in students' problems related to the subject, willingly provided explanations (when asked, e.g. discussed with them in tutorials, via e-mail communication).	1 2 3 4 N	1 2 3 4 N	1 2 3 4 N	1 2 3 4 N
7.	The teacher respected the time allotted for teaching.	1 2 3 4 N	1 2 3 4 N	1 2 3 4 N	1 2 3 4 N
8.	The tutor informed the students in a clear way about the requirements that would be placed on them in their assessment.	1 2 3 4 N	1 2 3 4 N	1 2 3 4 N	1 2 3 4 N
9.	I have gained a lot of new knowledge by taking this course.	1 2 3 4 N	1 2 3 4 N	1 2 3 4 N	1 2 3 4 N
10.	Taking this course has allowed me to better understand important concepts and connections of phenomena.	1 2 3 4 N	1 2 3 4 N	1 2 3 4 N	1 2 3 4 N

Explanatory note - answer options: completely agree - 1, rather agree - 2, rather disagree 3, do not agree at all 4, do not know how to judge - N.

If you rate some facts in teaching particularly positively and would like to point this out, please write:

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If there are any problems or deficiencies in the teaching that you would like to point out, please write:

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