

# Feedback Survey

**Educator:** Donald R. Webster, Professor and Associate Chair Civil and Environmental Engineering

**Context:** In class; Fluid Mechanics and Dynamics

**Keywords:** surveys, mid-term reviews, flipped classrooms

**Student Activity Time:** 10-15 minutes in class

*Two-thirds of the way through a course with a flipped classroom approach, students reflected on their experience in the course.*

## Introducing the Reflection Activity

In a mid-level fluid mechanics course, the educator flipped the classroom (i.e. students learn class information from online content and work on homework problems in class). As an opportunity to check-in with students, the educator asked students to reflect back on their experience in the flipped classroom. The purpose of this reflection activity was for students to think back on their experience in the course and for the educator to improve the course for future offerings.

Midway through implementing a flipped classroom, the educator wanted to know more about how students were experiencing this new pedagogical approach. By assessing the new pedagogical approach partway through the term, the educator could adjust the course for the current students and for future classes. In an anonymous in-class survey, students reflected on their experience in the course by responding to these questions:

1. What aspects of the flipped classroom format do you prefer over a traditional style course?
2. What aspects of a traditional style course do you prefer over the flipped classroom format?
3. Do you find the video lectures to be helpful? More or less so than a traditional classroom lecture?
4. At what moment in the class did you feel most engaged with what was happening?
5. At what moment in the class did you feel most distanced from what was happening?
6. Would you recommend this course format to a friend?

In terms of outcomes, from the educator's perspective, the main reason for implementing the reflection activity was for the educator to receive valuable input about the course. However, as students reflected on their experience, there was potential for them to think about their learning and how they best learned.

### Recreating the Reflection Activity

	Description
1	Flip a classroom.
2	Invite students to give feedback on the flipped classroom format.
3	Adjust the flipped classroom approach based on students' feedback.

#### In the words of the Educator: Tips and Inspiration

*Convey to students the importance of the survey results.* The first thing I would say is you have to make the students believe that you are going to actually use the results, so really make them feel empowered to give feedback. Many instructors struggle with encouraging the students to complete the institute survey (i.e., end-of-course reviews) or surveys that we're administering in class. In my opinion, you have got to make them feel comfortable with the instrument; you have to explain to them how you intend to use the results of the survey or the instrument that you are employing. You have to make them feel like there's not going to be a penalty for them. So I think it's all about creating an environment where they feel very comfortable with providing that feedback. If you do that, I think you're going to get useful and helpful feedback.

*What was the inspiration for the reflection activity?* Initially I was inspired by the fact that I wanted some input or some feedback on the course. I contacted Dr. Wendy Newstetter who's in the Dean's Office and who's an expert on communication, education, cognitive processing, and those kinds of things. She gave me some basic survey questions, and I picked and edited the most appropriate questions for my purposes. My graduate students helped me fine-tune the questions prior to asking the students to complete the survey.