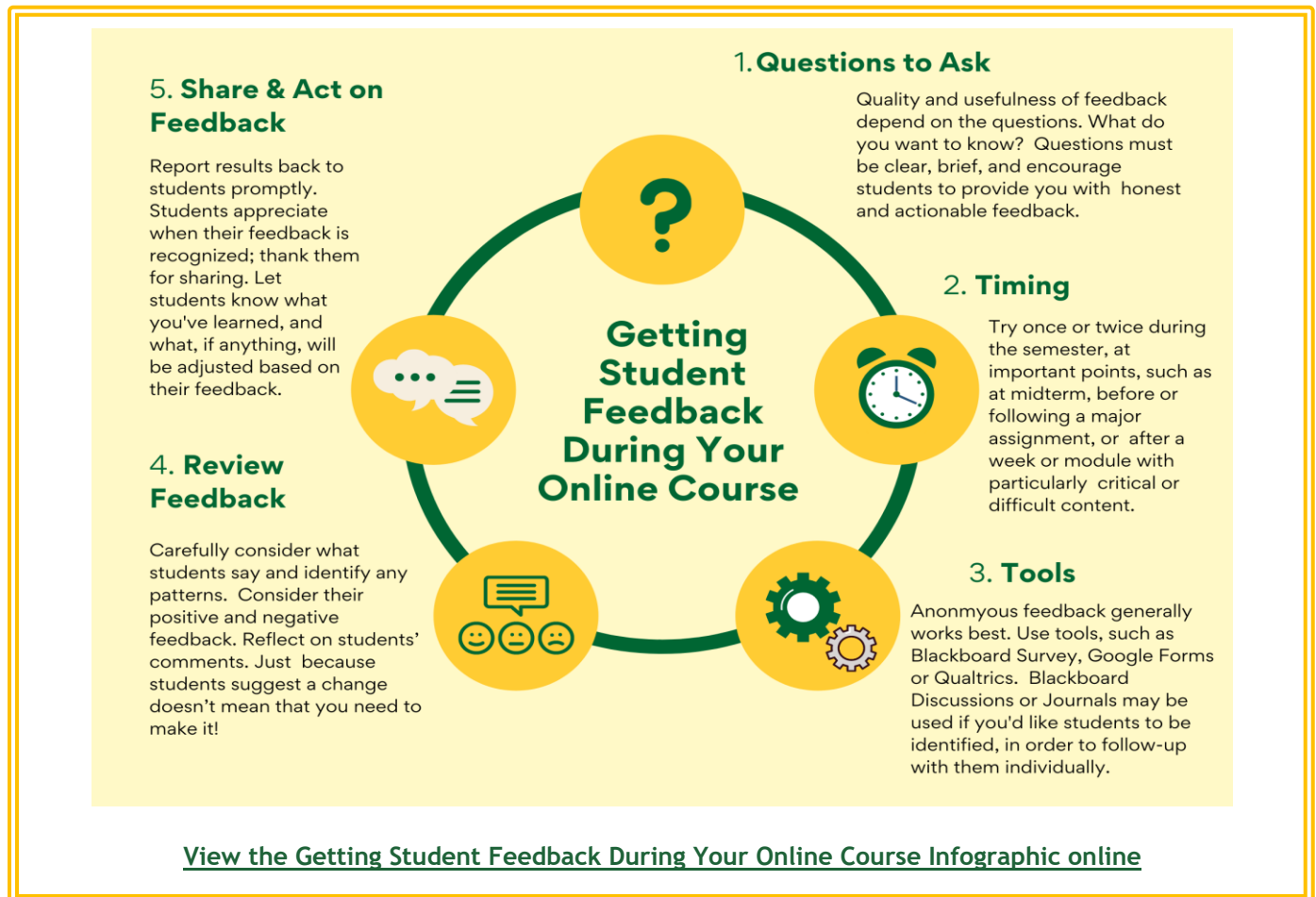# Getting Feedback from Your Online Students

Gathering feedback from your students is critical to ensure an engaging online experience that supports and empowers their learning. Informal student feedback provides you with a quick snapshot for how students are experiencing the course. Feedback during the course can help you identify what may be working or not working with your online course design and teaching. Through reviewing feedback, you may discover there are components of the course that may require some minor changes to address the outcomes you're looking for in your students. You shouldn't wait until end-of-course evaluations to ask for and act upon student feedback. To make sure that your course is responsive to students' needs, collect feedback at one or two points during the semester. In this issue of Online Teaching Coaching Newsletter, we will provide tips and guidance for getting online student feedback, considering these questions of the feedback cycle.

- What questions to ask for student feedback?
- When to ask students for their feedback in an ongoing online course?
- Which tools to use to collect student feedback in your online course?
- How to respond and act on student feedback?

See Stearns Center's Evaluating Your Course Success, noting the information on Student Feedback.

5. Share & Act on Feedback

Report results back to students promptly. Students appreciate when their feedback is recognized; thank them for sharing. Let students know what you've learned, and what, if anything, will be adjusted based on their feedback.

4. Review Feedback

Carefully consider what students say and identify any patterns. Consider their positive and negative feedback. Reflect on students' comments. Just because students suggest a change doesn't mean that you need to make it!

1. Questions to Ask

Quality and usefulness of feedback depend on the questions. What do you want to know? Questions must be clear, brief, and encourage students to provide you with honest and actionable feedback.

2. Timing

Try once or twice during the semester, at important points, such as at midterm, before or following a major assignment, or after a week or module with particularly critical or difficult content.

3. Tools

Anonmyous feedback generally works best. Use tools, such as Blackboard Survey, Google Forms or Qualtrics. Blackboard Discussions or Journals may be used if you'd like students to be identified, in order to follow-up with them individually.

Getting Student Feedback During Your Online Course

View the Getting Student Feedback During Your Online Course Infographic online

Examples of Questions to Ask for Student Feedback

The questions you ask your students depend on what you want to know about their learning experience in the online course. Spend some time really considering what you want to learn from your students. Here is a range of questions you might consider, select from, or customize. You may ask general questions or specific question. It's up to you and what you want to know! Keep the number of questions brief and include some open-ended questions to give your students a chance to share their feedback in their own words. Make sure to let your students know why their honest and constructive feedback can be helpful to you and to the course. Use findings from student feedback to help create more targeted questions for future surveys, as well as for course improvements.

General Course Design & Teaching

- What do you think about the structure of this course?
- What do you expect of me as your online instructor?
- What can I do as your instructor to better help your learning in this course for the remainder of the semester?
- What do you think is expected of you as an online student in this course?
- On average, how many hours per week are you spending on the course (coursework, studying, assignments)?
- Have you encountered any barriers to equity and accessibility during this course?
- What do you like most about this course so far?
- How do you think this course could be improved?
- If you could change one specific thing, what would that be?
- How do you see this course helping you with future courses or work?

Course Content & Assignments

- What concepts in this lesson/module/week are unclear to you? What is your "Muddiest Point" after completing this lesson/module/week?
- What concepts in this lesson/module/week do you feel that you now understand and can explain clearly to a classmate?
- Do you feel ready for the midterm/exam/paper/project? What could help you feel prepared?

Tools & Technology

- How do you find the tools we're using for this course? Are they easy to use?
- How do you primarily access this online course? On laptop, tablet, mobile device? How would you rate the experience on devices you use?
- Have you experienced any technical difficulties so far with the course (*e.g.* submitting an assignment, accessing a resource)?

Learn More about Getting Student In-Course Feedback

Parrish, G. (2016, October 31). **Transforming midterm evaluations into a metacognitive pause.** *Faculty Focus.* Magna Publications.

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