

TEACHING EVALUATION: CAN WE MEASURE WHAT REALLY MATTERS?

As a first step in any evaluation process, we should have a common sense of what we are measuring.

TEACHING ASPIRATIONS

In 2015-16 the Office of Teaching and Learning and a faculty learning community tackled the question...What kind of teaching do we aspire to at DU? Thirty statements about teaching were created and grouped into four categories. These statements closely align with the teaching ideals espoused in our university-wide strategic planning documents.

WE ASPIRE TO TEACH IN A WAY THAT IS...

- SIGNIFICANT AND IMPACTFUL
- LEARNING-CENTERED, MEANINGFUL AND ACTIVE
- INCLUSIVE, INVITING AND EMPATHETIC
- REFLECTIVE AND EVIDENCE-BASED

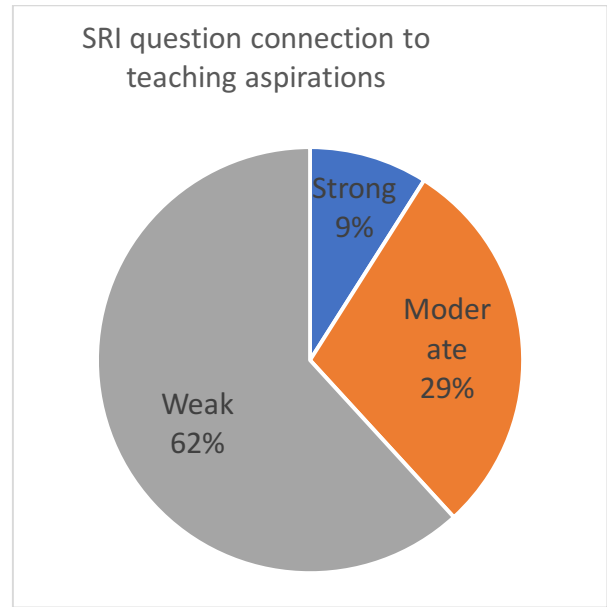
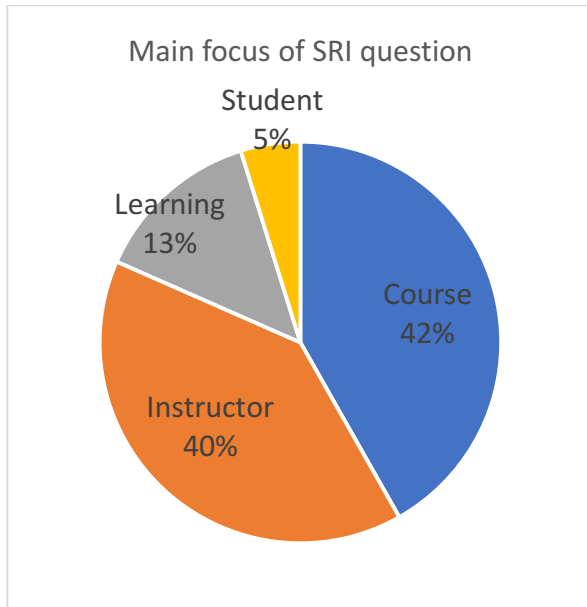
WHAT DO OUR COURSE EVALUATIONS CURRENTLY MEASURE?

Goal: Explore Student Ratings of Instruction/Course Evaluations through the lens of significant, learning-centered, inclusive, and reflective teaching practices.

Method: Three rounds of inductive and deductive coding by Executive Director of the Office of Teaching & Learning to uncover general observations and determine need for further analysis.

Preliminary Findings:

- *DU has over 50 different forms for 17+ units/programs, containing 504 questions. (243 unique questions)*
- *The vast majority (82%) of our questions are focused on instructor traits and course format. (The instructor was organized, knowledgeable, etc., strengths of this course)*
- *Less than 10% of the questions have a strong/direct connection to the type of teaching described in our teaching aspirations. (A response to this question is very likely to relate to one of the articulated teaching aspirations.)*
- *The more abstract the question, the more difficult it is to determine what is being measured (i.e., “challenging,” “organized”). The more specific the question, the more it is likely to inform and improve teaching and learning, but the less applicable it is to different disciplines or types of courses.*



QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

- Should SRIs be focused on improving the learning process, or evaluating the instructor? Are those purposes at odds or can SRIs do both?
- Are some SRI questions in fact undermining the kind of teaching we are trying to promote?
- What are the best forms of evidence to measure significant, learning centered, inclusive and reflective teaching practices?
- What evidence or analysis would be useful to stakeholders at your institution?

KEY REFERENCES

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