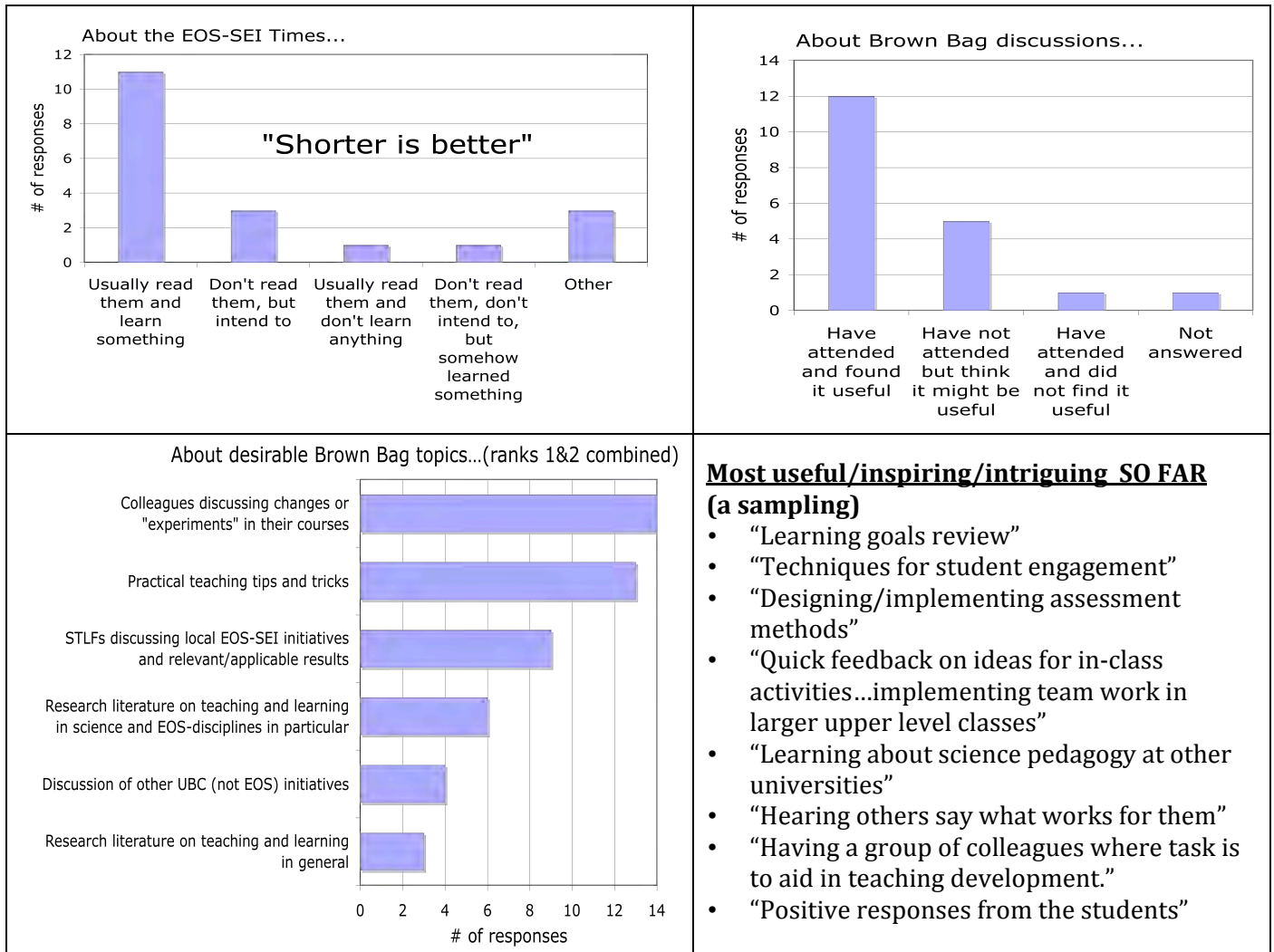


What YOU said

1. Departmental retreat survey results & 2. Summary of the EOS-SEI mini-retreat

How can EOS-SEI help YOU?

19 people completed a survey at the departmental retreat regarding EOS-SEI efforts. This information will help guide what we do in the future. Here's what you said:



What you wish could happen BEFORE OUR TIME RUNS OUT (a sampling):

- | | |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "As many examples as possible of effective teaching in 3rd-4th year quantitative classes" • "A coherent EOS curriculum" • "[Figure out if] students are actually learning more effectively" • "Figure out how not to lose the best students" • "Evidence that methods changes cause students to learn more and to better understand how science works" | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "Archive of course-level materials" • "Establish good statistical evidence for effectiveness of changes" • "Find funds to hire 1-2 STLFs permanently" • "Renovate field school" • "Restructure all my classes with appropriate goals" • "The teaching fairy adds an extra 40 hours to a week". |
|--|--|

What happened at the EOS-SEI mini-retreat in April?

22 people attended the EOS-SEI mini-retreat on 21 April 2009. Primary instructors of targeted courses were asked to respond to 5 questions prior to the retreat. These were the questions:

1. ***What do you find EXCITING about what you've done so far?***
2. ***What CHALLENGES have you/your STLF/your working group encountered so far?***
3. ***What PROBLEMS do you see in the transformation process so far? Resolved? If so, how?***
4. ***What IDEAS do you have for the future of your course transformation?***
5. ***Has this process influenced your overall approach to teaching? If so, how?***

At the mini-retreat, we spent the first half-hour with the primary instructors of targeted courses offering informal comments about their experiences so far. Different courses have taken quite different approaches and this was the first opportunity for people to hear what others have done.

The next 2.5 hours was spent in small-group discussions of three questions. Groups were asked to identify major problems, good ideas, and what would help, within each of the 3 topic areas. Here are the questions (which were chosen based on the pre-retreat comments):

1. ***How can we tell if what we're doing is helping students learn?***
2. ***Implementation issues: How do we effectively design materials? How do we effectively guide student participation in class?***
3. ***How do we maximize resources, time, and support?***

Here are a few of the "good ideas" that emerged:

1. Get students to read before class, to push some of the content learning out of class time and increase the level of student preparation for class.
2. Focus on students producing something
3. Provide early feedback to students on project/assignments, so they can improve
4. Use hard prerequisites. Use post-test from prerequisite course as a diagnostic in the next course.
5. Require note-taking in group discussions.
6. Call students by name (tips for learning names – an upcoming brown bag or Times)
7. Calibrate assessment & goals
8. Use clicker feedback to help identify what's important.
9. Weekly self-test exam-like questions based directly on goals.
10. Use simple, but carefully designed worksheets to guide in-class activities.
11. Collect and review all available data about each class, before starting.
12. Figure out how to measure what students can do at the end of a degree program.
13. Share what's learned so others don't have to make the same mistakes.
14. Discuss and share strategies for minimizing risk, managing student expectations, communication.
15. Incremental effort is good – you don't have to jump off the high dive into the deep end.

You can find the complete pre-retreat comments (anonymized) and the post-retreat summary of problems, ideas and recommendations at:

<http://www.eos.ubc.ca/research/cwsei/learningresources.html>

Where do we go from here? EOS-SEI will use these ideas to guide course transformation, and as focal points for the Times, Brown Bags, and workshops over the coming year. Let us know how we can help YOU better.

The next EOS-SEI mini-retreat will be in **APRIL 2010!** All are welcome!

Contact EOS-SEI: To talk about your course(s) or teaching and learning in general, visit EOS-South 361, or contact Francis Jones (fjones@eos.ubc.ca), Brett Gilley (bgilley@eos.ubc.ca), Erin Lane (elane@eos.ubc.ca), Josh Caulkins (jcaulkins@eos.ubc.ca) or Sara Harris (sharris@eos.ubc.ca). See also <http://www.eos.ubc.ca/research/cwsei/>.