Using student feedback surveys in eosc114, “Natural Disasters”

1. Purposes: Midterm & End of term surveys help assess ...

- Student reaction to pedagogy
- Progress towards Department’s aims

2. History:

<table>
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<th>Year</th>
<th>2001</th>
<th>2006</th>
<th>2007</th>
<th>2008</th>
<th>2009</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Students preferences: topics, instructors, TAs, features, EOS attitudes</td>
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<tr>
<td>Probe 1st clicker use</td>
<td>Probe multi. instr’s</td>
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<td>SALG(SE) format, drop instr, TA preferences</td>
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<td>Refinements for clarity</td>
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3. Examples

Consistency helps draw long-term conclusions.

- a) clickers “liked”, BUT hard to compare over 6 terms.
- b) change to custom text → good.
- c) better goals.

Two lessons: Work to reduce the number (20%) who do not like clickers, & strive for survey consistency.

4a. Adjustments to improve student learning:

- Printed copies of the online course notes - BUT later stopped
- Adjusted: Disaster Watch (done by grad students) & ECAC hours
- Added: exam feedback, custom textbook & online homework
- Encouraged standardization for all instructors
- Stopped bonus marks for optional activities (movie night, field trips)
- Recommended changing clicker technology

4b. Adjustments re. Department aims:

- Moved course into prime times
- Fine tuning ECAC hrs (increases efficiency)
- Last class highlights EOSC / ATSC courses

Implementation?

- Paper - Scantron
- Vista - Custom code.

Plans for eosc114?

- Continue ... but other changes will happen, despite opinions.

5. Lessons about how to survey:

- Not too many - start before term’s end - bonus pts
- Do midterm surveys only if changes can be made (BUT students DO appreciate adaptability).
- Question only what you can react to.
- Good question-asking practices are important
- Open questions are time consuming to process.
- Students are NOT always good judges of pedagogy because learning is “hard”.

Some references


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