Formative Feedback for Teaching Development

Quick Reference

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2019

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What is Formative Feedback for Teaching Development?

Formative feedback for teaching development is an intentional, voluntary, developmental strategy for instructors to initiate and receive feedback from various sources about their teaching with the goal to better understanding and improving student learning.

(Brookfield, 2015; Smith, 2001; Weimer, 2013)

References


For the Curious: A Comparison of Feedback Types...

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>☑️ FORMATIVE FEEDBACK</th>
<th>☑️ SUMMATIVE FEEDBACK</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Instructor initiated</td>
<td>Mandatory (institutional)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spontaneous</td>
<td>Scheduled</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ongoing, real time</td>
<td>After the fact</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low stake</td>
<td>High stake</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Frequent</td>
<td>Occurs once</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Developmental</td>
<td>Possibility developmental</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Process focused</td>
<td>Result focused</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feedback to the student</td>
<td>Feedback to the student</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feedback to the instructor</td>
<td>Feedback to the instructor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>For tenure and/or promotion</td>
<td>For tenure and/or promotion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mid-term evaluation</td>
<td>Final grades</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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Why Formative Feedback?

1. Real-time information to inform teaching

2. Helps us understand and enhances student learning

3. Provides evidence for a teaching dossier or other purpose
Exploring a Formative Feedback for Teaching Development Model

Step-by-step Through the CARRA Model
Preparing to collect formative feedback

**CURIOS.** Self-reflection - what have you noticed?
What do you want to know about your students, their learning, and/or your teaching?

**ASK.** Who will you ask (students, peers), what will you consult (scholarship), What type of feedback do you want (verbal, written, electronic, anonymous, etc)?

**RECEIVE.** What feedback did you receive? This is the time for compiling, and analyzing. Do you need to ask for clarification or ask another question(s)?

**REFLECT.** This is the time to interpret and analyze the feedback. Did you receive enough feedback, was it useful?

**ACT.** Based on the feedback, is there anything you can do, change, and/or adapt? Acknowledge the feedback. Repeat steps as needed.

Additional details at doi.org/10.1002/ntlf.30157

Notes...

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## Formative Feedback through the Lenses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lenses</th>
<th>Processes and techniques to gather feedback</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Self</strong></td>
<td>Examples: Instructors’ self-awareness and reflection (e.g. What have you noticed? What do you need to know about your teaching?). Reflective journals and notes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Student</strong></td>
<td>Examples: Gathering real-time feedback from students, including structured feedback and input on particular assignments and/or teaching and learning activities. Eg. one-minute paper, start-stop-continue, Mentimeter. What do they know, what do they need to know.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Colleague</strong></td>
<td>Examples: Asking colleagues for feedback. Joining (or starting) a peer-learning group, or community of practice.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Scholarship</strong></td>
<td>Examples: Consulting the literature, participating/presenting at conferences, and/or engaging in teaching and learning research (SoTL).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

References & Resources: Formative Feedback for Teaching Development


Taylor Institute for Teaching and Learning. Formative Feedback Resources https://taylorinstitute.ucalgary.ca/formative-feedback/resources
Sample Activities: Formative Feedback for Teaching Development

The following SAMPLE activities are included for you to gather and explore feedback through various lenses of:

- Self
- Student
- Colleague
- Scholarship

adapted from


Rolfe et al., (2001), provide a framework for reflection (What, So What, Now What?) that can be useful in our teaching practice. Three (3) simple statements provide a method for tracking teaching experiences, curiosities, and goals. This framework is adaptable and can be used in most situations and kept as a reference. You can also adapt this for students to give you feedback.

**What? So What? Now What?**

1. **What?** What did you experience in your class that you are curious about, or felt great, or that didn’t feel right? Was this something new or have you experienced it before? What do you want to know more about? Jot down the details and be as specific as possible.

2. **So What?** How did this experience impact your teaching, and how do you think it impacted your students’ learning?

3. **Now What?** How will you proceed to examine your experience? Is there something you will try or change in your teaching?

What else do you want to learn about? How will you accomplish this? What are your goals for development?

STUDENT LENS: One Minute Paper

Perhaps one of the most used formative feedback techniques (Chizmar & Ostrosky, 1998) is the ‘One-Minute Paper’. It is a quick and simple method to obtain feedback from students, to and for the instructor. This can be used at any time, and adapted to fit the instructors’ needs. You can prepare a form to handout, or ask students to take out a blank piece of paper to answer the questions you have prepared (2 or 3 questions max). Critical to the success of this strategy, instructors summarize the input gathered, as well as specific strategies and changes they will implement based on the students’ feedback at a future class meeting.

One-minute paper

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. What is the most important thing you learned today?</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>2. What are some questions that remain for you after today’s session?</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>3. What are some of the things you don’t even understand well enough to ask about after today’s session?</td>
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Other comments or suggestions:

Adapted from: Chizmar & Ostrosky, 1998; and Queens University, 2008.
COLLEAGUE LENS: Peer consultation and peer feedback

Any peer consultation or invitation for peer feedback should be initiated by the instructor (Cassidy & Lee, 2010). Consider what you want to know. What are your specific teaching and learning goals? This reflection will inform the type of activity you engage in to receive formative feedback. There are additional options and models for peer consultation and structured programs in the resources section of this guide.

**Peer consultation and peer feedback options**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Informal Not structured Quick Simple</th>
<th>More formal Drop-in and/or Scheduled Variable time</th>
<th>Formal Structured Significant time Complex</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Consult with a trusted colleague who has teaching experience to discuss a particular teaching challenge, or a specific element of your course outline, assignment, lesson plan</td>
<td>• Learning circles • Discussion groups • Drop in sessions • Request a consultation with an educational development consultant</td>
<td>• Peer mentorship</td>
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<td>• Consult with someone who is not as experienced and you can learn together</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Invite a colleague to have a cup of coffee or a quick meeting to discuss a curiosity you have about teaching</td>
<td>• Your faculty, department, or institution may have scheduled activities to support peer learning about teaching • Start a learning or discussion group focused on teaching development</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Be aware of confidentiality if you are in a public place</td>
<td>• Your faculty, department, or institution may have scheduled mentorship activities • If there isn’t a structured activity offered in your department or faculty, initiate one</td>
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SCHOLARSHIP LENS: Exploring teaching and learning literature

Maryellen Weimer’s (2013) teaching journey took her full circle from guessing, reflecting, experimenting, and implementing, to eventually realizing how she was teaching was in fact supported by evidence and theory. Her writings and work guide us as teachers, and describe how theory informs our teaching and learning practices (Weimer, 2006).

Britzman (2003) writes about how reading theory can help instructors understand their experiences in the classroom, by providing scholarly insights into what is occurring. Reading, studying, and researching teaching and learning, all contribute to the development of the teacher, inform practice, and in turn, impact students’ learning.

Brookfield (1995) recognizes reading and searching the literature is another demand on our time, yet it is beneficial and worthwhile to our practice. He provides a succinct overview of the theoretical scholarship related to teaching on pages 38-39 in his book *Becoming a critically reflective teacher* and includes works on:

- teachers’ voices
- personal narrative
- autobiographical stories
- teacher thinking
- personal theorizing
- ethnographic studies of teachers’ lives
- case studies of teachers in practice

Exploring teaching and learning literature

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic or issue of Interest</th>
<th>Identify journal, article, book, or website to explore. Is this a potential research project for yourself?</th>
<th>Notes, Actions</th>
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Formative Feedback for Teaching Development: Quick Reference

Jeffs & Paris (2019)
Putting it in perspective: Formative feedback for teaching development

Collecting, interpreting and responding to formative feedback is a practical and beneficial strategy to enhance teaching, and better understand and improve student learning. (Jeffs & Piera, 2016).

We hope you will be able to use and/or adapt the resources and ideas, or create your own. Check out additional sample activities, including suggestions for gathering online feedback.

Taylor Institute for Teaching and Learning website: Formative Feedback Resources
https://taylorinstitute.ucalgary.ca/formative-feedback/resources

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