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Reflective Course Evaluations: Impact on Teaching and Learnings

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Student evaluation of teaching in higher education maintains its position as a time-honored end-of-semester ritual about which much research exists. The researchers desired to make meaningful changes in their online courses but found feedback from traditional evaluations too limited to do so. They decided to supplement traditional course evaluation with the use of a reflective student course evaluation in their quest to answer the following research question: Do mid-term and end-of-term reflective student course evaluations provide feedback that instructors and students can utilize to improve their teaching strategies and student approaches to learning? They hoped that reflective evaluations would elicit feedback of enhanced breadth and depth in comparison to the traditional evaluation, allowing for improvements to the teaching and learning process beyond those generated by the results of traditional evaluations.

The researchers incorporated reflective student course evaluation assignments into their four online courses. Analysis of the results then occurred, focusing on instructor strengths and opportunities for change related to teaching and learning.

The intended audience who will benefit from this presentation includes instructors at all levels within any discipline who are seeking an evaluation format to complement the traditional course evaluation ritual, with the goal of feedback that may lead to improvements to the teaching and learning process for their online courses. This presentation will introduce the reflective practice utilized by the researchers, providing the opportunity to consider implementation of this type of evaluation.

Biography:

Dr. Sara Fier is a Professor and Department Chair for Social Sciences and Humanities at Northwestern Health Sciences University in Bloomington, MN. Her background includes teaching psychology courses and provision of services as a licensed psychologist and certified mental performance consultant.

Dr. Mary Risacher is an Assistant Professor of Education for Southwest Minnesota State University in Marshall, Minnesota. Her background includes teaching Early Childhood, Kindergarten, and serving as the Director of an Early Childhood At-Risk Program, with an emphasis on pairing young children and families to needed resources. She currently teaches introductory educational and Early Childhood licensure courses for the School of Education at SMSU.