

Likes and Dislikes

Like most instructors, I receive course evaluations after a class is complete. However, the time lapse does little to help the dynamics of the class that completed the evaluations. Therefore, I find it useful (for both my students and me) to have some sort of class evaluation midway through the term.

Sometime toward the middle of the semester, I hand out notecards to students in my classes. I then give them a very simple task: on one side of the card, list three (or more) things you like about the class (especially as related to your learning); on the other side of the card, list three (or more) things you dislike/would like to change about the class (especially as related to your learning). Students are asked to not write their names on the cards as their responses are anonymous, which hopefully encourages honesty.

Before the next class period, I take the time to read the responses and compile a list of common themes. I share these themes with the class during the next class period. Sharing the “likes” seems to remind students of the positive things they are taking away from the class. Sharing the “dislikes” gives me an opportunity to actually commit to making changes or explain why I am choosing not to do so.

I think the activity helps me better see my classes through the students’ eyes. I think it also gives the students some perspective from my point of view as well as that of their peers.

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