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Subject: Teaching Toolbox: Mid-Semester Feedback
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Mid-Semester Feedback

by Emily O. Gravett

Welcome back to a new fall semester!

By now, you may have seen information about the CFI's [Teaching Analysis Poll \(TAP\)](#) program, through our Weekly Digest or a special email announcement. While the semester has only just begun, it is nevertheless a great time to plan to solicit mid-semester feedback from your students. The CFI offers TAPs for this very purpose. Participating in a TAP is an opportunity to find out how your course is going, from the students' perspective, long before those final course evaluations roll in.

You can request a TAP now. Visit [the TAP website](#) and click on "Request a TAP."

Let me tell you a bit about the process. On the day of the TAP, about 30-45 minutes before the end of class, you leave the room and a facilitator (one of your faculty colleagues who has generously volunteered to do TAPs) will guide your students through small-group reflections about what is helping and hindering their learning in your course, including their own behaviors. The facilitator will then share this anonymous feedback with you during a later, private consultation. You can respond to the TAP by making strategic instructional adjustments and/or by explaining to students why certain elements of the course need to remain the same, despite their suggestions. At the very least, we encourage you to have some kind of follow-up conversation with your students about their commentary, so that they know they were heard.

Studies such as those by JMU's very own faculty (e.g., [Hurney et al.'s "The Impact of a Learner-Centered, Mid-Semester Course Evaluation on Students," 2014](#)) have shown that feedback opportunities like TAPs can improve students':

- perception of instructor enthusiasm
- understanding of expectations regarding assignments and tests
- view of the course organization
- motivation
- attendance
- completion of assignments
- in-class discussions

- exam performance
- bonding and communication with instructors
- perception of the overall learning environment

You can also solicit students for mid-semester feedback on your own, either in class or online, using a survey tool like [Qualtrics](#) (for which JMU thankfully renewed its site license!) or even Canvas. Please [request a CFI teaching consultation](#) if you are interested in brainstorming how to solicit feedback on your own. We are always happy to help.

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