# Evaluating student learning at mid-semester

January 2019 Office of Assessment, Duke University

#### assessment.trinity.duke.edu/assessment-roundtable





#### Spring 2019 | Fall 2018 | Spring 2018 | Fall 2017

#### Spring 2019

#### Setting up mid-semester course evaluations

Tuesday, January 22, 2019 - 2:00pm Bevan Building - Room 1001

 A growing number of programs and instructors desire midterm course evaluations. Seeking feedback from students mid-way through the semester can reveal important insights about the learning experience, and do so in time to make useful adaptations to the course. This session explores practices are most likely to provide helpful information while the course is in progress.

Resources: Available following presentation

#### Contacts

Director

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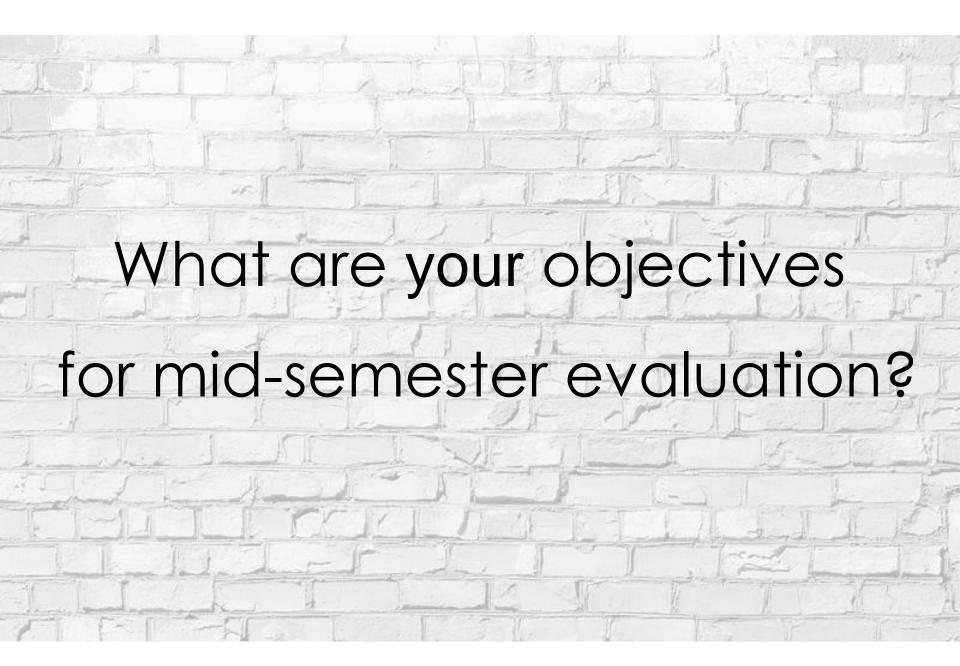
Associate Director

lennifer Hill Ed D

Why do we care about evaluating student learning at mid-semester?

How? What tools and techniques are possible?

How do we make good use of this information?



Size-up the course curriculum

Monitor learning from middle to end of course

Identify gaps in learning

Make course corrections

Students may be more invested in midterm assessment

Students can check their own learning Mid-Semester Evaluations should aim to answer the following:

# Mid-Semester Evaluations

- What aspects of class are going well and what needs improvement?
- What changes in the course would benefit student learning?
- What are the mid-semester benchmarks to help you interpret end of term data?

When developing midsemester course evaluations an instructor may wish to focus on the following course elements:

- Course Content
- Course Instruction
- Classroom Dynamics
- Course Assignments and Feedback
- Course Policies
- Instructional Technologies

# Don't do it all!

# What methods are possible?

- o Interviews
- o Focus Groups
- Classroom Observation
- Surveys (Course Evaluations)
- Student Reflections
- Student Assignments

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Do students stop by office hours or advising?

### Interviews

#### Have a set of prepared questions:

- What topic do you wish we had spent more time on?
- How could I make the classroom more welcoming?
- How can I help you prepare for the final paper?

# Focus Group Best Practices

- 5-10 participants, preferably 6-8
- Circle Seating (outside of the classroom)
- Pre-determined question prompts
- 2 moderators (1 to ask questions and 1 to observe and take notes)
- Provide snacks/refreshments!

# Focus Group Questions

- After an introduction, start with an easy round robin question: "please go around and tell everyone your name, your major, and why you took this course."
- Use open-ended questions: "what do you think of the reading assignments"?
- Use reflection prompts: "think back to the first day of class, what do you wish I had told you?"
- To end, ask a summative question: "Of all the things we discussed, what is the most important?" Then, ask "Does anyone have anything that they want to add?"



# Classroom Observations

- Self-lead: Take a hard look -- what would you like to be happening in the classroom versus what is happening in the classroom.
- Peer-lead: invite a peer or colleague into your class to observe. Offer to reciprocate!
- Use an observation protocol

		Remember: Retrieves definitions, facts, or lists, or recites previously learned information	Understand: Construct meaning from instructional messages, including oral, written and graphic communication.	Apply: Carry out or use a procedure in a given situation.	Analyze: Break material into constituent parts and determine how parts relate to one another and to an overall structure or purpose.	Evaluate: Makes judgments based on criteria and standards through checking and critiquing.	Create: Put elements together to form a coherent whole; reorganize into a new pattern or structure.	N/A
	The ability to evaluate a global issue from perspectives of multiple disciplines.	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	The ability to evaluate a global issue from multiple cultural, geographical, and historical perspectives.	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Engage in collaborative group work centered around a global issue.	0	0	0	0	0	0	0



#### Visit a Classroom

The Visit a Classroom program provides Duke faculty with an opportunity to observe their colleagues teaching in their classrooms. Three faculty participants observe at least one class taught by each faculty member in the group to get ideas to enhance their own teaching and classroom experience.

Applications for the Visit a Classroom program are accepted on a rolling basis throughout the year. It is available to any Duke faculty member or instructor teaching during the current semester.

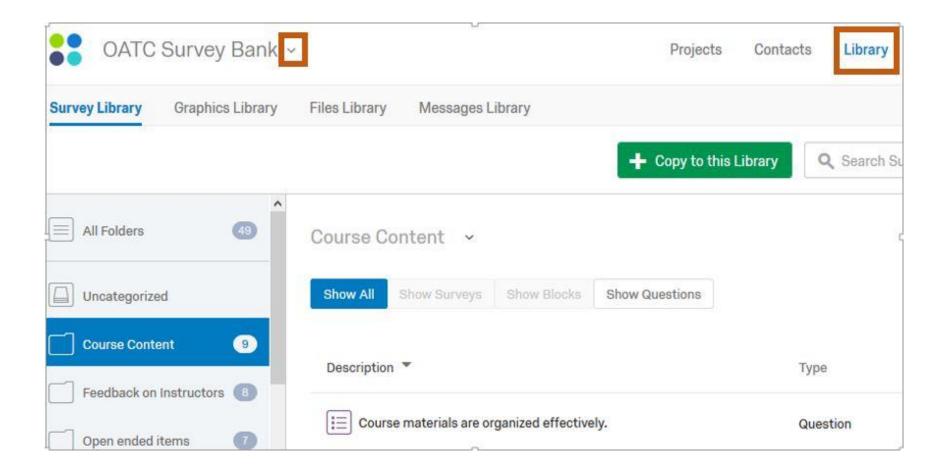
Apply for the Visit a Classroom program »

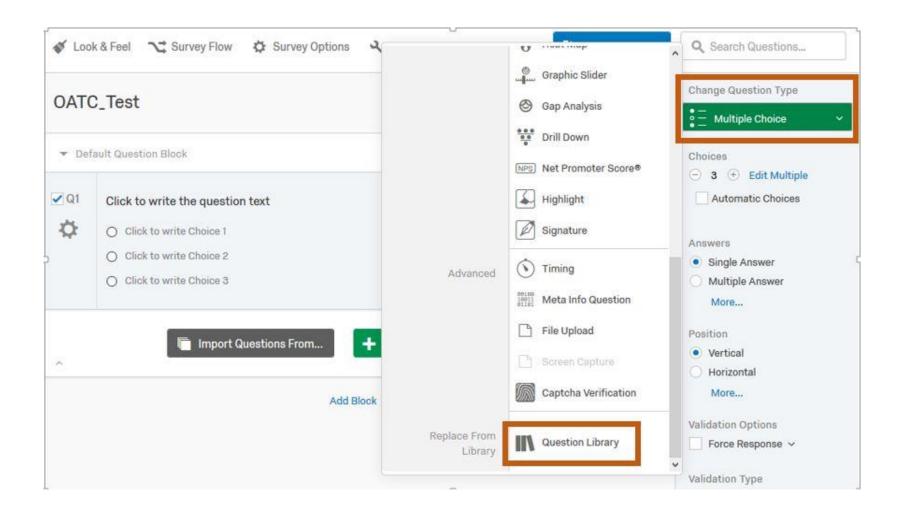
https://learninginnovation.duke.edu/faculty-opportunities/connect-with-other-faculty/

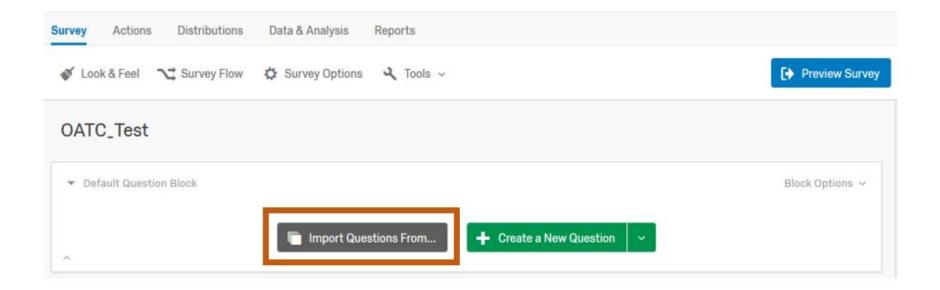
Question Bank developed by the Office of Assessment, Trinity College to support your use of Mid-Semester Evaluations

 Guidebook available on OATC Website:

> http://assessment.trinity.duke.edu/ midterm-assessment-strategies







Follow up on the feedback you've received



- Be timely & thankful
- Provide a summary of feedback to students
- Discuss your action plan based on feedback (and why)



# Discussion

# References & Resources

- Duke Learning Innovation (2018). Innovation in Teaching and Learning.
   Duke Learning Innovation. Retrieved from:
   <a href="https://learninginnovation.duke.edu/">https://learninginnovation.duke.edu/</a>
- Duke Trinity College of Arts & Sciences (2017). Midterm Assessment Strategies. Duke Trinity College of Arts & Sciences Office of Assessment. Retrieved from: <a href="https://assessment.trinity.duke.edu/midterm-assessment-strategies">https://assessment.trinity.duke.edu/midterm-assessment-strategies</a>
- Krueger, R. A., & Casey, M. A. (2002). Designing and conducting focus group interviews. Social analysis, selected tools and techniques, 4(23), 4-24.
- Yale University (2016). Midterm Student Course Evaluations. Center for Teaching and Learning. Retrieved from: <a href="https://ctl.yale.edu/MidtermCourseEval">https://ctl.yale.edu/MidtermCourseEval</a>