

# SAMPLE QUESTIONS FOR GETTING FEEDBACK FROM STUDENTS

## BEGINNING OF THE SEMESTER (PRE-COURSE SURVEY, FIRST DAY, FIRST WEEK)

What do you wish your college instructors knew about you?

What is something that you know you need to work on as a college student? How might you develop that skill in this course?

What are some specific strategies that other instructors have used that have helped you be successful in past courses?

Why did you sign up for this course? What are you hoping to learn by the end of the semester?

After our first day of class do you have any concerns about your ability to succeed in this course?

## DURING THE SEMESTER

What are your main take-aways from today?

What do you like most about this course? What would you like more of in this course?

Is there anything about the structure of the course that could be adapted to help your learning? (e.g. having assignments due by midnight rather than 5pm)

How are things going? Please be constructive and specific so that I can identify what parts are going well and also some ways I might adapt the course during our remaining time together.

## FEEDBACK ON A SPECIFIC ACTIVITY

Today we did an activity [working in groups]. What did you like about this activity? If we do a similar activity in the future should I consider any modifications?

## WHAT WENT WRONG? OR THIS IS GETTING INTENSE!

(Notecards/Exit Slip) Many students did poorly on this [assignment, exam] and I would like to better understand what happened. What about the assignment was most challenging? Is there anything that seemed unfair? What kind of guidance would have helped you be better prepared? Please provide some **specific** feedback so that I can reflect on what steps to take, to help students be more successful in this course in the remaining weeks.

(During a discussion) Time-out! This discussion is getting heated and I want to be sure we all have a chance to process our own thoughts and ideas. I want everyone to take out a piece of paper and reflect individually on your thoughts on this topic for the next five minutes, jotting down your notes. Then we will (discuss in pairs, small groups, pick it up next class) OR I will collect the notes, review, and structure an activity for next class to help us talk about this in a more structured way.

## USING POLLING TOOLS (LARGE CLASSES, VIRTUAL CLASSES)

Are we ready to move on?

- A. I'm totally lost
- B. one more example would help
- C. yes, we can move on
- D. this is too easy, go faster/skip ahead

What did you think about the reading for today?

- A. I did not do the reading.
- B. I read, but I did not understand it.
- C. I understand the main concepts but have some questions.
- D. I have thought deeply about this material and I'm ready to discuss!

How should I teach the class today?

- A. Do the activities as a whole class
- B. Do the activities in small groups



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## COLLEAGUE FACILITATED FOCUS GROUP QUESTIONS:

- What do you like most about this course?
- What do you like least about this course?
- What are the instructor's strengths?
- What can the instructor do differently to help you learn more in this course?
- Do you come prepared for class (e.g. do the readings)? Why or why not?
- Are the assignments clear?
- Does the instructor make good use of the live class time together?
- Do you understand the purpose of the assigned materials in the course?
- Do you feel you are assessed fairly for your work?
- Is this course what you expected it to be? Why or why not?
- Would you recommend this course (or this instructor) to another student? Why or why not?
- Do you feel you could give this feedback directly to the instructor? Why or why not?
- What other feedback should I share with the instructor?

## GENERAL TIPS & STRATEGIES:

Include an open-door/open-ears policy about feedback in your course syllabus, letting students know that you want to hear feedback from them during the semester, not to wait until the semester ends.

Discuss feedback on the first day of class – both in terms of how you want to help them to become better students and also that you want to continuously become a better teacher. Set the climate for a feedback friendly classroom.

Always follow-up when feedback is provided and offer some kind of response. Students appreciate when their feedback is recognized. If students feel their feedback was ignored this could have a negative impact.

Consider feedback as a whole and do not get too upset by outliers. Even the very best teachers will get critical (and sometimes hurtful) feedback from a few students now and then.

You do not have to respond to feedback in the moment. If you feel put on the spot, tell students you have heard their concerns and you need time to reflect and consider how to best incorporate their feedback.

For challenging feedback, discuss with a colleague or with the appropriate GW department for more serious grievances.

Keep in mind that it may take a lot of courage for a student to come to you with feedback. Even if you disagree, thank them for sharing and try to respond with this context in mind.

