

Here are a few suggestions from faculty colleagues to improve students' response rate on the SFI:

Send broadcast messages on Skype to remind the students to complete the assessment and encourage them to elaborate on their responses with descriptions and examples.

Wael Yousif, professor, computer engineering technology

I mention it in class and through social media/email at least a couple times. When I mention it, I ask them for their feedback and let them know it's important for me as an educator and a person to grow and learn and that their feedback is KEY. I sometimes start off by saying, "I've assessed your growth all semester. Now it's your turn to assess me!" I ask that they include written feedback if possible and let them know that all constructive feedback is really useful.

Meg Curtiss, professor, graphic design

We discuss ways to increase our SFI response rates at several division meetings throughout the year. I share how important the SFI is for the full-time annual evaluations and for our tenure-track faculty. A few of our professors are known to allow time in their lab where their students can use their devices to complete the SFI while the professors step out of the room for 15 minutes; this has led to nearly 100 percent participation in those classes. It is also helpful to let students know in advance which day they will need to have an electronic device available to complete the SFIs. It is important to constantly reinforce how important the SFI is to faculty and students.

Bob Gessner, dean, science

I share how valuable and important their feedback is to faculty, deans and the College in general, and highlight the fact that their constructive feedback helps us to know what is successful or needs improvement. At times, previous student comments are used to show how feedback has helped develop or improve course content, student learning as well as our effectiveness as instructors. Also, I include SFI in the syllabus as an assignment to do the course evaluations and rarely, as an alternative to curving challenging exams, I may give five points toward any exams if the SFI is completed before the final day of classes.

Ali Notash, professor, electronic engineering technology

We send students in our courses this note:

As we wind up this last two weeks of classes before finals, please take the time to complete the online Student Assessment of Instruction for each of your courses. Contrary to any rumors you may have heard, these evaluations are completely anonymous, and will have zero impact on your grade. As Program Chair, I won't see any of the forms until after grades have been submitted, but I need your input to advise our adjuncts on any classroom activities or text materials which could be improved the next time the course is taught. One reason Valencia College was selected for the first Aspen Prize is that part of our mission statement addresses our dedication to student success, results, and dedication to improvement, so please do your part.

Andy Ray, professor, building construction technology

I remind students weekly to complete the SFI and write it on the board as part of their homework.

I assure them that I do not see their responses before final grades are in and encourage them to write comments and let them know I read them, all – but only after grades are submitted.

On occasion, I have reserved the ATLAS lab one day for EAP students to do this en masse as a language learning activity, with the help of the lab assistant. Finally, I conduct an anonymous written evaluation in class at midterm, which is legitimately helpful to us all, since I use it to assess how well I am addressing student learning needs while there is still time to change course if needed. This also helps students take responsibility for their learning.

Richard Sansone, professor, Portuguese