Interpreting Instructor Evaluation Results from Class Climate

Scaled Questions

To the right of each question is a frequency distribution of the responses. This is a bar chart that looks like this:

The number of people who answered for each response category is indicated at the top of each bar in the chart. The response categories are numbered from 1 to 5 at the bottom of the chart. These correspond to the possible responses on the current evaluation form as follows:

1 2 3 4 5
Strongly Disagree Disagree Somewhat agree Agree Strongly Agree

To the right of the chart are two numbers – the “n” or total number of responses to the question – and the median. There may be an “ab” - #. This stands for “abstention,” meaning that some number of students responding to the evaluation and included in the overall “N” at the top of the page did not answer this particular item. The median is the “middle” score – half of the answers were above it and half were below it. The median is a more statistically sound measure of central tendency than is the mean for the scaled type of questions used in the instructor evaluation. It can be used in the same manner as one would use a mean. For example, relative comparisons can be made across instructors with different medians and an instructor’s medians can be compared to department level composite medians. You can find your departmental composite report online.

Red and Green “Traffic Lights”

In between the frequency distribution and the numbers indicating responses, median, etc. there is an object that looks like a traffic light. The light will be either red or green. The instructor evaluation task force determined that the light should change from green to red whenever 25% or more of respondents select “Strongly Disagree” or “Disagree” for that item. This is intended as a quick method to identify those items which may require further exploration or discussion when results are discussed. As noted at the top of the report, these measures should be interpreted with caution whenever there are 8 or fewer responses to an item.

Comments

The Comments Report appears after the report on the scaled questions. If paper evaluations were used the comments appear exactly as written on the form. Online evaluations have typed comments.