<center>**Improving Course Evaluation Response Rates**</center>

**What Works**

1. **Gaining Early Student Feedback.** Ask the students 2-3 questions around mid-semester about course improvement. Then initiate changes based on the feedback or explain why such changes cannot be made. Showing the students that their opinions impact the class improves their desire to give final, truthful feedback on course evaluations.

2. **Offering Academic Rewards.** Rather than offering extra credit (which is controversial), use the response rate percentage to allow students to affect the final exam in some meaningful way. For instance, if 85% or more of the class responds to the survey, then they can add a question to the exam, remove a question or have the option of answering one fewer question in the options, or gain access to a question before the test. This, of course, requires access to the response rate before the scheduled exam.

3. **Ensuring All Departments Use the Same Evaluation Method/Timeframe.** This is not an issue within the College of Arts & Sciences; however, it is an issue for the university in that students might be completing Blackboard or paper evaluations in other colleges. Standardizing a method is suggested. Additionally, advertising a specific timeframe for evaluations is a good idea.

4. **Offering Time for In-Class Completion.** Expending 10-15 minutes in class for students to complete the survey (as they did with paper surveys) improves the response rate. Have a gadget day for this by advising students to bring their laptops, tablets, or smart phones to class to take the survey, or reserve a lab for them to do so.

**What Doesn't Work**

1. **Offering Prize Drawings.** The possibility of winning a prize has been shown to be an insufficient incentive in gaining student interest in completing surveys.

2. **Sending Repeated Reminders.** Other than the first reminder, any following ones have been proven in studies to be very ineffective—and additional reminders annoy students.

3. **Increasing the Evaluation Window.** Having an evaluation window longer than 7 days is ineffective. The best window for evaluations is between 4-7 days. On-campus publicity of the evaluation timeframe increases rates. Different colleges within the university offering at different times can hurt rates, as this confuses students.

4. **Offering Direct Monetary Rewards.** Offering a few bucks delivered electronically to student accounts for proof of completion has been shown not to work. The small size of the award is not consequential to them, and the lack of a *tangible* reward (if sent directly to their account) makes students entirely indifferent to this incentive.