Bridging the Gap: A Survey of Student Perception

Background

• We are not students.
  • Age/Generation
  • Technology
  • Upbringing/Background
  • Expectations of Life
Background

• We have to understand each other
  • Frustration comes from breakdowns in communication
  • Jargon/Slang/Terminology
  • Expectations of Instructors
Objective

• The objective of this survey was to determine how students’ viewpoints change during their academic career regarding what they expected of Student/Instructor interaction.
Materials and Methods

• 406 students in animal science courses completed a survey containing:
  • Demographic information
  • 20 questions pertaining to their expectations as students
    • 7 questions focused on their expectations as students including what they expected of their instructors.
Survey Questions

1. How long is a reasonable amount of time for an instructor to wait before receiving your response to an email?
   a. 1 hour
   b. 8 hours
   c. 1 day
   d. 1 week

2. How long is a reasonable amount of time to wait for an instructor to respond to an email?
   a. 1 hour
   b. 8 hours
   c. 1 day
   d. 1 week

3. Should an instructor be upset or annoyed if you show up late or leave the classroom early?
   a. Yes
   b. No, if it was for work or family matters
   c. No, not if I am quiet in doing so
   d. No, never
Survey Questions

4. Should you be required to have an appointment to meet with an instructor outside of their normal/posted office hours?
   a. Yes
   b. No

5. Should the instructor remind students when assignments are due after initially assigning the task?
   a. Yes
   b. No

6. Should an instructor be upset or annoyed if you respond to a text or leave the classroom to answer a phone call during class?
   a. Yes
   b. No, if it was for work or family matters
   c. No, not if I am quiet in doing so
   d. No, never

7. Because you as a student paid for the class, should you be able to come and go as you please without penalty?
   a. Yes
   b. No
Materials and Methods

• Distributions of responses was compared using a Chi Squared analysis followed by pairwise comparisons to determine differences between student classifications.

• Comparisons were limited to
  • the change during an undergraduate degree (Freshmen to Senior)
  • entering Graduate school (Senior to Grad).
Materials and Methods

• Differences in distributions (P < 0.05) during…

• the change during and undergraduate degree (Freshmen to Senior) indicated by *

• entering Graduate school (Senior to Grad) indicated by ‡
How long is a reasonable amount of time for an instructor to wait before receiving your response to an email?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Freshmen</th>
<th>Senior</th>
<th>Graduate Student</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 hour</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 hours</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 day</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>70%</td>
<td>75%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 week</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

P < 0.02 (Difference detected is likely between Freshmen and Graduate students)
How long is a reasonable amount of time to wait for an instructor to respond to an email?

- Freshmen:
  - 1 hour: 5%
  - 8 hours: 15%
  - 1 day: 40%
  - 1 week: 40%

- Senior:
  - 1 hour: 5%
  - 8 hours: 15%
  - 1 day: 60%
  - 1 week: 20%

- Graduate Student:
  - 1 hour: 5%
  - 8 hours: 15%
  - 1 day: 70%
  - 1 week: 10%

$P = 0.27$
Should an instructor be upset or annoyed if you show up late or leave the classroom early?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>No, never</strong></td>
<td>Freshmen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>No, work/family</strong></td>
<td>Senior</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>No, quiet</strong></td>
<td>Graduate Student</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Yes</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

$P = 0.15$
Should you be required to have an appointment to meet with an instructor outside of their normal/posted office hours?

\[ P = 0.87 \]
Should the instructor remind students when assignments are due after initially assigning the task?

$P < 0.01$
Should an instructor be upset or annoyed if you respond to a text or leave the classroom to answer a phone call during class?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No, never</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No, work/family</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No, quiet</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Freshmen: 60%
Senior: 40%
Graduate Student: 20%

P = 0.02
Because you as a student paid for the class, should you be able to come and go as you please without penalty?

P < 0.01

‡
Discussion

• The majority of changes detected occurred as students moved from an undergraduate degree to a graduate degree.

• The majority of students, regardless of classification, believe they should be able to come and go as they please.

• Approximately 70% of undergraduates expect you to remind them of what they need to do.
Conclusions

• External factors initiate many of these changes.
  • Graduation
  • Teaching/Grading
  • Employment

• Clear expectations and active communication from both students and instructors can improve how students learn.

• It will change again.
Questions?