

Bates

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Mid-semester Assessment Process

The Mid-semester Assessment Process (MAP) is a confidential and voluntary practice that provides faculty with student feedback on a course in progress. In addition, the Bates Learning Assessment Specialist (LAS) can offer aligned resources and tools for pedagogical development.

The MAP is a formative assessment of instructional practices and other course elements, not a mandatory student evaluation such as that required at the end of all courses. The MAP is conducted during course (midterm or during key curricular moments) to allow the instructor to make meaningful changes *during* the course.

The MAP allows instructors to:

- Review and analyze student responses to activities, instructional styles and materials of the course, and
- Compare the instructor's perceptions of the course and its learning and teaching objectives with those held by the students.

The MAP also offers the support and services of the Bates LAS to collect, synthesize, interpret student feedback, and identify appropriate learning and teaching resources. Unlike end-of-term evaluations, MAP feedback goes directly to, and only to, the instructor. The LAS may consider general themes in student feedback across courses throughout the years to inform selection and programmatic development of Bates Learning Assessment professional offerings and resources.

Pre-collection Conversation (10-20 minutes)

The LAS and instructor will discuss the common questions asked on all Mid-semester Assessments and set a date for the in-class data collection process. The instructor may select to utilize only the standard questions or add 1-2 additional items for feedback that may be aligned with his/her own goals, objectives, challenges or questions.

Optional: Peer Observation

The instructor may request a member of the Bates Faculty Commons for Learning and Teaching (who will not be a letter writer for the instructor's tenure and promotion process) to meet and observe a class. This component can help identify areas of focus for student feedback or direct requests for supporting resources from the LAS.

Gathering Student Feedback

There are two methods for gathering student feedback in the Bates MAP. These are typically conducted between weeks 4 and 9 of the semester. In classes larger than 30 students, the instructor and the LAS may decide to utilize only one method of gathering student feedback. Collecting this data is conducted by the LAS in at a mutually convenient time within a designated class. On the day of collecting student

feedback, the instructor may introduce the LAS at the start of the agreed-upon time or inform students of process in a prior class. The instructor is not present in the room during the remaining 30-minute process of data collection.

Collective Student Feedback (20 minutes)

The LAS begins the data collection process by placing students into groups of 3–5. Students designate a recorder to write down the group’s ideas. Then, the group briefly discusses their perceptions of the class as prompted by the questions below and indicates in the recorder’s notes items or perceptions that are most important for the instructor to hear. Two questions are standard to the process:

- “What do you like most about this course and/or your professor's teaching and why?”
- “What about this course and/or your professor's teaching could improve the course and why?”

The instructor may also opt to include one of the following additional questions:

- “What can I do as a student to improve my learning in this class?”
- A question designed by the requesting faculty member.
- The LAS can also work with the instructor to design an additional question, at the discretion of the instructor.

At the conclusion of 20 minutes, the LAS will collect each group’s recorder notes.

Individual Student Feedback (10 minutes)

After the collective feedback activity, the LAS will ask students to independently complete a short questionnaire online. This questionnaire allows each student to offer his or her opinions by completing several items relating to learning and teaching activities in the course. Students rate various aspects of the class on a 5-point scale. Again, there are several standard items that will be shared with the instructor and the opportunity for including additional items requested by the faculty member or collaboratively developed by the instructor and the LAS. Also, open-ended questions are included to encourage students to provide feedback for qualitative analysis.

Sharing Student Feedback with Instructor

The LAS will compile the student feedback data in a standardized written template. This data will be given to the instructor electronically (as a pdf via email). The LAS will retain an electronic copy for one year then destroy the copy. The LAS will not share this data with anyone other than the instructor of record. Faculty may share as they see fit and are encouraged, but not required, to utilize this student feedback data in their evaluation, promotion and tenure processes.

Optional – Follow-up Conversation

Faculty members are encouraged to request an informal discussion with the LAS after receiving their student feedback data. This conversation may provide further insights and analysis regarding the trends and findings from the data, resources aligned with findings or questions regarding tools for next steps. The LAS can also offer templates and suggestions for faculty utilizing this data in their professional evaluation processes.

Optional – Follow-up Informal Observation

Faculty members may request an informal class observation by the LAS and/or faculty member of the Bates Learning and Teaching Commons before or after receiving their student feedback data. This observation may provide further insights about practices aligned with the student feedback data, related resources or implementation of recommended strategies. (Again, this peer faculty member observing will not be a letter writer for you in the tenure and promotion process.)

NOTE: An exception to privacy will be made in situations required by law or college policy. For example, if student feedback data identifies abuse, harassment or other serious disclosures of potential harm, the data may be shared with the appropriate institutional or legal personnel.