

Howard University

Fall 2020 Course Evaluations – Executive Summary

Overview

Course evaluations for the Fall 2020 academic semester were opened to Howard University students on November 16, 2020. The evaluation period was open for approximately 2 weeks, closing on December 1, 2020 before the beginning of final exams. The course evaluation instrument was comprised of 19 questions (8 course and 11 instructor). Approximately 56,542 evaluations were sent out and 35,992 evaluations were completed resulting in an overall engagement rate of 63.66%. This engagement rate includes students who completed a course evaluation(s) as well as students that chose to opt out of completing an evaluation(s). Looking at this further, there were 5,521 (9.78%) instances where students decided to opt out of taking a course evaluation. Consequently, the overall response rate for the university with opt outs removed was 53.89%. For Howard University, 2,466 courses received at least one evaluation.

Results

Quality of Remote Instruction

Given the current state of remote learning due to the COVID-19 pandemic, it is important to look at questions and groupings of questions that explore students' perception of the quality, accessibility, and reliability of instruction in their course(s). When asked about their instructor's effectiveness in communicating the content of the course, 75.11% of students (undergraduate, graduate, and professional) either "agreed" or "strongly agreed" that their instructor succeeded in this regard ($M = 4.09$, $SD = 1.14$). Further, 78.59% and 75.97% of students either "agreed" or "strongly agreed" that their instructor was well prepared for class meetings and made effective use of class time, respectively ($M = 4.24$, $SD = 1.02$; $M = 4.17$, $SD = 1.08$). A majority of students also indicated that instructors provided timely and constructive feedback on exams/papers/performance. Approximately 69.02% of students "agreed" or "strongly agreed" that the feedback from instructors was timely, and 67.24% of students "agree" or "strongly agreed" that the feedback from instructors was constructive ($M = 3.98$, $SD = 1.21$; $M = 3.96$, $SD = 1.22$).

General Education

The course evaluation instrument used at Howard University contains questions that indirectly assess general education outcomes. Currently, Howard has 21 general education outcomes that are a part of the Howard University General Education (HUGE) experience. Four of these outcomes are indirectly assessed using the course evaluation instrument: critical thinking and problem solving, written and oral communication, foundation and skills lifelong learning, and integrative and applied learning. For the Fall 2020 semester, 78.50% of students "agreed" or "strongly agreed" that their course challenged them to think critically about the subject ($M = 4.08$, $SD = 1.02$). Looking at written and oral

communication, 73.13% of students “agreed” or “strongly agreed” that the course helped them to communicate clearly about the subject ($M = 3.95$, $SD = 1.09$). Further, 75.44% of students “agreed” or “strongly agreed” that their course helped them consider connections between course material and other areas of their personal, academic, or professional life. This result speaks both to lifelong as well as integrative and applied learning ($M = 4.01$, $SD = 1.08$). While general education outcomes are traditionally captured for only undergraduate students, the data provided includes graduate and professional students. Future reports will disaggregate this data for a more nuanced picture of outcome attainment.

An overall aggregate or grand mean was calculated for both course and instructor question sets at the university level. The mean for course questions ($n = 8$) was 4.01 and the mean for instructor questions ($n = 11$) was 4.12.