

Evaluation of Teaching and Units – Semester One, 2003

Background

In semester one, 2003 Deakin introduced a common survey instrument for obtaining feedback from students on the evaluation of teaching and units.

The instrument has been developed so that it can be administered on-line and as a paper-based survey. In semester one, 2003 the majority of students were surveyed using the paper-based instrument (92%). Over 30,000 responses were received from both methods representing an overall response rate of 44%, comprising 28,452 paper-based returns (43% response rate) and 3,001 on-line responses (representing 50% of those who were surveyed on-line). It is envisaged that greater use will be made of the on-line tool in the future.

A series of summary reports have been generated by the Planning Unit at various levels of detail, including school, faculty, campus, unit level and University reports. Summary reports of both teaching and unit results have been distributed to Deans and Heads of School for dissemination to the appropriate teaching staff. Results from the unit evaluations are available from the on-line reporting tool to all Deakin staff and students at www.deakin.edu.au/unit_eval/results/general.php.

This report discusses the responses from particular student cohorts to two key statements, “This unit was well taught” and “I would recommend this unit to other students.” Aggregated results by faculty to all items in the evaluation of units are attached to this report.

Summary Results

Definitions

Responses indicate the number of unit evaluations received for that faculty, campus or unit level group.

Response Rate represents the proportion of unit evaluations returned in each cohort.

Proportion of Total represents the number of responses of each faculty, campus and unit level as a percentage of the total responses. This provides an indication of the representativeness of the survey sample. For example, the 6,269 responses received from Faculty of Arts students represents 20% of all responses received and Arts students comprise approximately 23% of the University’s student population.

The **mean** score for each of the cohorts represents the average result on a five point scale, where 1 represents ‘strongly disagree’ and 5 represents ‘strongly agree’.

The **Broadly Agree** percentage represents the number of students responding with a 3, 4 or 5 on a 5 point scale as a percentage of all responses to each cohort.

The **Agree** percentage represents the number of students responding with a 4 or 5 on a 5 point scale as a percentage of all responses to each cohort.

Table 1. Responses, Response Rates and Proportion of Total Respondents by Faculty, Campus and Unit Level

Faculty/Campus/Unit Level	Responses	Response Rate	Proportion of Total
Faculty of Arts	6,269	38%	20%
Faculty of Business and Law	8,267	39%	26%
Faculty of Education	3,793	52%	12%
Faculty of Health and Behavioural Sciences	5,921	50%	19%
Faculty of Science and Technology	7,201	48%	23%
Melbourne Campus at Burwood	16,933	47%	54%
Geelong Campus at Waurm Ponds	5,742	46%	18%
Geelong Waterfront Campus	1,577	58%	5%
Warrnambool Campus	1,720	54%	6%
Off Campus	5,491	31%	17%
Level 1 Units (UG)	10,044	44%	32%
Level 2 Units (UG)	8,630	44%	28%
Level 3 Units (UG)	7,349	43%	23%
Level 4 Units (UG/Hons)	1,143	42%	4%
Level 5 Units (UG)	711	58%	2%
Level 7 Units (PGC)	3,497	43%	11%
Total University	31,470	44%	100%

Table 1 above shows that the majority of respondents came from the faculties of Business and Law and Science and Technology. Despite having the largest number of respondents the Faculty of Business and Law recorded the second worst response rate, behind the Faculty of Arts. All other faculties had above University average response rates.

More than half of the respondents came from unit enrolments on the Melbourne campus. Higher than average response rates were reported at both the Geelong Waterfront and Warrnambool campuses, despite making up less than 10% of all responses combined. The off campus cohort made up almost 20% of the respondent cohort, but had the poorest response rate recorded.

The majority of respondents were from first and second year undergraduate units. Level 5 undergraduate units had the greatest response rate, but made up only 2% of the total respondent pool.

Table 2. Evaluation of Teaching – Question 5, “This unit was well taught” by Faculty, Campus and Unit Level.

Faculty/Campus/Unit Level	Mean	Broadly Agree	Agree
Faculty of Arts	3.85	89%	68%
Faculty of Business and Law	3.62	86%	58%
Faculty of Education	3.74	86%	64%
Faculty of Health and Behavioural Sciences	3.68	86%	62%
Faculty of Science and Technology	3.47	81%	54%
Melbourne Campus at Burwood	3.68	86%	62%
Geelong Campus at Waurm Ponds	3.70	86%	63%
Geelong Waterfront Campus	3.68	86%	62%
Warrnambool Campus	3.83	89%	67%
Off Campus	3.39	80%	49%
Level 1 Units (UG)	3.65	87%	60%
Level 2 Units (UG)	3.62	84%	59%
Level 3 Units (UG)	3.71	86%	63%
Level 4 Units (UG/Hons)	3.86	87%	70%
Level 5 Units (UG)	3.64	82%	62%
Level 7 Units (PGC)	3.54	83%	56%
Total University	3.66	85%	60%

In response to the question, “This unit was well taught” the mean score across the University was 3.66 on a five point scale. Eighty five percent of respondents “broadly agreed” with this statement (responding with a 3, 4 or 5), whilst 60% “agreed” (responding with either a 4 or 5).

The Faculty of Arts reported the highest mean, “broadly agree” percentage and “agree” percentage of any faculty, whilst the Faculty of Science and Technology reported the lowest results in all three measures. Arts, Education and Health and Behavioural Sciences all recorded means above the University average.

Warrnambool campus students were most likely to agree with this statement, with a mean of 3.83, a “broad agreement” percentage of 89% and an “agreement” percentage of 67%. Off campus students were the least likely to agree, with 49% agreeing that the unit was well taught, although 80% of the off campus respondents broadly agreed that the unit was well taught. This suggests that the majority of off campus respondents neither agreed nor disagreed with the statement, rating it three on a five point scale. Responses from other campus cohorts were above the average University results.

Level 4 units (undergraduate and honours) received the most positive feedback to this statement under all three measures, but these responses constitute only 4% of all responses. Postgraduate coursework units (level 7) had the lowest mean and the lowest percentage agreement. All results at the unit levels were similar to the University mean.

Table 3. Evaluation of Units – Question 14, “I would recommend this unit to other students” by Faculty, Campus and Unit Level.

Faculty/Campus/Unit Level	Mean	Broadly Agree	Agree
Faculty of Arts	3.90	89%	69%
Faculty of Business and Law	3.58	86%	56%
Faculty of Education	3.69	85%	62%
Faculty of Health and Behavioural Sciences	3.67	87%	61%
Faculty of Science and Technology	3.47	81%	54%
Melbourne Campus at Burwood	3.62	85%	59%
Geelong Campus at Waurm Ponds	3.64	85%	59%
Geelong Waterfront Campus	3.70	88%	62%
Warrnambool Campus	3.78	89%	65%
Off Campus	3.71	86%	63%
Level 1 Units (UG)	3.62	85%	59%
Level 2 Units (UG)	3.62	85%	58%
Level 3 Units (UG)	3.68	86%	61%
Level 4 Units (UG/Hons)	3.85	87%	69%
Level 5 Units (UG)	3.59	83%	58%
Level 7 Units (PGC)	3.72	87%	63%
Total University	3.65	85%	60%

The mean score for the statement, “I would recommend this unit to other students” was 3.65 for the University. Furthermore, 85% of all respondents broadly agreed with the statement and 60% agreed. These figures are very similar to the results generated for the teaching statement above.

Again the Faculty of Arts reported the highest mean, “broad agreement” percentage and “agreement” percentage of any faculty, and Science and Technology had the lowest results in the three measures used. Arts, Education and Health and Behavioural Sciences all reported above University means.

Warrnambool campus respondents were again the most likely to agree with this statement, with a mean of 3.78. However, the Melbourne and Geelong (Waurm Ponds) campuses had the lowest mean, “broad agreement” and “agreement” percentages for this statement. The other three campuses (Warrnambool, Waterfront and off campus) all reported above University average results.

Level 4 (undergraduate and honours) and 7 (postgraduate coursework) respondents were most likely to recommend their unit to other students, with Level 5 respondents the least likely. Note however the small proportion of respondents made up by these unit levels.

Future Developments

Enhancements to the Teaching and Unit Evaluation process that might be considered in the future include:

- Inclusion of a free-form text section for students to make general comments. This may be one generic field or form a best aspects/need for improvement section.
- Pending advice from ITS regarding impact on servers and systems, a greater proportion of evaluations to be administered via the on-line tool rather than through the paper-based survey.
- It is noted that from semester two 2003 students from Twinning partners will be included.

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