

Thematic Summary of Student Reviewer Reflections

2023-2024

How would you describe your recent experience as a student reviewer? What role did you play? What questions did you ask?

Student reviewers described their experiences as positive and enriching. They played pivotal roles in bridging student perspectives with external and internal reviewers, ensuring that student voices were heard throughout the evaluation process. Roles varied from facilitating meetings, asking clarifying questions, to advocating for student concerns. In addition, student reviewers felt that this opportunity provided valuable insights into various academic programs, and allowed them to share their observations and recommendations for program enhancement.

Drawing from your student experience at Western, as well as this recent experience as a student reviewer, what program features and/or factors are most impactful on student learning?

From their collective experiences, the broad areas identified by student reviewers as most impactful on student learning are:

- **Quality of Teaching:** engaged and passionate professors, who care about both the subject matter and their students, positively impact student learning experiences.
- **Relevance and Diversity in Curriculum:** programs that integrate contemporary issues and diverse perspectives into their curriculum were noted as beneficial for student engagement and preparedness.
- **Engagement and Relevance:** Programs that incorporated real-world applications, small group sessions, and interactive learning environments were deemed most effective.
- **Student Support:** Access to academic counselling, supportive services, and clear communication channels were identified as essential for student satisfaction and success.

What do you feel are the best ways to engage students in continuous program enhancement?

Student reviewers provided insightful recommendations for continuous program enhancement:

- **Regular Student Engagement:** encouraging regular feedback from students through surveys, focus groups, and ongoing consultations to inform program improvements.
- **Transparency and Communication:** enhancing transparency in program changes and involving students in decision-making processes.
- **Integration of Student Feedback:** actively using student feedback to shape curriculum, improve teaching methods, and enhance overall program quality.

Other Comments

- Western University continues to prioritize student engagement in program reviews through structured feedback mechanisms.
- Continue efforts to enhance teaching quality, support services, and program relevance to optimize student learning outcomes.
- Actively promote and expand opportunities for student reviewers to participate in cyclical and ongoing program reviews.

A Few Excerpts:

- *It was an interesting experience! I offered an outsider student perspective to the external reviewers. Most of the questions I asked were during the student meetings to confirm and fully understand the student experience during the program and the culture of the program.*
- *I had a very positive experience as a student reviewer. There were some issues that came up during the review that would impact students, for example, the inclusion/exclusion of tutorials, and changes to first year class structures, that I was able to help students discuss. I received a lot of encouragement from the other reviewers to facilitate the meetings with students. I asked questions relating to class size, assignment structure, and the whether they felt that courses prepared them for success.*
- *As a student reviewer, my role was to act as a bridge between the internal and external reviewers and the students. Through student meetings I facilitated, I was able to provide student perspectives on the issues that were considered in the review process.*
- *As a student reviewer, I was actively engaged and acted as a voice on behalf of students in the program when they weren't in the room, to echo their concerns and make sure their feedback was accurately reflected in the review process. When students were in the room, I took on the role of an ally, prompting them with questions and acting as a bridge between them and our team.*
- *My role as the student reviewer was to enable students to give feedback regarding the support that they need and whether they were getting this support from the program. I also guided discussion on whether they felt that the program was preparing them for success after graduation.*
- *Overall, this experience was positive and engaging. I provided clarity and information about the student experience to the external reviewers (e.g., informing them of our OWL site, how courses are chosen, etc.) as well as suggesting ideas for increasing program enrolment. I facilitated discussion to elicit student feedback on how their courses are coordinated and managed.*