

A Systematic Approach to Triple Feedback Systems for Teaching Enhancement

E. Chang, R. Morien, K.L.Chin, C. Cheah

School of Information Systems
Curtin Business School
Curtin University of Technology

change@cbs.curtin.edu.au; morienr@cbs.curtin.edu.au; chink@cbs.curtin.edu.au

Abstract

This paper identifies issues that arise from traditional university feedback systems. Traditional university feedback systems are undertaken as annual student surveys in areas including curriculum and teaching which may be conducted by the academic development unit, student union or at faculty or school level which generate statistical results. All universities around the world have such feedback systems. Some universities take the results seriously at senior management level, some only at academic teaching staff level and some only at a student level. A common problem is that these teaching survey results may only be seen by teachers, it doesn't matter whether the results are good or bad.

The questions arise; How much value can be gained from seeking feedback annually rather than routinely? How to measure the significance on those who utilise the survey results to enhance teaching? How can one utilise these anonymous results to enhance service not just at subject level or from the teachers' point of view but for the entire curriculum? How much effort has to be put in by teachers to use it for teaching improvement? How much effort has to be put in by senior management to use it for monitoring, supervising and controlling the standard of teaching performance, standard and incremental educational improvement?

We note that there is another kind of feedback which has not been addressed systematically nor dealt with efficiently, that is the feedback from Academics who deliver the teaching materials. This kind of feedback has been dealt with in an ad-hoc fashion among many universities. Some universities use a sub-group of staff or elected teaching staff, others rely on senior management, or carry out periodic meetings that may be un-productive because matters are not followed up or disagreement during the meetings result in wasted time and in little change. This is caused by ad-hoc management of the specialised academic expert.

Normally, an academic's teaching area is the same or related to their research area. Naturally, the academics in a particular teaching area are recognised as being more advanced than others. Academics understand that teaching is informed by research. Therefore, any feedback from specialised academics should not be dealt with in an ad-hoc fashion and their feedback on the subject or curriculum is as vital as student feedback

We also note that many universities utilise industry advisory panels. In many universities, they only meet once a year. However, we found only ad-hoc management of such feedback exists and no measurement has taken place on how the industry panel and their input has been applied. What are the effective ways of utilising the connection between course development and education improvement?

In this paper, we illustrate a dynamic curriculum development architecture, which systematically collects triple input or feedback from learners (students), teachers (academics) and industry panellists. We provide an incremental management approach to use these as a basis for new course development and strategic management of the improvement process of course development, as well as a matrix on the measurement of how one utilises the triple feedback for teaching and learning improvement and the value output from the triple feedback system.