Effects of Return Rates on the Nature of Faculty Evaluation:  
An Annotated Bibliography  
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**Abstract Summary:** Research investigated the relationship of the response rates from 84 Zoomerang surveys with the intended evaluation purpose (e.g., meetings/conferences, needs assessment, output/impact, and ballots). Results showed that the lowest response rates received were for needs assessment evaluation (40%). The author recommends decreasing the non-response rate error, and to consider the breadth and depth of respondent reactions and suggestions when rates are less than optimum (<85%).


**Abstract Summary:** Authors undertook this study in an academic department considering changing over to electronic course evaluations to determine the effect such a change would have on the quality of resulting course evaluation data. Study results found that Web-based evaluation methods led to lower response rates, but that lower response rates did not appear to affect mean evaluation scores. They suggested that faculty evaluation scores will not be adversely affected by switching from paper to Web-based evaluations.


**Abstract Summary:** Response representativeness is more important than response rate in survey research. However, response rate is important if it bears on representativeness. The present meta-analysis explores factors associated with higher response rates in electronic surveys reported in both published and unpublished research. The number of contacts, personalized contacts, and pre-contacts are the factors most associated with higher response rates in the Web studies that are analyzed.

Abstract Summary: Two sections of business classes taught by the same professors were randomly assigned to complete teacher evaluations either online or in class (16 professors, 961 usable evaluations). The online method had a lower response rate; students were concerned about anonymity and thought the process was time consuming and complicated.


Abstract Summary: This study examined whether administering an employee satisfaction survey using the Internet affected the rates or quality of employees’ participation. 644 hospital employees were randomly assigned to complete a satisfaction survey using either a Web survey or a traditional paper measure. Response rates were relatively high across both modes. No evidence for a very large difference in response rates was detected.


Abstract Summary: This meta-analysis covered 199 surveys administered through the SuperSurvey® cluster. Results showed that half of all surveys yielded a ≥ 26% response rate. The white paper also addresses participant response time, showing 96.5% of the responses arriving within a two-week period. Recommendations include sending invitations to participants early in the day, and giving participants one to two weeks to complete to account for periods when participants may be unavailable.


Abstract Summary: This article is about differences between, and the adequacy of, response rates to online and paper-based course and teaching evaluation surveys. Its aim is to provide practical guidance on these matters. The first part of the article gives an overview of online surveying in general, a review of data relating to survey response rates and practical advice to help boost response rates. The second part of the article discusses when a response rate may be considered large enough for the survey data to provide adequate evidence for accountability and improvement purposes. The article ends with suggestions for improving the effectiveness of evaluation strategy. These suggestions are: to seek to obtain the highest response rates possible to all surveys; to take account of probable effects of survey design and methods on the feedback obtained.
when interpreting that feedback; and to enhance this action by making use of data derived from multiple methods of gathering feedback.


**Abstract Summary:** UCLA Researchers used data collected from a national survey of first-year college students to examine both response rates and non-response bias across four survey administration groups: paper-only, paper with web option, web-only with response incentive, and web-only without response incentive. Findings indicate that response rates vary by mode of administration, and that predictors of response differed by administration group.


**Abstract Summary:** This study examines response rates, non-response bias, and response bias across two groups of community college students: those who received a district-wide follow-up survey of their college experiences via email, and those who received this survey by standard mail. The results of this study not only paint a clearer picture of differences and similarities between online surveys and paper surveys, but also inform efforts to equate online survey data with paper survey data in a single, mixed-mode administration.