THE IMPACT OF COURSE DELIVERY MODE ON STUDENT EVALUATIONS OF TEACHING

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SESSION LEARNING OUTCOMES

Participants will . . . .

1. Gain an understanding of biases present in Student Evaluations of Teaching and how they might unfairly penalize faculty if they are the sole method of teaching performance evaluation.

2. Expand their knowledge of faculty perceptions of the use of SETs in an online course.

3. Learn about the unique issues faculty face when teaching online, how they can impact student evaluations of teaching, and the practices faculty recommend to overcome these issues.

4. Learn about alternate methods, recommended by faculty, for evaluating teaching performance in online courses.

ISSUES WITH STUDENT EVALUATIONS OF TEACHING (SETS)

- SETs improve teaching
- Problems with SET Validity
- Bias due to Faculty Characteristics
- Bias due to Student Characteristics
- Bias due to Student Honesty
  - The "Halo" Effect
- Bias due to Course Characteristics
  - Delivery Mode

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Is there a statistically or practically significant difference in SET ratings between online and face-to-face sections of the same course simultaneously taught by the same instructor?

What are faculty perceptions of the use of SETs in evaluating online teaching?

What are important considerations, from a faculty perspective, when determining practices for evaluating teaching performance in online courses?

MIXED METHODS & THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Convergent Mixed Methods Design

- Quantitative methods
- Phenomenological interviews

Sensemaking Theory

- Something becomes an event
- Make meaning out of the event
- Decide what action to take

RESEARCH SITE & PARTICIPANTS
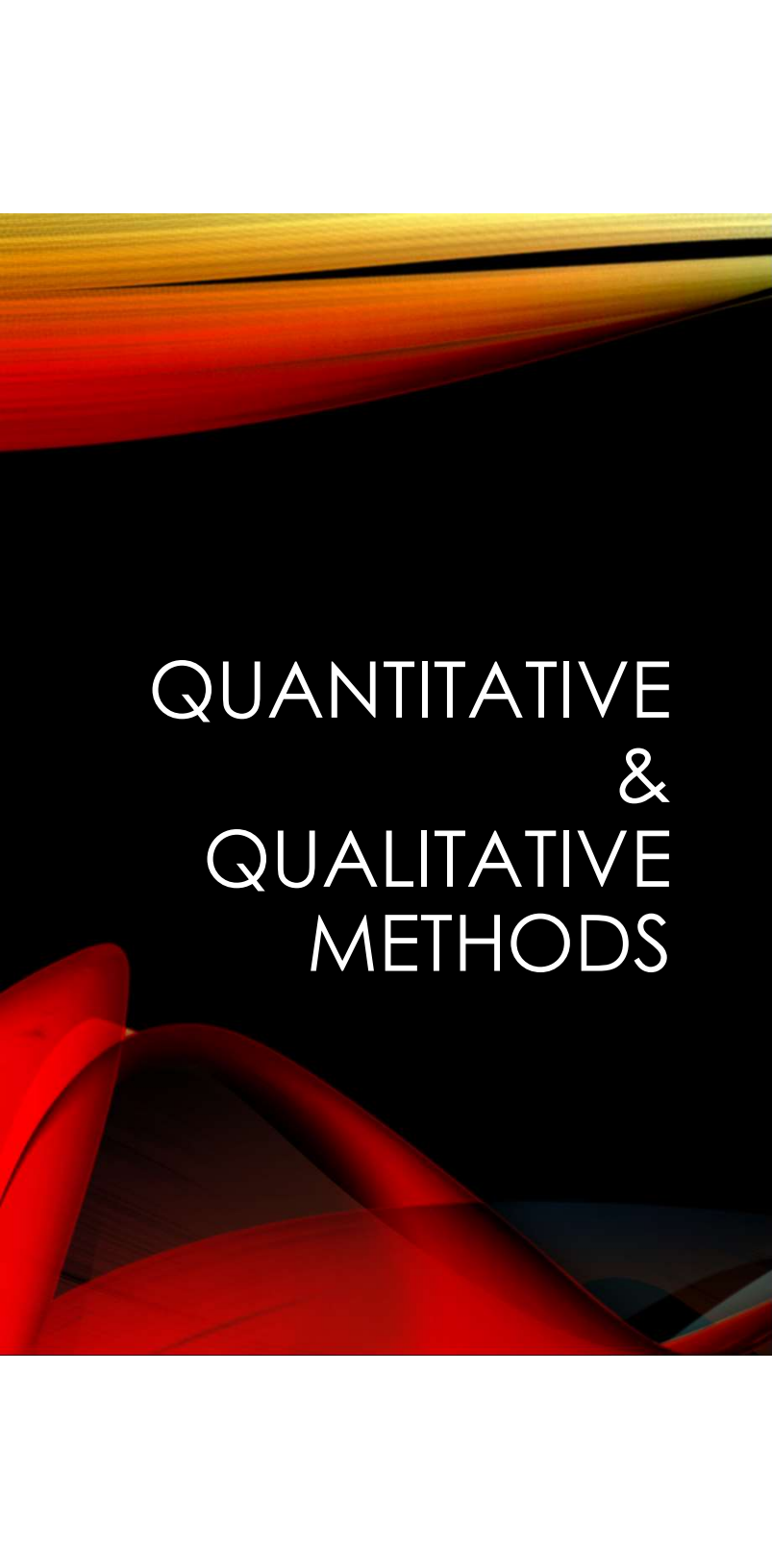
College of business

- Faculty often teach courses both online & F2F
- Robust online program for 25 years

SET data

- 9 question survey
- 1,451 course sections
- 119 online & F2F course section pairs

Phenomenological interviews

- 8 participants
  - Mix of tenured, tenure-track, and non-tenure faculty
  - 5 male, 3 female, all White

QUANTITATIVE & QUALITATIVE METHODS

Quantitative Methods

- SET constructs:
  - Instructor Satisfaction
  - Course Satisfaction
- Independent samples t-test
- Paired t-test
- Regression

Qualitative Methodology:

- Phenomenological research
  - Moustakas (1994) method

QUANTITATIVE RESULTS

Independent samples t-tests

- Online courses had lower instructor and course satisfaction

Paired t-test

- Online courses had lower instructor and course satisfaction

Regression

- Instructor satisfaction: Prior interest, delivery mode, & level
  - 18.7% of the variance
- Course satisfaction: Hours per week, prior interest, & delivery mode
 - 22% of the variance

"The Data is Going to Tell a Story, but It Might Not Be the Complete Story"

QUALITATIVE RESULTS

FACULTY FEELINGS ABOUT SETS

- "At least it's comparable and consistent, if horrible."

- "I think it's necessary but flawed"

- "I think it's important. I think it needs human judgment, though . . .. You say, here's the data, and the data is going to tell a story, but it might not be the complete story."
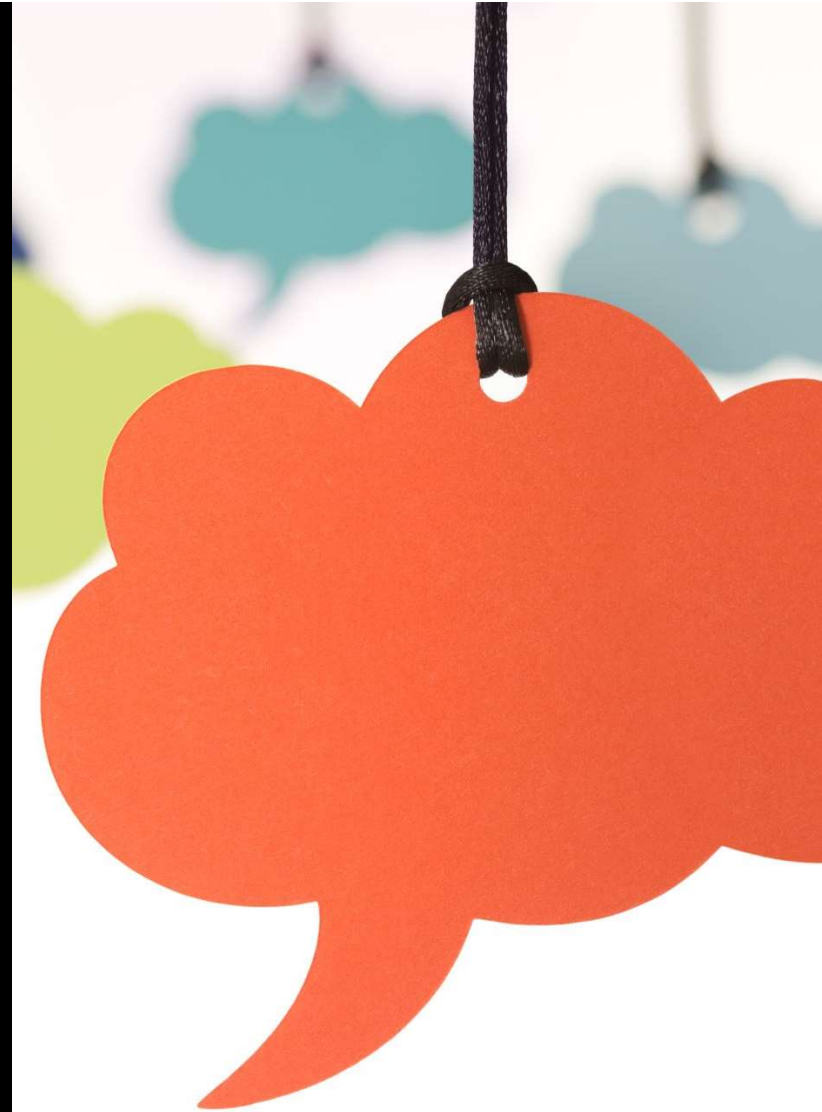
STUDENT FEEDBACK IS IMPORTANT & HELPFUL

"I think there's a responsibility for the institution to give students a voice in that process."

"Every business should get customer feedback, right? Students are customers, right?"

"I go through and look at any student comments because I find those to be by far and away the most valuable part . . .. Students sometimes have really good suggestions for, you know, minor tweaks or sometimes major tweaks."

SETS ARE NOT A GOOD MEASURE OF STUDENT LEARNING

"I filter. Okay, so who was potentially just disgruntled versus who has a legitimate observation and critique about the class?"

"You can have a whole class give you terrible [SETs] because you caught somebody cheating, and if that person happened to be a popular person, that's it, you're toast."

"I'm not sure that you can measure teaching effectiveness with [SETs]."

MAKING SENSE OF SETS

Rationalize	Rationalize it
Distance	Distance themselves emotionally
Gather	Gather their own evidence of student learning
Find	Find ways to satisfy SET feedback AND student learning

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR IMPROVING SET RATINGS IN ONLINE COURSES

- **Responsiveness**
  - "Number one is professors not providing feedback in a timely manner. "

- **Organization**
  - "Organization is huge . . . really making sure it's so clear where students are going to find the materials."

- **Interaction**
  - "You have to build a community online."

- **Respectful and Encouraging Communication**
  - "You can send an email and depending on how they want to read it, it can be positive or negative, so you have to be really careful with your communication."

FACULTY RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ONLINE TEACHING EVALUATION

Multiple Measures

- Peer Review
  - Faculty peers
  - Industry peers
- Qualitative feedback
- Survey students AFTER the course

Review Course Materials

- Student learning outcomes
- Content
- Organization
- Engagement
- Communication

CONCLUSION, LIMITATIONS, & FURTHER RESEARCH

Conclusions:

- Faculty teaching online courses receive lower SET ratings than faculty teaching F2F courses
- Need for different evaluation criteria for online courses or multiple measures
- Faculty who transition from F2F to online may need additional professional development

Further research:

- Other types of courses
- More diverse sample
- Professional instrument

CONTACT INFORMATION

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