Can Sharing a Meal with Your Students Make a Difference?

PRESENTER

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Introduction

- The purpose of this study was to determine if a social intervention (breakfast or lunch) between a faculty member and students could improve student learning outcomes, student averages, student effort, and improve overall course perceptions.

- Studies of high impact practices cite the importance of direct contact between the college professor and the student.

- Students who attain a sense of belonging through a positive faculty/student relationship are more likely to be retained and can experience positive effects on student learning (Klingo et al, 2014; O'Keefe, 2013; Swecker, Fifolt & Searby, 2013; Morrow, et al., 2012).

Introduction

- Will a social intervention improve:
- Learning (class average)
- Effort
- Retention
- Enjoyment

Class Description

- Introductory course in Sport Management
- Mostly majors (65%)
- Minors (20%)
- Undecided and elective (15%)
- Two sections taught each fall and spring semester
- Males (70%)
- Female (30%)
- ~40 to 60 students per semester

Class Description

- Course historically has a high Withdrawal, Grade of D and Grade of F (WDF) rating.

- Most often cited complaint by students is the amount of work required

- Attendance policy is strict and ~50-60% of students who complete course never miss a class.

The Meal

- Sign up for breakfast or lunch in week 1 of semester
- Lunch on Dr. Ayers
- Students can talk about anything
- I ask questions and listen
- Topics generally about family and future plans
- Rarely talk about classes or specific assignment

Methodology

- Fall 2017 one class section had meal intervention (N-27) while the other section did not (N-25).

- Student evaluations were evaluated.

- Student evaluations cover three primary areas
  - Global Index Score (Course and Professor)
  - Instructor Evaluation (Professor 7Q's)
  - Course Evaluations (Course 5Q's)

- Student perceptions are recorded on a five point Likert scale

Methodology

- In addition to the three general evaluation areas, the author analyzed two questions specifically.
  - "I learned a great deal in the course"
  - "I put in a great deal of effort into this course"
- Additionally, class averages were compared to analyze any impact on learning outcomes.
- The two sections for fall 2017 were compared and the intervention section was also compared to historical data dating back to the spring 2012 semester.

Results (Table 1)

Semester Year Section	N	Global Index	Instructor Evaluation	Course Evaluation
*F17 02	14	4.72	4.70	4.73
F17 01	19	4.47	4.49	4.47
Collective Evaluation Averages S12-S17 *(5 years total)	466	4.38	4.41	4.36

Results Students Self-Reporting and Class Averages Table 2)

Semester Year Section	N	Learned a lot	Great Effort	Class Averages	Absolute Deviations
*F17 02	14	4.71	4.50	.838	.157
S17 01	19	4.47	4.26	.834	.118
Collective Evaluation Averages S12-S17 *(5 years total)	466	4.32	4.24	.821	.112

Results

- Student perception rankings for the intervention course were higher on the Global Index Score (4.72), the Instructor Evaluation Score (4.70), & Course Evaluation Score (4.73) as compared to the control class section which rated these areas (4.47, 4.49, and 4.47) respectively & the historical ranking scores of (4.38, 4.41 and 4.36) respectively.

Results

- Student perception rankings for the items; I learned a great deal in this course (4.71) and I put a great deal of effort into this class (4.50) were also higher in the intervention class as compared to the nonintervention class which scored (4.47) and (4.26) respectively and the historical ranking average of (4.32) and (4.24) respectively.

- The class average for the intervention class was (.838) and was slightly higher than both the nonintervention class (.834) and the historical average of (.821).

Results

- Unfortunately, class averages were not significantly higher in the intervention course.

- The instructor continued the experiment for the next four semesters.

- Results were similar to the initial study.

Results (Table 3)

Semester Year Section	N	Global Index	Instructor Eval	Course Eval	Learned a lot	Great Effort	Class Average
F1801	11	4.65	4.64	4.65	4.55	4.73	0.835
F1802	16	4.5	4.62	4.38	4.56	4.56	0.837
S1801	15	4.58	4.62	4.56	4.47	4.42	0.836
S1802	14	4.51	4.65	4.52	4.67	4.45	0.824
F17 01	19	4.47	4.49	4.46	4.47	4.26	0.834
F17 02	14	4.72	4.70	4.73	4.71	4.50	0.838
S17 01	5	4.31	4.24	4.38	4.5	4.2	
S1702	10	4.6	4.56	4.64	4.5	4.5	0.749
F1601	23	4.42	4.53	4.31	4.21	4.37	
F1602	24	4.32	4.39	4.23	4.19	4.26	0.842
S1601	20	4.23	4.21	4.25	4.17	4.35	
S1602	25	4.18	4.19	4.16	4.08	3.96	0.785
F1501	22	4.44	4.38	4.49	4.53	4.21	
F1502	18	4.36	4.38	4.33	4.22	4.11	0.82
F1401	15	4.05	4.08	4.01	4	4.29	
F1402	27	4.47	4.48	4.46	4.35	4.38	0.806
S1401	23	4.23	4.31	4.21	4.22	4.19	
S1402	23	4.17	4.22	4.26	4.09	4.16	0.834
F1301	19	4.33	4.42	4.24	4.21	4.11	
F1302	22	4.37	4.42	4.36	4.32	4.21	0.862
S1301	26	4.41	4.49	4.4	4.21	4.18	
S1302	25	4.55	4.6	4.5	4.5	4.3	0.817
F1201	23	4.38	4.44	4.32	4.3	4.17	
F1202	27	4.46	4.55	4.37	4.58	4.19	0.824
S1201	29	4.39	4.47	4.31	4.36	4.13	
S1202	27	4.45	4.46	4.45	4.35	4.17	0.845
Total N	522						
Intervention		**4.572**	**4.620**	**4.550**	**4.572**	**4.487**	**0.834**
Nonintervention		**4.378**	**4.410**	**4.358**	**4.321**	**4.236**	**0.821**

Discussion

- This study suggests that student perceptions of courses and instructors can be positively influenced by a social intervention with the instructor. It also indicates that students perceive that they work harder and learn more when a social intervention with the course instructor takes place. Unfortunately, there was no significant improvement on final grades with the introduction of a social intervention.

Discussion

- Another important outcome of this study was how much the instructor enjoyed getting to know his students better. It was one of the most enjoyable semesters this instructor has ever had in his twenty plus years of teaching at the collegiate level. Currently, all students enrolled in the Introduction to Sport Management class are invited to share a meal with their instructor.

Bon appetit!
Questions?