Strategies to Increase Student Response to Online Course Evaluations

- Before the term begins, select a day when students will complete their evaluation in class. Note this date on the syllabus and announce it during the first class meeting.
  - Make clear that their completion of the evaluation is a part of the course. Make clear your expectations for completion of course evaluations.
- Throughout the academic term, talk to students about the importance of completing their course evaluations.
  - Explain the importance of these evaluations (i.e., gathering feedback on how the quality of instruction can improve). If necessary, explain the role of these evaluations in the rank and tenure process.
- Foster peer encouragement:
  - Encourage students to promote completing their evaluations to their peers.
  - Encourage your faculty peers to promote the course evaluation system.
- Administer course evaluations in class:
  - The week before the day of the evaluation, remind students of the selected day of evaluation and that they must bring an electronic device, such as a laptop, smartphone, or ipad, to complete their evaluation. If necessary, prepare students to use the Library’s computer lab (or a similar space) on the selected evaluation day.
  - On the selected day of evaluation, check the student response rate before the class.
    - Ask students to use Moodle—as opposed to email—to access the course evaluation system so that they are not searching for the link to their evaluation.
    - Devote enough class time for every student to thoughtfully complete their evaluation. Devote class time to the possibility of some students sharing an electronic device to complete their evaluations.
  - Soon after the day of evaluation, re-check the response rate and send an email reminder to students who have not yet completed their evaluation. Use the email function within the course evaluation system, which automatically sends messages only to non-respondents.
- Take students’ evaluations seriously and use course evaluation results.
  - Show students that they are not wasting their time in completing course evaluations by considering their feedback and making changes.
  - Provide students feedback to their feedback. If possible, talk with students about your interpretations of their feedback and what improvements you might make.

Office of Institutional Research, Saint Mary's College. Adapted from Michael Edwards' *The 'Big 6' Predictors of Course Evaluation Response Rate* (2012).