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ABSTRACT

Information is presented on a study to explore similarities and differences among adults in their perceptions of attributes associated with exemplary instruction. Three purposes were to: determine how returning adults describe the instructors they find exemplary and compare these findings with the findings of previous research about younger student perceptions; explore similarities and differences in perceptions; and use the findings to generate propositions for further study. Bases of comparison were gender, age, level of study, subject matter, profession, and stage in professional career. A content analysis was done on 176 letters of recommendation received from adult students in an excellence in off-campus teaching award program at a large midwestern research university. Content analysis yielded 971 data elements in 28 categories focusing on instructional techniques, instructor-student relationships, course outcomes, instructor as a person, and instructor professionalism. Much commonality was found between characteristics of excellent instruction reported by adult students and those reported by traditional undergraduate students from other studies. Findings suggest students' expectations of instructors arise from the interaction of such factors as content studied, student status, and personal situation. Common patterns of normative evaluations or expectations can be extended via the additive and diversifying experiences of adulthood. Also, these common patterns can be modified through the particular experiences of academic preparation and adulthood. Tables are included. Contains 17 references.
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AN EXAMINATION OF SIMILARITIES AND DIFFERENCES AMONG ADULTS' PERCEPTIONS OF INSTRUCTIONAL EXCELLENCE

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AN EXAMINATION OF SIMILARITIES AND DIFFERENCES AMONG ADULTS' PERCEPTIONS OF INSTRUCTIONAL EXCELLENCE

Abstract

The objective of this research was to explore similarities and differences among adults in their perceptions of attributes associated with exemplary instruction. Bases of comparison included gender, age, level of study, subject matter, profession, and stage in professional career. One hundred seventy-six letters of recommendation received from adult students as part of an excellence in off-campus teaching award program at a large, midwestern research university were subjected to content analysis. The majority of students were practicing professionals in various stages of their careers who were enrolled in graduate level, credit courses. Content analysis yielded 971 data elements in twenty-eight categories focusing upon instructional techniques, instructor-student relationships, course outcomes, instructor as a person, and instructor professionalism. Descriptive statistics and nonparametric statistical tests were employed as methods of analysis and as means to generate propositions for further study. A great deal of commonality was found between characteristics of excellent instruction reported by adult students in this study and characteristics reported by traditional undergraduate students in other studies. However, adult students also reported some characteristics not reported in other studies, and some differences among adult students were also uncovered. It is suggested that these commonalities and differences can be understood within the context of the normative expectations of instructor role performance associated with the outcomes of students' socialization to the student role and to profession-specific work roles.

AN EXAMINATION OF SIMILARITIES AND DIFFERENCES AMONG ADULTS PERCEPTIONS OF INSTRUCTIONAL EXCELLENCE

Background

The traditional student in higher education becomes an increasing rarity as more and more students manifest one or more of the characteristics which mark them as nontraditional. Students 25 years of age or older have become commonplace, representing about 45% of the college student population. In addition, it has been forecast that by the year 2000 50% of higher education students will be over the age of 25, with 20% being 35 years of age or older (AASCU and NASULGC, 1986). The past ten years have been witness to an approximate 45% increase in the number of higher education students who are between the ages of 35 and 44 (National Center for Education Statistics, 1988).

Adults are not only returning to college to earn undergraduate degrees. They are also returning in increasing numbers to attend graduate school on a part-time basis after being in the world of work. In 1986-87 part-time graduate enrollments accounted for about 54% of the total graduate level enrollments at American Colleges and Universities (National Center for Education Statistics, 1986). More and more, graduate students are intermixing work and study, especially in professional schools, rather than continuing directly to graduate study from their undergraduate experience.

Although there have been numerous studies and several meta-analyses (e.g., Feldman, 1976) of dimensions associated with students' evaluation of college teaching, these have focused almost exclusively on the perceptions of traditional, undergraduate students. Little is known about the characteristics adult learners prefer in instructors and instruction, and this

is especially the case for returning graduate students. The changing nature of higher education's student body and the lack of knowledge about adult students' perceptions about and expectations of their instructors raise a number of questions for higher education. For example: Are adults perceptions of effective instruction similar or dissimilar to those of traditional students? What implications does the changing student body have for faculty evaluation and for faculty development? Should things continue as they have been, or are adjustments needed to improve the validity of both evaluations and faculty development efforts?

There is disagreement in the literature about whether adults are different in their learning and therefore should be taught differently. For example, after studying faculty perceptions about and attitudes toward adult undergraduate students, Galerstein and Chandler (1982) concluded that traditional and nontraditional undergraduate students are so much alike that it might not be necessary to have any special development efforts to help faculty teach adults. In contrast, the adult education literature is replete with assumptions about how adult learners differ from younger learners (e.g., Knowles, 1980), and much is written about the need to help instructors learn how to teach this growing group of learners. The present study was undertaken to explore some of these same questions from the adult students' perspective.

Purposes

The current study had three specific purposes: (1) to determine how returning adults describe the instructors they consider to be exemplary and to compare these findings with the findings of previous research about younger students' perceptions; (2) to explore similarities and differences among adults in their perceptions of attributes associated with exemplary

instruction, with the bases of comparison being gender, age, level of study, subject matter, profession, and stage in professional career; and (3) to use the present study's findings to generate some propositions for further study.

Methodology

A case study approach was employed using as the case an excellence in off-campus teaching award program of a large midwestern research university. One hundred seventy-six student letters (written from December, 1980 through September, 1987) recommending faculty members for the award were subjected to content analysis. The theme (Holsti, 1969) was used as the unit of analysis. The nineteen categories of instructional characteristics reported by Feldman (1976, pp. 253-254) for "nonstructured response" studies were employed to analyze the data. Characteristics not fitting one of Feldman's categories were compiled and analyzed to create additional dimensions. Nine additional categories were identified from this secondary analysis. One of these was "other," into which infrequently mentioned general characteristics were placed. Analysis of the 176 letters yielded 971 data elements ($\bar{X}$ = 5.52, range = 1 -13, mode = 6, median = 5).

A reliability check was made by having another person analyze a random sample of letters. The coefficient of agreement (α) was employed as the measure of intercoder reliability (Krippendorf, 1980). It was found to be 0.861 across all variable categories. With one exception, α ranged from 0.67 to 1.0 for individual variables. The one exception (value of supplementary material) was excluded from further analysis (Krippendorf, 1980). (The coefficient of agreement for twenty-three of the twenty-seven attribute variables was 0.78 or higher.)

Data were subjected to three additional forms of analysis. Absolute and relative frequencies of attributes were computed to describe how the total group of adult students described the instruction they considered to be exemplary. Remaining analyses were exploratory in nature and led to the development of propositions for further consideration and study. First, attributes mentioned by students were placed in rank order for purposes of comparison with reports of previous rankings (Feldman, 1976; Goldsmid, Gruber, & Wilson, 1977). Rankings of nonstructured response studies reported by Feldman were employed as a basis of comparison because his study represents a synthesis of forty-nine nonstructured response studies. Rankings of the Goldsmid, Gruber and Wilson study were selected as another basis of comparison because their study also analyzed letters of nomination for a teaching award, albeit for an undergraduate teaching award based upon letters of recommendation from traditional undergraduate students. Second, to explore possible differences among subject matter and students, chi-square tests of independence were conducted. This analysis afforded an in-depth exploration of data which generated more substantial evidence upon which propositions could be based. This form of analysis was limited to attributes mentioned by no fewer than 10% of students. This was done to control for adequate cell size, as well as for meaningfulness of findings. Also, due to the nature of the study and its data, this form of analysis could not generate inferences applicable to the population of all returning adult students, and the results reported should not be so construed.

Comparisons were made on the basis of gender, age, level of study, subject matter, profession, and stage in professional career. The age variable was partitioned into five categories (22-28,29-34,35-43,44-50, 51+)

which correspond to the stages of adult development identified by Gould (1978). Students from whom letters were received were either undergraduates, graduate nondegree students (not formally admitted to the institution's graduate college), and graduate degree students (formally admitted to a graduate program of study). Seven broad subject matter areas were studied by students -- agriculture, education, engineering, fine arts, liberal arts, library science, and social work. Due to small frequencies for some subject matter areas, these seven were collapsed into three -- technical subject matter (agriculture and engineering), social science based subject matter (education, library science, and social work), and arts (fine arts and liberal arts). Anderson's (1974) distinction between production oriented and service oriented professions, which is based upon a professional's perceived orientation toward clients, was used to divide students into two broad groups of professions. Hall's (1976) model was used to identify students' career stages. Age was used as a rough, and admittedly arbitrary, criterion with which career stage was defined. (It is also recognized that the criterion does not accurately reflect the career stages of many women and the growing phenomenon of mid-career change.) Students were considered to be in the establishment/advancement stage of their careers if their ages ranged from 24 to 44; students who were 45 to 64 years of age were defined as being in the maintenance stage of their careers. Due to insufficient numbers, neither the pre-work stage nor the retirement stage was considered.

Results

Of the 176 letters analyzed, eighteen were from groups of students. The remaining 158 letters were written by individuals. One hundred nine (66.9%) of the letters were written by females or groups of females, and fifty-four

(33.1%) were from males. At the time letters were written, individuals' ages ranged from twenty-four to seventy-seven. The mean age was 42.7 years (median = 43, mode = 46, 48, 49). Fifteen percent of the females were 29 years of age or younger, 23% were between 30 and 39 years of age, 34% were between 40 and 49 years of age, and 29% were 50 years of age or older. Ten percent of the males were 29 years of age or younger, 40% were between 30 and 39 years of age, 30% were between 40 and 49 years of age, and 20% were 50 years of age or older.

Twenty-four (15%) of the individuals were undergraduates, most with nondegree status. Ninety-four (59%) were graduate level nondegree students, and 40 (25%) were graduate degree students. Students recommended faculty members who taught the three broad subject-matter areas defined earlier -- technical (23.3%), social science based (53.4%), and arts (23.3%). One hundred thirty-nine (79%) of the letters were from students who were in service professions, including education, social work, and library science. The remaining 37 (21%) letters came from students who were in production oriented professions, such as agribusiness and engineering (Anderson, 1974).

Characteristics of Exemplary Instruction

The frequency with which each of the twenty-seven attributes was mentioned, the percentage of letters in which each characteristic was found, and the rank order of the characteristic are provided in Table 1. A comparison

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Insert Table 1 about here

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of the rankings of selected attributes with rankings reported by Feldman (1976) and by Goldsmid, Gruber and Wilson (1977) is found in Table 2. This

table shows that eight characteristics -- (1) "instructor's concern and respect for students," (2) "instructor's knowledge of subject matter," (3) "nature and value of course material," (4) "stimulation of interest," (5) "instructor's preparation and course organization," (6) "instructor's availability and helpfulness," (7) "instructor's enthusiasm" and (8) "encouragement of questions/discussion" are among characteristics ranked in the top ten in all three studies. Goldsmid, Gruber and Wilson (1977) reported four characteristics ("committed dedicated professional," "motivation of students," "role model," and "instructor's humor") not included by Feldman (1976). The first two were among the top ten characteristics in the Goldsmid, Gruber and Wilson study and in the present one. "instructor's humor" received about the same relative ranking in both studies (17th of 27 characteristics in the present study and 22nd of 35 characteristics in the other); but "instructor serves as role model" received a higher ranking in the present study. Finally, "instructor's elocutionary skills" received a much lower ranking in the present study than in Feldman's. (This characteristic was not reported by Goldsmid, Gruber and Wilson).

Insert Table 2 about here

Neither Feldman (1976) nor Goldsmid, Gruber and Wilson (1977) reported four categories identified in the present study. These were (1) "impact of instructor or instructor's teaching," (2) "instructor's responsiveness to diverse needs," (3) "instructor fosters development of a community of learners," and (4) "instructor uses a variety of teaching techniques."

The "impact" characteristic was derived from comments about a resultant change in students' practice, attitude or performance. Letters contained comments about the "profound influence" and "significant impact" instructors and their teaching had on students' personal and professional lives.

Instructors' responsiveness to diverse needs was derived from student comments about instructors making adjustments in content, schedules, supplementary materials and teaching techniques to respond to the diversity in needs, interests, experiences, and life situations brought by adult learners to the teaching/learning transaction. The "community of learners" category was developed from student comments about the development among class members of an intensity of involvement, cohesiveness, focus on common goals, full participation and mutual caring, sharing, and helping. This characteristic went beyond encouraging questions and discussion and creating a conducive atmosphere for learning, although it contributed to these dimensions. Rather, it apparently resulted from instructors using the group as a primary teaching/learning vehicle in which participants were responsible for each other's learning.

The "variety of techniques" category stemmed from students' comments about the importance of instructors using a variety of instructional techniques. These included case studies, lectures, guest speakers, participant panels, films, work related projects, and videotapes. Variety was considered to be important in each class meeting, as well as in an entire course. This characteristic was also referred to in relation to instructors' abilities to employ diverse techniques in their teaching. This finding has also been reported by Apps (1987) in his studies of outstanding instructors of adults.

Comparisons based on Subject Matter and Student Groupings

As noted earlier, chi-square tests of independence were used to explore data more thoroughly. The purpose of this procedure was to generate additional information from which propositions about differences among subject matter and different groups of students could be developed. Although tests of significance were used, given the exploratory nature of this form of analysis any significant findings (at $p \leq .05$) are reported as tendencies upon which propositions could be based. Analyses were conducted on the frequency with which different groups of individuals did or did not mention a particular instructional attribute. When a tendency was found, it was explicated by holding other variables constant to determine their contributions to the tendency (Reynolds, 1984). Dimensions employed in this analysis were (1) subject matter studied by students, (2) the type of profession in which students worked, (3) age, (4) stage in professional career, (5) gender, and (6) level of study. The results of this analysis are reported in Table 3.

Insert Table 3 about here

Subject Matter Studied. Three tendencies were found across the different subject matter areas that students studied. Students taking technical courses were more apt to mention instructors' "encouragement of questions and discussion", and students enrolled in other courses were less apt to mention this attribute. Students studying technical subject matter (especially graduate nondegree and graduate degree students in the establishment/advancement career stage) mentioned "concern and respect" much less frequently than expected, while those studying other subject matter areas

mentioned this attribute slightly more frequently than expected. Finally, students studying technical subject matter mentioned "instructor serves as role model" less frequently than expected, while students studying social science based subject matter mentioned this attribute more frequently than expected.

Type of Profession. As noted earlier, the professions in which students were engaged were categorized as to whether they were production or service oriented (Anderson, 1974). Six tendencies were identified from the analysis of attributes mentioned by the type of profession in which students were engaged.

Students in production oriented professions mentioned more than expected (and students in service oriented professions less than expected) some aspects of instruction related to their mastery of subject matter. They were more apt to mention (a) "instructor's ability to explain and understandableness" (especially those in the establishment and advancement stages of their careers); (b) "instructor's encouragement of questions and discussion" (especially women who were in the establishment/advancement career stages); and (c) "instructor's availability and helpfulness" (especially women who were in the establishment/advancement career stages). It would appear that persons (especially women) who are in the process of establishing and advancing their careers in production oriented professions are more concerned with those aspects of instruction related to mastering technical subject matter.

In contrast, students in service oriented professions were more likely than expected to mention (and conversely for persons in production oriented professions) (a) "instructors' concern, respect and friendliness" (especially for graduate nondegree students who were in the career stage of

establishment/advancement); (b) "motivation of students" (especially for graduate nondegree students who were in the maintenance stage of their career); and (c) "impact" (especially males who were in the maintenance career stage). This group of learners appeared to be more concerned with the affective aspects of instruction, as well with the impact that instructors and their instruction had upon their personal and professional lives. This latter tendency was especially the case for individuals whose careers had reached a plateau.

Age. Only one tendency was identified with the age of students. Individuals 44 - 50 years of age were more likely than expected to mention the impact that instructors and their teaching had upon their personal and professional lives. This was particularly the case for females who were in the service professions and had graduate nondegree status. Persons 29 - 34 years of age and 35 - 43 years of age mentioned this attribute less frequently than expected. If considered from the perspective of career stages, this finding suggests that those individuals in the early part of the maintenance stage are more likely than expected to mention this particular attribute.

Career Stage. As noted above, Hall's (1976) career stage model was used to guide the exploration of differences based upon students' career stages. Career stages were operationalized using student age as an rough index of career stage. Persons 24 to 44 years of age were considered to be in the establishment/advancement stages of their career. Persons 45 to 65 years of age were considered to be in the maintenance stage of their careers, a critical time when they either continue to grow or decline. Only one tendency was identified for different career stages. Those in the maintenance stage of their careers (especially those studying social science based subject matter)

were more likely than expected to mention role modeling, while those in the establishment/advancement stage were less likely than expected to mention this attribute. A review of the data indicated that role modeling was not considered by students as mentoring, but as integrity and consistency in approach. Instructors practiced what they taught, and the subject matter they taught (see earlier finding for social science based subject matter) gave them the opportunity to demonstrate this consistency. One possible explanation for this finding is that individuals who have reached a stage of maturity in their careers are not only more able to identify role integrity in others, but they also expect it and appreciate it more than others do.

Gender. No tendencies were identified with gender. All attributes were mentioned as frequently as expected by males and females alike.

Student Status. Four tendencies were identified with student status. Undergraduates mentioned more frequently than expected, (1) "ability to explain and understandableness" (especially male undergraduates), (2) "encouragement of questions and discussion" (especially those in the establishment/advancement career stage), and (3) "availability and helpfulness" (especially females in the establishment/career stage). Graduate nondegree students mentioned all three attributes less frequently than expected, and except for "availability and helpfulness" which was mentioned fewer times than expected, graduate degree students mentioned these characteristics about as frequently as expected.

Graduate nondegree students (especially those in the maintenance career stage) mentioned "impact" more frequently than expected, while undergraduates mentioned the attribute less frequently than expected. Graduate degree students alluded to this characteristic at about the expected frequency.

Nondegree students have been said to have a "consumer orientation" to continuing education. They shop among different sponsoring institutions and are motivated to enroll in both noncredit and credit courses to deal with specific work related goals (Campbell, Hentschel, Rossi, & Spiro, 1984). This pragmatic orientation suggests a possible explanation for why this particular group of students mentioned the impact attribute more frequently than expected. However, most undergraduates were also nondegree students, and they mentioned this attribute much less frequently than expected. It could be that a nondegree classification alone is an insufficient explanation for this pattern. The data from the present study also suggest that being established in one's career may also provide a partial explanation for this finding.

Discussion

The sampling technique and form of data do not permit inferences to be made to all adult students, and comparisons of the present study's results with studies of younger students have only heuristic value. But the study's results have merit in suggesting areas for additional research. The findings will be considered first from the perspective of general propositions which can be offered. These will be followed by specific recommendations for research in this area.

This study's findings suggest that students' expectations of instructors arise from the interaction of several factors, such as content studied, career stage, personal situation, classroom interaction, and student status. In addition, the findings reported here can be construed as originating from students' technical evaluations of teaching. But they can also be understood as being derived from students' normative evaluations of the extent of congruence or deviation of instructors' role performance with students'

expectations (Linsky and Straus, 1973). Indeed, it could be argued that the writing of unsolicited letters of recommendation had its origin as much or more in students' perceived congruence of their expectations with instructors' role performance as in the observation and reporting of exemplary techniques. Although several approaches might be used to interpret findings, the concept of normative evaluation appears to hold a great deal of promise for explaining differences between adults and younger students and among adults themselves.

A great deal of similarity was found between characteristics of excellent instruction reported by adult students in this study and the characteristics reported by younger students in the Feldman (1976) and Goldsmid, Gruber and Wilson (1977) studies, as well as in other literature not reviewed in this paper. Considered from the perspective of socialization, it can be proposed that learners are socialized through formal educational experiences to expect certain things of their instructors and that, unless a resocialization to other expectations occurs, these expectations persist throughout the lifespan.

Second, this study's findings suggest that common patterns of normative evaluations or expectations can be and are extended through the additive and diversifying experiences of adulthood. Further, these normative evaluations and expectations can also be modified by the particular situations in which adults find themselves and from which different motives for participating in sponsored learning originate. Four dimensions not reported in literature on younger students were mentioned by adults in this study -- "responsiveness to diverse needs," "instructor uses a variety of instructional techniques," 'instructor fosters the creation of a community of learners," and "impact of instructor and instruction on personal and professional lives." As people

grow older they recognize their distinctiveness and the heterogeneity of the world around them, including the high degree of heterogeneity that obtains in most adult classroom situations. It could be argued that the expectation that instructors respond to students in particular (or at least varied) rather than in universal ways (Parsons, 1951) is greater among adult than among younger students. This might explain, in part, adults mentioning responsiveness to diverse needs and instructional variety. Much of adult life involves working with colleagues, participating in team problem solving efforts, and learning from peers. If being responsible for another's learning is not emphasized in traditional instruction, it is in the work environment. The mention of a community of learners by adults irrespective of class level (graduate or undergraduate) suggests that this attribute may be derived, at least in the case of this investigation, more from expectations learned in the work environment than in the classroom. Lastly, the data suggest that adults do want their learning to have application in their personal and professional lives. Immediacy of application has been a central tenet of adult education (Knowles, 1980), and adult roles facilitate the application of learning more than the roles of younger students. Yet, the findings of this study suggest that the saliency of this factor may be modified by the specific situations in which adults find themselves. As noted earlier, graduate nondegree students in service professions and in the early maintenance stage of their careers emphasized this attribute more than other students. It would appear that the pragmatic motives, as well as the career stage, of this group of learners contributed to the significance of this attribute for them.

Finally, the study's findings suggest that common patterns of normative evaluations or expectations can be and are modified through the particular

experiences of academic preparation and adulthood. Several differences were found in characteristics mentioned when the dimensions of subject matter, age, career stage, type of profession, and student status were considered. It must be kept in mind that these differences represent only a difference in emphases across these dimensions. The attributes reported were mentioned by all groups of students and for all types of subject matter. Therefore, the tendencies reported are differences in degree and not in kind. For example, just because individuals in the production oriented professions mentioned concern and respect less frequently than expected does not imply that this is an unimportant attribute for this group. In fact, this attribute's ranking for production oriented professions was 8.5 out of the 27 specific attributes reported. What it does suggest, however, is that this characteristic has less saliency for this group of students than for their service oriented counterparts. It also suggests that socialization during career preparation and in the work setting may foster the learning of different sets of values for different professions. These in turn find their expression in adult students' expectations about the role performance of others, including their instructors. What could not be discerned from this study were the relative effects and interactions between socialization during academic preparation and in the work setting.

The tendency for undergraduate students to mention "ability to explain," "helpfulness and availability," and "encouragement of questions and discussion" more than expected may reflect their socialization during high school and in early undergraduate work. It may reflect, as well, their expectations of instructors and instruction as they, in adulthood, begin anew to explore the academic waters and test their abilities to learn. Finally,

the tendency for individuals in the maintenance stage of their careers to mention role modeling more than expected suggests that individuals who have reached a stage of maturity in their careers expect the same role integrity among instructors, many of whom are their contemporaries.

Recommendations for Future Research

The general propositions outlined above were generated by recognizing that student evaluation of teaching has both normative and technical dimensions. This suggests that future research in this area should include measurement of the normative factors associated with the effects of socialization to the role of student and to specific work roles that adults assume. Future studies should also include large, randomly selected samples of traditional age undergraduate students and continuing graduate students as well as sub-groups of adult students. This will be required in order to compare expectations of traditional age undergraduate students, continuing graduate students, and returning adult undergraduate and graduate students. Setting and mode of delivery (for example, on-campus, off-campus, face-to-face, distance education modalities), subject matter, and class size are also important variables to which additional attention should be paid. Although career stage was considered in the present study, more exacting measures of this variable need to be devised, so that the effect of this variable can be more fully and validly explicated. Finally, studies should be conducted which allow exploration of interaction among normative, technical, contextual, and instructional interaction factors. Results of the present study suggest that student expectations of instructors and instruction have multiple sources, and research needs to be undertaken which explores the saliency of each and the relation of each category of variables to others.

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Table 1

Characteristics Attributed to Faculty Members Recommended for the Excellence in Off-Campus Teaching Award

Characteristic	Frequency of Characteristic (N = 971) N	%	Percent of Those Recommending (N = 176)	Rank Order
1. Instructor's concern and respect for students; friendliness of instructor‡	85	8.8	48.3	1
2. Committed, dedicated professional	78	8.0	44.3	2
3. Instructor's knowledge of subject matter‡	73	7.5	41.5	3
4. Nature and value of course material (including usefulness and relevance)‡	69	7.1	39.2	4
5. Stimulation of interest in subject‡	58	6.0	33.0	5
6. Instructor's preparation; organization of course‡	56	5.8	31.8	6
7. Instructor's availability and helpfulness‡	53	5.5	30.1	7
8. Instructor's enthusiasm for subject or for teaching‡	48	5.0	27.3	8.5
9. Encouragement of questions/ discussion; openness to opinions of others‡	48	5.0	27.3	8.5
10. Motivation of students	42	4.3	23.9	10
11. Impact of instructor or instructor's teaching	41	4.2	23.3	11
12. Instructor's ability to explain course material clearly‡	40	4.1	22.7	12.5

Table 1 (continued)

Characteristic	Frequency of Characteristic (N = 971) N	%	Percent of Those Recommending (N = 176)	Rank Order
13. Nature and value of supplementary materials and teaching aids‡	40	4.1	22.7	12.5
14. Instructor's responsiveness to diverse needs	33	3.4	18.8	14
15. Instructor serves as a role model	22	2.2	12.5	15
16. Instructor fosters development of a community of learners	18	1.9	10.2	16
17. Instructor's humor	17	1.8	9.7	17
18. Instructor uses variety of teaching techniques	16	1.7	9.1	18
19. Intellectual challenge, encouragement of independent thought‡	15	1.5	8.5	19
20. Instructor's intellectual expansiveness and intelligence‡	14	1.4	8.0	21
21. Instructor's sensitivity and concern with class level and performance‡	14	1.4	8.0	21
22. Classroom management, including maintaining classroom atmosphere conducive to learning‡	14	1.4	8.0	21
23. Instructor's fairness, impartiality of evaluation of students‡	11	1.1	6.3	23
24. Difficulty of the course and workload‡	9	0.9	5.1	24

Table 1 (continued)

Characteristic	Frequency of Characteristic (N = 971) N	%	Percent of Those Recommending (N = 176)	Rank Order
25. Nature, quality, and frequency of feedback to students*	7	0.7	4.0	25
26. Instructor's elocutionary skills*	4	0.4	2.3	26.5
27. Clarity of course objectives and requirements*	4	0.4	2.3	26.5

* Categories identified by Feldman (1976).

Table 2

Selected Characteristics Compared by Rank with Feldman (1976), and Goldsmid, Gruber, and Wilson (1977)

Characteristic	Rank in Present Study	Rank Reported by Feldman	Rank Reported by Goldsmid et. al.
Instructor's concern and respect for students; friendliness of instructor	1	1	3
Committed, dedicated professional	2	---[1]	(3)[3]
Instructor's knowledge of subject matter	3	2	4
Nature and value of course material (including usefulness and relevance)	4	---[2]	7
Stimulation of interest in subject	5	3	2
Instructor's preparation; organization of course	6	9	6
Instructor's availability and helpfulness	7	4	1
Instructor's enthusiasm for subject or for teaching	8.5	7	5
Encouragement of questions/discussion; openness to opinions of others	8.5	5	9
Motivation of students	10	---[1]	8
Impact of instructor or instructor's teaching	11	---[1]	---[1]
Instructor's ability to explain course material clearly	12.5	6	10
Instructor's responsiveness to diverse needs	14	---[1]	---[1]
Instructor serves as role model	15	---[1]	30
Instructor fosters development of a community of learners	16	---[1]	---[1]
Instructor's humor	17	---[1]	22
Instructor uses variety of teaching techniques	18	---[1]	---[1]

Table 2 (continued)

Characteristic	Rank in Present Study	Rank Reported by Feldman	Rank Reported by Goldsmid et. al.
Instructor's fairness, impartiality of evaluation of students	23	8	11
Instructor's elocutionary skills	26.5	10	---[4]

Notes:

[1]These categories are not reported by Feldman (1976) or by Goldsmid, Gruber, and Wilson (1977).

[2]Feldman (1976, p. 253) notes that the category, "nature and value of course material" would have been included among those reported most frequently in nonstructured studies, but he did not include this characteristic because the results for it were based on an insufficient number of studies.

[3]If separate categories listed under "Teacher as Professional" were collapsed into one, it would have had a rank of "3" in the Goldsmid, Gruber, and Wilson (1977) study.

[4]This category is not reported by Goldsmid, Gruber, and Wilson (1977).

Table 3

Statistically Significant Chi-Square Tests of Independence for Instructional Attributes versus Dimensions of Subject Matter and Student Groupings (Statistically Significant Findings Are Reported as Tendencies)

Attribute	Dimension: Subject Matter	Type of Profession	Age	Career Stage	Student Status
Encourage Questions & Discussion	x^2 = 7.45 df = 2 p = .02	x^2 = 5.05 df = 1 p = .025			x^2 = 10.59 df = 2 p = .005
Ability to Explain		x^2 =5.05 df = 1 p = .025			x^2 = 6.97 df = 2 p = .03
Availability & Helpfulness		x^2 = 4.67 df = 1 p = .03			x^2 = 8.51 df = 2 p = .01
Concern, Respect & Friendliness	x^2=6.0 df = 2 p = .05	x^2 = 3.95 df = 1 p = .047			
Motivation		x^2 = 5.35 df = 1 p = .02			
Impact		x^2 = 5.02 df = 1 p = .025	x^2 = 12.3 df = 4 p = .015		x^2 = 6.79 df = 2 p = .033
Role Modeling	x^2 = 6.8 df = 2 p = .03			x^2 =4.3 df = 2 p = .038	