

SELECTED VARIABLES INVOLVED IN STUDENT RATINGS OF THE
TEACHING PERFORMANCE OF THE COLLEGE FACULTY

by

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CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

If student ratings are to be used as a part of the evidence accumulated about an instructor for the purposes of granting tenure or promotion in rank, then more needs to be known about factors that might influence the rating process. The instructor and the administrator need more information concerning the process in order to evaluate the ratings given. Do students evaluate the instructor on perceived performance alone or are there other factors which tend to bias the results? For example, do students who anticipate receiving higher grades in a course tend to be less critical in their evaluation of the instructor's teaching performance than students who expect low grades? If an instructor of a class composed of seniors is rated lower than an instructor of a class made up of freshmen, is it because older students tend to be more critical in their evaluations? Does an instructor of elective courses receive higher ratings than an instructor assigned to teach required subjects? Is there a difference in instructor ratings as a function of the overall grade point average of the student? Do students enrolled in the College of Education rate their teachers higher than do students enrolled in the College of Home Economics? Are females inclined to

be more lenient than males in rating an instructor? Are instructors who teach lower division classes rated more severely than teachers of upper division courses? Do teachers of higher academic rank generally receive more favorable student ratings than teachers of lower academic rank? Does the time of day that the class is scheduled to meet influence ratings assigned to the instructor?

Is the student population at Texas Tech University similar to the student populations at other universities and colleges concerning variables which influence the student rating process?

Although student evaluations have considerable potential value, there are many questions which need to be answered before that potential can be attained. The present study was designed to investigate some of the variables involved in the evaluation process.

Problem of the Study

In recent years student evaluation of faculty teaching performance has become a critical issue in higher education (Eble, 1972). The problem of the present study was to investigate the involvement of twelve selected variables in the evaluation process.

Purpose of the Study

This study was designed to provide information which would be beneficial to administrators in higher education

who plan to utilize student ratings as a part of the evidence accumulated about an instructor for the purposes of granting tenure or promotion in rank.

In addition, the information which was obtained from this investigation will be useful to the college instructor who wishes to use student evaluations to enhance his teaching skills.

Any department which plans to establish a system of formal student evaluation will find data in this report which will facilitate the development of such a program.

Limitations of the Study

The investigator was aware of the many limitations of this type of study. Only a few of the possible factors which could influence student evaluations were selected for investigation. A number of worthy variables were omitted out of necessity.

The data used in the present study were collected by the Student Association of Texas Tech University. Participation in the evaluation process was contingent upon the approval of the instructor. It is not known what effect, if any, that such a limitation imposes.

Also, the various colleges included in the University were not equally represented. Some 157 classes from the College of Arts and Sciences were evaluated while only ten

from the College of Agricultural Sciences and not any from the College of Engineering.

Hypotheses

Twelve hypotheses were involved in the current study. The first seven hypotheses pertained to the student rater, the next three hypotheses were course factors, and the last two involved the instructor.

The following are the null hypotheses which were formulated. It was hypothesized that students would not differ in ratings of the teaching performance of the instructor as a function of:

- HO₁ The grade that the student anticipated receiving in the course.
- HO₂ The age of the student.
- HO₃ The reason why the student was taking the course.
- HO₄ Overall grade point average of the student.
- HO₅ The college in which the student was enrolled.
- HO₆ The sex and/or marital status of the student.
- HO₇ The academic classification of the student.
- HO₈ The academic level of the course.
- HO₉ The time of day that the class met.
- HO₁₀ The number of students enrolled in the class.
- HO₁₁ The college assignment of the instructor.
- HO₁₂ The academic rank of the instructor.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Faculty Evaluations

In recent years the college student has come to be considered as a possible source of information concerning the teaching effectiveness of his instructors. There are several reasons for such a state of affairs. Eble (1972) stated that one reason for the current interest in student evaluations could be linked with the contemporary influence of accountability in the educational situation. Tolor (1973) felt that citizens resented paying high taxes for the support of higher education without evidence of the quality of instruction. He also indicated that the public was concerned over the relevance of what was being taught in the institutions of higher learning.

There has been criticism leveled at the college instructor concerning his knowledge of how to teach (Fischer, 1965). In the past there have been few programs specifically designed to train prospective college instructors to be effective teachers or inservice programs to help the faculty improve their teaching skills (Gaff & Wilson, 1971). Eble (1972) maintained that teachers do change and student evaluations do facilitate teaching performance.

A number of writers have pointed out an imbalance which exists in the college reward structure. A faculty member's rate of promotion, salary increments, and tenure considerations were found to be almost entirely a function of productivity in research and publication (Bresler, 1968; Cohen, 1967; Eble, 1972; Fischer, 1965; Gaff & Wilson, 1971; Hayes, 1971).

The prolific researcher is not necessarily a superior instructor. Voeks (1962) found that while teaching effectiveness and extensiveness of publication did not go hand in hand, neither did they conflict. On the other hand, McDaniel and Feldhusen (1970) reported evidence which indicated that superior instructors engage in a limited amount of research activity. The superior teacher who is not a prolific researcher is limited in professional advancement opportunities (Martin & Berry, 1969). The reason why classroom instruction is relegated to a secondary role in higher education seems to be the difficulty involved in identifying superior teaching and not because it is considered unimportant (Eble, 1972). College administrators can readily evaluate a faculty member's proficiency in research which is highly visible. The assessment of teaching performance presents a much more formidable task (Eble, 1972; Woodring, 1964).

Unfortunately, the methods currently employed in evaluating teaching performance leave much to be desired (Bogue, 1967; Gustad, 1967; Kult, 1973). In rating the teaching performance of a faculty member, administrators reported the reliance upon such sources as the grapevine, informal student opinion, opinion of colleagues, and again, the ability to do research (Astin & Lee, 1966; Byrnes & Jamrich, 1962; Cohen, 1967; Kult, 1973). Gustad (1967) found that over half of the institutions involved in his study reported that they were not satisfied with their present system of faculty evaluation.

Effective Teaching Performance

Eble (1972) reported that students voiced instances of bad teaching more often than instances of good teaching. He found that students wanted an instructor to be able to convey a sense of caring about what he was doing and some-
how to make the concern include both the students and the world outside the campus. Some of the effective teacher characteristics listed by students were: (1) a thorough knowledge of the subject, (2) ability to explain the material to the students, (3) the ability to arouse the student's interest, (4) a willingness to entertain ideas other than his own, and (5) the ability to establish rapport with the class.

effective teaching about

The characteristics which differentiate superior and inferior teaching performance have been the focus of extensive research. Finkbeiner, Lathrop, and Schuerger (1973) reported that students evaluate an instructor's teaching performance on instructor empathy and instructional competence. Tolor (1973) found that students rated good teaching methods as being highly important in distinguishing a good teacher from a poor one. Very few students felt that a teacher was ineffective because he did not know his subject matter. Granzin and Painter (1973) reported that superior instructors made the course relevant, provided information or developed skills which would be of value in terms of a job or for later life. It was also reported that effective instructors made the course interesting and entertaining.

Students stated that an effective teacher possessed personality traits of a sense of humor, fairness, courtesy, tact, and self control (Cooper & Lewis, 1951). Coffman (1954) reported a high positive relationship between student ratings of effective teaching and ratings of ability to arouse interest, sense of humor, good relationship between instructor and student, and tolerance. Guthrie (1954) found that students associated "belittling behavior" with instructors receiving low ratings. * Sarcasm and belittling behavior occurred almost not at all on comments about instructors who had received high ratings.

In the literature reviewed, students did not seem to favor any one particular instructional method over another. Colliver (1972) reported no significant differences in instructor ratings as a function of lecture or discussion methods. Eble (1972) observed that there seems to be no one style favored over the others. Crittenden and Norr (1973) stated that students' overall evaluation of an instructor is an additive function of component aspects of teaching behavior weighed by the student's view of the importance of those aspects for good teaching.

Student Ratings Compared to Other Forms of Evaluation

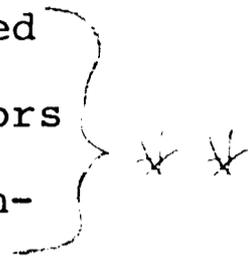
Some investigators have studied the relationship between student ratings and other forms of faculty evaluations. Aleamoni and Yimer (1973) reported that colleague and student ratings of instructors were not related. Colleague ratings were related to the academic rank with higher rank receiving higher ratings. Such was not the case with student ratings. Guthrie (1954) discovered a relatively low (.43) correlation between student and colleague ratings on teaching effectiveness. Marsh (1956) found a high positive correlation between colleague and supervisor ratings of teaching effectiveness. Webb and Noland (1955) obtained a high correlation between self ratings and student ratings, but low correlation between either of the above and supervisor

ratings. Hayes (1971) found that the ratings of supervisors revealed a high correlation between research ability and teaching quality. He contended that the high ratings in teaching effectiveness may well be a "halo" effect. Perhaps the supervisors were judging teaching effectiveness by research abilities. He also noted that bad researchers were given a heavier teaching load as well as low-level classes. Kult (1973) observed that most evaluations were subjective and performed by an administrator who is in no position to evaluate teaching performance.

The weight of evidence supports the contention that  student and supervisor ratings do not agree. It seems that the supervisors and students are using different criteria in making their evaluations. Detchen (1940) maintained that only the student can adequately rate the impact that the instructor has upon him. Woodring (1964) stated that college administrators have little knowledge of their faculty's teaching performance. Some more valid method of teaching evaluation was deemed necessary. Bogue (1967) stated that there had been a lack of scientific basis for instructor evaluation, and a need existed to utilize student evaluations.

A strong case has been made concerning the need to improve the current process of faculty evaluation. A number of writers feel that student ratings would enhance the

evaluation process. Before a great deal of confidence can be placed in student evaluations, the process needs to be thoroughly investigated. The following section is devoted to a review of studies which have evaluated certain factors which could influence student ratings of instructor teaching performance.



Student Variables

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A number of student variables which could affect teacher ratings have been investigated. Borland (1973) conducted a study which investigated instructor ratings of economically disadvantaged and usual students. He found that ratings did not differ as a function of the economic status of the student rater.

Anikeeff (1953) found that class absences were negatively correlated with faculty ratings. Students that were absent the most were most critical in their evaluations of teaching performance.

Colliver (1972) reported that ratings varied as a function of whether the students were required to sign the evaluation forms. Students who were not required to sign the forms gave lower instructor ratings.

Elliott (1950) discovered that the achievement level of the student was a significant factor in the evaluation process. Instructors of high achieving students received higher ratings than instructors of low achievers.

Students rated instructors of courses which they considered to be beneficial higher than instructors of courses that they felt had small practical value (Walker, 1969).

A number of studies have investigated the relationship between the grade that the student anticipated receiving in a class and the rating that he assigned to the instructor. The majority of studies reviewed found no relationship between course grade either anticipated or received and instructor ratings (Blum, 1936; Colliver, 1972; Detchen, 1940; Eble, 1972; Eckert & Keller, 1954; Elliott, 1950; Garverick & Carter, 1962; Hudelson, 1951; Remmers, 1930; Voeks, 1960). However, the research results were not completely consistent. Some evidence indicated that students who expected to receive better grades gave the instructor higher ratings (Stewart & Malpass; Weaver, 1960). When students got higher grades than anticipated, they were less critical in their ratings than students who received lower than anticipated grades (Grazin & Painter, 1973). Anikeef (1953) also found that grades were reflected in student ratings. The effect was reported to be of greater magnitude at the freshman and sophomore levels. Grazin and Painter (1973) contended that a student uses perceived performance as the frame of reference in evaluating the teaching performance of his instructors rather than the grade that he anticipates receiving in the course. The inconsistency of

the results concerning the involvement of grades in the evaluation process indicates that additional investigation of that relationship is required.

Bryant (1967) stated that the college student is too immature to adequately evaluate the teaching performance of his instructors. Bryant's contention can be investigated if the assumption is made that greater age is usually associated with greater maturity. Walker (1969) presented evidence which suggested that older students were more critical in their ratings than younger students. Grazin and Painter (1973) discovered that ratings did not differ significantly as a function of the rater's age. The conflicting results concerning the influence of the age factor in the evaluation process offers an avenue for further research.

Several studies reported that students were more favorable in their ratings of instructors who taught elective courses than teachers of required courses (Cohen & Brawer, 1969; Downie, 1952; Gage, 1961; Grazin & Painter, 1973). Apparently, the student's attitude toward the course affects his evaluation of the instructor's teaching performance. Such information needs to be taken into account if instructor ratings of required and elective courses are being compared. Differences in ratings of instructors' teaching required or elective courses in the educational setting at Texas Tech University were included in the current study.

The relationship between the grade point average of the student and the instructor ratings is worthy of investigation. A high grade point average is indicative of academic success in the college situation. It might be anticipated that the students who are academically successful would tend to rate their instructor's teaching performance higher than students who have earned lower grades. However, several studies which investigated that particular relationship reported that no significant difference in student ratings as a function of grade point average was found (Grazin & Painter, 1973; Guthrie, 1954; Rayden, 1968). The grade point average variable was included in the present study in order to determine if the previous results can be replicated with the student population at Texas Tech University.

No data were found concerning the relationship between the college in which a student is enrolled and the rating that he gives to his instructors. If student ratings are to be used as a part of the information assembled for purposes of faculty evaluation, then it is important for the administrator to be aware of any variables which bias the results. In the present study, instructor ratings of students enrolled in the various colleges at Texas Tech University were analyzed for significant differences.

Grazin and Painter (1973) found that female students tended to give instructors slightly higher ratings than did male students. Bendig (1952) obtained the opposite results. He found females to be more unfavorable in their ratings than males. Other studies found no significant differences in ratings as a function of the sex of the rater (Bendig, 1953; Lovell & Haner, 1955; Rayden, 1968). The involvement of sex and marital status of the rater in the evaluation process was analyzed in the current study.

When the classification of the rater was made the critical variable in instructor evaluation studies, the results have not been consistent. Some studies found no relationship between the cumulative semester hours attained by the student and ratings concerning the teaching effectiveness of his instructors (Detchen, 1940; Grazin & Painter, 1973; Rayden, 1968). On the other hand, Clark and Keller (1954) reported that seniors and graduate students tended to rate their instructors higher than did lower classmen. Juniors and seniors were found to be more unfavorable in their ratings than lower classmen by other researchers (Bendig, 1952; Eckert & Keller, 1954). Perhaps confounding results were obtained because different student populations were used in the various studies. In any event, student classification was selected as one of the variables to be included in the present study.

Course Variables

Students might be expected to be more critical when rating instructors of the more difficult courses. Contrary to that expectation, Grazin and Painter (1973) found that instructors of more difficult courses did in fact receive superior ratings. The result of Walker's (1969) study indicated that there were no significant differences in instructor ratings as a function of course difficulty. One explanation could be that instructors exert greater effort when teaching more difficult material. The difficult subject material might well demand the instructor's best efforts. The evidence from the above studies supports the position that the student is rating something other than the difficulty of the subject matter when he evaluates teaching performance. Resolution of that particular factor awaits additional research.

One study reported that classes that met away from the main college campus were rated more favorably than classes that met on campus (Gage, 1961). The explanation for those results is difficult to fathom. Students enrolled in off-campus courses could differ from the campus student body in some critical respect which tends to influence ratings. Courses which meet away from campus are possibly confined to a particular subject area or time interval which enhances the ratings.

Previous studies of student evaluations have generally neglected investigating the relationship between the academic level of the course and the ratings assigned the instructor. Only Gage (1961) reported findings that suggested that teachers of lower division classes were rated more unfavorably than teachers of upper level courses.

Any differences in ratings peculiar to a particular course level need to be discovered and taken into account when data from student evaluations are used in making critical decisions concerning faculty members. Differences in student ratings as a function of course level were investigated in the present study.

Of the studies reviewed, two reported that the time of day that a class meets has an influence on the ratings that the instructor receives (Clark & Keller, 1954; Eckert & Keller, 1954). Those researchers stated that instructors who taught courses in the middle of the day were given higher ratings than the instructors who taught early or late classes. If the above results can be replicated, several avenues of speculation are opened. One possible explanation would be that the teaching performance of an instructor is in fact more effective during that certain period of the day. Students may be inclined to favor attending classes during the middle of the day and are therefore more lenient in their ratings of instructors

fortunate enough to teach in that time interval. Differences in ratings could be a function of a difference in course offerings; maybe less favored courses are offered early and late. That course variable was included in the present investigation.

Research results have been somewhat confusing concerning the relationship between instructor ratings and class size. Cohen and Brawer (1969) reported that instructors of classes with 30 to 39 students received lower ratings than instructors of either larger or smaller classes. Wilson (1932) found that instructors of classes of 40 or more received lower ratings than instructors of smaller classes. Lovell and Haner (1955) obtained evidence which indicated that instructors who taught classes of 30 or more received more critical ratings than teachers of smaller classes. The findings of McDaniel and Feldhusen (1970) were consistent with the above results. They found that the larger the class, the lower were the ratings.

Not all studies, however, found a relationship between class size and instructor ratings. Data have been obtained which revealed no functional relationship between those two variables (Colliver, 1972; Heilman & Armentrout, 1936). The reason for the conflicting results is not readily apparent. The cause could be due to the difference in student population or perhaps the different instruments employed in the

evaluations. If confidence is to be placed in the validity of student evaluations, the influence, if any, of class size on ratings must be ascertained. The involvement of class size in the student evaluation process at Texas Tech University was analyzed in the current study.

Instructor Variables

The assumption has sometimes been made that experience enhances performance and competency in the teaching profession. In the studies reviewed, three reported no significant differences in student ratings as a function of differences in the amount of experience of the instructors (Colliver, 1972; Guthrie, 1954; Heilman & Armentrout, 1936). Only Walker (1969) reported superior ratings for teachers with more experience in classroom instruction. Colliver (1972) found no relationship between magnitude of ratings and number of times that an instructor had taught the course. Such results offer no support for the notion that experience facilitates teaching performance. It appears that excellence in teaching is not a product of experience alone. If the instructor receives no feedback concerning his performance, perhaps he continues to teach in the same ineffective manner.

Two studies which investigated student ratings as a function of the age of the instructor were reviewed. Downie

(1952) compared the ratings of instructors who were 39 years of age or younger with ratings of instructors 40 and older. No significant difference in ratings occurred as a function of the age of the instructor. Heilman and Armentrout (1936) evaluated differences in ratings of groups of instructors with differences of from 5 to 30 years of age. No significant differences were obtained. Since these data were collected a number of years ago, it would be interesting to attempt a replication of those studies considering the current emphasis on youth.

Only two studies were reviewed in which the sex of the instructor was the critical variable in student ratings. Walker (1969) found no significant difference in student evaluations as a function of the sex of the instructor. The other study, published some 30 years ago, also reported no significant differences in ratings received by male and female instructors (Heilman & Armentrout, 1936).

One of the instructor variables which was selected for investigation in the present study was the college membership of the instructor. Few studies have focused upon that aspect of student evaluation. Walker (1969) did report that math and science teachers received higher ratings than teachers of other subjects. Inclusion of the variable in this study may help to determine if superior instruction is associated with any particular content area.

The other instructor variable included in this investigation was the academic rank of the instructor. The findings concerning the relationship between the academic rank of the instructor and how students rate his teaching effectiveness have not been consistent. A number of studies have reported that instructors with higher rank received higher ratings from the students (Clark & Keller, 1954; Elliot, 1950; Gage, 1961; Guthrie, 1954; Lovell & Haner, 1955). However, other studies have reported no differences in ratings as a function of academic rank (Colliver, 1972; Downie, 1952; Wilson, 1932).

It is difficult to resolve the relatively large amount of conflicting data. The relationship between student ratings and the instructor's academic rank does not appear to be universal. In view of such results, it would seem unwise to generalize the results obtained in one college situation to another institution of higher learning. In order to attempt to determine what relationship, if any, exists between these two variables, the rank of the instructor was included for study.

Conclusions

The college student's ability to rate the teaching effectiveness of instructors has been the subject of a wide range of studies over the past forty years. A considerable

amount of information has been accumulated, some of which has been included in this review. Some of the variables which were selected for the present study have been neglected by other investigators. Several of the selected variables have been investigated, but conflicting findings were the result. Certain functional relationships discovered in one institution appear to be limited to that particular campus. The present investigation was designed to provide information concerning the evaluation of certain variables involved in the student rating process at Texas Tech University.

CHAPTER III

METHODS AND PROCEDURES

The purpose of this chapter is to explain the methods and procedures used in the study. A description of the method of data collection and selection is given. The instruments, variables, and statistical procedures involved in the present study are also discussed.

Data Collection

The Student Association of Texas Tech University collected the data which were used in the current study. The data were collected for the purpose of accumulating information concerning student ratings on various faculty members. It was intended that the obtained ratings would be made available to the student population at Texas Tech University. The Association was kind enough to give this investigator access to those data.

The Association received 11,370 completed forms from 251 different classes. Some 164 various instructors participated in the evaluation. The collection of the data was performed in December of 1974. The forms were not signed and the instructors did not have access to the data until after final course grades had been turned in. Participation in the evaluation process was contingent upon the approval

of the classroom instructor. Each instructor was required to sign a release form. (A copy of the release form is contained in Appendix A.)

The instructor was asked to step outside of the classroom while the evaluation was in progress. The following instructions were read to each class by the Student Association's representative responsible for conducting the evaluation in that particular class. (A copy of the instructions is contained in Appendix B.)

The Student Association is conducting teacher evaluations this semester on a voluntary basis, and the results of these evaluations will be published and available to all students for Spring registration next January. This evaluation is not in conjunction with any other evaluating group, and is being established for the students' benefit.

Your professor has volunteered to publish the evaluations from this class. In order to make the results as accurate as possible, try to answer each question. Make all responses clearly. The completed forms will be taken to the computer center for processing in the closed envelopes. Your teacher will not handle any part of the evaluation process and will get the read-out sheets next semester.

Since there is no way for any student to be penalized or rewarded for his or her answers, please try to be as objective and responsible as you want your teacher to be.

The completed evaluation forms for each class were placed in manila envelopes, sealed, and returned to the Student Association office. Data concerning the time of day that the class met, the number of students enrolled, the name of the instructor, and the title and number of the course were stated on each envelope.

Materials

The evaluation forms were constructed so that the first section contained items of student information applicable to this study. Information related to course and instructor variables was listed on the envelope containing the evaluation forms of each class. (A copy of the form is contained in Appendix C.)

Student Variables

One of the variables involved the grade that the student anticipated receiving in that class. The categories were A, B, C, D, and F. There were very few students who anticipated receiving an F in a course; therefore, when the data concerning that variable were analyzed, the F category was not involved in the analysis. Only the categories of A, B, C, and D were included.

Another variable which was investigated was the age of the rater. The age factor was divided into five groupings. The age groupings consisted of 18 or younger, 19 and 20, 21 and 22, 23 and 24, and 25 years of age and older.

The third variable consisted of the reason why the student had enrolled in the course. Four choices were offered for responding. They were: (1) core course required for graduation, (2) course required as a part of the student's degree plan, (3) recommended elective, and (4) free elective.

The fourth variable involved the current overall grade point average of the student. Seven orderings of grade point average were listed on the test instrument. It was found, however, that very few students had a grade point average of less than 1.00. In preparing the data for analysis, the group of less than 1.00 was combined with the 1.01-1.5 group. Six groupings of grade point average were investigated in the present study. The groups according to grade point average were: less than 1.5, 1.56-1.99, 2.00-2.49, 2.5-2.9, 3.00-3.45, and 3.5-4.0.

The fifth of the student variables concerned the college in which the rater was enrolled. Seven response categories were made available. They were: Agricultural Sciences, Arts and Sciences, Business Administration, Engineering, Home Economics, Education, and Graduate.

Four selections were listed for sex and marital status. The choices were: married male, married female, single male, and single female.

The last student variable which was investigated was classification. At Texas Tech University the classification of a student is contingent upon the number of semester hours of course work which have been successfully completed. Students who have completed less than 32, 32 to 63, 64 to 95, and 96 and more are classified as freshmen, sophomores, juniors, and seniors, respectively. A student who has

satisfied all of the admission requirements and has formally been admitted to the Graduate School is considered to be a graduate student. Six orderings of classification were constructed. They were: freshman, sophomore, junior, senior, graduate, and non-credit. However, it was found that so few students classified themselves as non-credit that it was not possible to include that group in the analysis of the results. Only the remaining five groups were involved in the statistical treatment of the data.

Course Variables

Three course variables were investigated in the present study. Differences in student ratings as a function of the academic level of the course were analyzed. In the educational system at Texas Tech University, courses are designated by name and number. The name normally used is that of the subject. The first digit in the number indicates the academic level of the course. First digits of 1, 2, 3, or 4 indicate that the course is primarily designed for the freshman, sophomore, junior, or senior year of study. A number of 5 or above designates a graduate course. Courses with first digits of 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5 were assigned to the freshman, sophomore, junior, senior, and graduate levels respectively. Although courses are generally considered to be primarily for students of a particular academic level,

it was not uncommon to have evaluation from students of various classifications in the same course. Evaluations of freshman level courses were not exclusively made by freshman, all sophomore level courses were not solely evaluated by sophomores, and so forth.

The second variable consisted of the time of day that the class started. Four different time intervals were studied. A class was placed in a group depending on whether it had been scheduled to start: before 9:00 A.M., 9:00 A.M.-11:30 A.M., 12:00 noon-2:30 P.M., or 3:00 P.M. and later.

The last course variable to be considered was the number of students enrolled in the class. Five separate orderings of class size were investigated. The class size categories were: 15 or fewer, 16 through 25, 26 through 40, 41 through 60, and 61 and above.

Instructor Variables

Two instructor variables were investigated. The first was the faculty assignment of the instructor. Instructors participating in the study represented five colleges of the university. The following colleges were included in the study: Arts and Sciences, Education, Business Administration, Agricultural Sciences, and Home Economics. Unfortunately, data were not available so that the College of Engineering could be included in the study. Students

enrolled in the College of Engineering participated in other segments of this study because they were enrolled in various courses outside the College of Engineering and evaluated instructors assigned to other colleges.

The second variable was the academic rank of the teacher. Four orderings of rank were constructed. They were: Instructor, Assistant Professor, Associate Professor, and Professor.

Evaluation Items

The second portion of the evaluation form consisted of eight questions which related to the teaching performance of the instructor. Numerical values were provided for each item. Those values ranged from 2 through 6, with 2 being the lowest value and 6 the greatest. A rating of 1 on any item indicated that the rater did not feel qualified to evaluate the instructor on that particular question. If the student rated the instructor on all items, it was possible for the instructor to receive a total rating as low as 16 or as high as 48. The sum of the ratings on all 8 questions were employed in order to obtain one value to represent the rating granted that instructor by that student.

The questions which were contained in the evaluation forms are listed below. (These questions are a part of the evaluation form contained in Appendix C.)

1. The instructor stimulated your interest in the subject matter.
2. The instructor was available to meet with students outside of class.
3. The instructor was willing to meet with students outside of class.
4. The instructor was receptive to new ideas, others' viewpoints, and encouraged students to express opinions.
5. Graded work, exams, and/or quizzes were returned quickly enough so you were able to determine your progress in this course.
6. Graded work, exams, and/or quizzes were given frequently enough so you would be aware of your progress in this class.
7. Graded work, exams, and/or quizzes had value as a learning experience.
8. In an intellectual sense, you were reasonably challenged by this instructor.

The last section of the rating instrument consisted of two items which required a "yes" or "no" response. Those items were not used in this study, but are stated below for the benefit of the reader.

9. If you were taking this course for the first time, knowing what you know now, would you take this course from this instructor?
10. Has this instructor been academically responsible to this class?

Procedure

The completed forms for each class were contained in individual, numbered envelopes. Each envelope had been

assigned a filing number. The name of the instructor, course number and title, student enrollment, time of day that the class was scheduled to start, and the filing number were recorded on individual index cards. The cards were used in selecting samples for the purpose of data analysis.

The process of tabulating the data was somewhat different for the three sets of variables. In order to clarify the procedures, student variables are discussed separately from course and instructor variables.

Tabulation of Student Variables

Twenty-five evaluation forms were selected at random to represent each cell of an experimental condition. For example, in the situation where the sex of the rater was the critical variable, 25 forms were selected to represent the single female, 25 to represent the married male, and so forth. One reason for the decision to use 25 was based on Guthrie's (1954) report that different student samples of 25 or more were very stable for an instructor. The other reason was that in some cases 25 appeared to be approaching the total number of evaluations in some categories. Only one sample for any one cell was taken from a class. Forms that were incomplete and forms that had any item rated with a one were replaced with the next appropriate sample.

Tabulation of Course and Instructor Variables

Ten classes were selected at random to represent each group of an experimental situation. For example, 10 randomly selected classes taught by Instructors were employed to represent the ratings assigned to Instructors where academic rank of the teacher was the critical variable.

Statistical Procedures

In this study significant probability was set at $P < .05$ for all hypotheses. Data were analyzed by computing differences between the means of the various groupings in each variable condition. A one-way analysis of variance was performed on the data in each situation. In cases where significant differences were found, t tests were performed on the various pairs of values in order to determine the source of variance.

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS

All data were examined for significant differences between means within each experimental situation. The One-way Analysis of Variance Test which was used in the present study is contained in the Health Sciences Computing Program at the University of California at Los Angeles, and available through the Texas Tech University Computer Center. In situations where significant differences between means were obtained, t tests were performed on the various pairs of scores in order to determine the source of variance.

Student Variables

Seven hypotheses were stated concerning the influence of selected student variables on the rating process. Those hypotheses were tested and the results are reported in this chapter.

HO₁--Anticipated Grade

The first hypothesis stated that students would not differ in ratings of the teaching performance of the instructor as a function of the grade that was anticipated in the course. Obtained mean ratings of instructor effectiveness for students anticipating a course grade of

A, B, C, and D were 42.80, 41.44, 37.76, and 37.28, respectively. The obtained F ratio of 4.64 (df=3, 96) was significant at the .01 level, as shown in Table 1.

In order to determine the source of variance, t tests for differences between the mean ratings of the various pairs were computed. The results of those t tests are shown in Table 2. The difference in means between the students expecting A and B grades was not significant. Neither was the difference between the groups anticipating C and D grades significantly different. However, the A and the B groups rated the instructor significantly higher than both the C and D groups. In this particular situation the null hypothesis was rejected.

HO₂--Age of Rater

The second hypothesis stated that students would not differ in ratings of the teaching performance of the instructor as a function of the age of the student. An analysis of variance was performed on the data with age of the rater being the critical variable. The mean ratings assigned the instructor as a function of the rater's age as well as results of the analysis of variance are contained in Table 3. The obtained F ratio of 2.3064 did not reach the value required for statistical significance. The null hypothesis could not be rejected.

TABLE 1
INSTRUCTOR RATINGS AS A FUNCTION OF ANTICIPATED
COURSE GRADES

	Anticipated Grade in Course			
	A	B	C	D
Sample Size	25	25	25	25
Mean	42.8000	41.4400	37.7600	37.2800
Standard Deviation	5.4924	4.2728	7.3160	7.5802

Source of Variation	Analysis of Variance			
	Sum of Squares	DF	Mean Square	F Ratio
Between Groups	554.9973	3	184.9991	4.6422*
Within Groups	3825.7512	96	39.8516	
Total	4380.7461	99		

*An F value of 4.31 is significant at the .01 level.

TABLE 2

t TESTS OF PAIRS OF MEAN RATINGS WHEN ANTICIPATED
GRADE IN COURSE IS THE CRITICAL VARIABLE

Pairs	t Value	Significance
A-B	.9576	NS
A-C	2.6995	.01**
A-D	2.8800	.01**
B-C	2.1284	.05*
B-D	2.3426	.05*
C-D	.2234	NS

*A t value of 2.014 is significant at the .05 level.

**A t value of 2.690 is significant at the .01 level.

TABLE 3
INSTRUCTOR RATINGS AS A FUNCTION OF THE
AGE OF THE STUDENT

	Ages Expressed in Years				
	18 or Younger	19-20	21-22	23-24	25 and Older
Sample Size	25	25	25	25	25
Mean	42.7600	41.9600	39.6400	39.3200	42.4800
Standard Deviation	5.2064	3.7912	5.7000	6.4854	5.2688

Source of Variation	Analysis of Variance			
	Sum of Squares	DF	Mean Square	F Ratio
Between Groups	265.3115	4	66.3279	2.3064*
Within Groups	3450.9509	120	28.7579	
Total	3716.2625	124		

*An F value of 2.45 is significant at the .05 level.

HO₃--Reason for Course

The third hypothesis stated that students would not differ in the ratings of the teaching performance of the instructor as a function of the reason for taking the course. The data were analyzed and the hypothesis was tested. Students were grouped into four cells according to the reason for being enrolled in the course. The four groupings were: core course, course required as part of degree plan, recommended elective, and free elective. The mean ratings obtained for each group were 38.36, 39.32, 41.96, and 40.88, respectively, as is recorded in Table 4. Although the mean ratings for the two categories of electives were somewhat greater than the two categories of required courses, the differences in the means were not sufficient to yield an F ratio that was significant at the .05 level ($F(3,96) = 1.5283$). The null hypothesis was not rejected.

HO₄--Grade Point Average

The fourth hypothesis stated that students would not differ in the ratings of the teaching performance of the instructor as a function of the overall grade point average of the student. The analysis of variance test which was employed in analyzing the data obtained an F ratio of 1.0044, which did not reach the value required for statistical

TABLE 4
INSTRUCTOR RATINGS AS A FUNCTION OF REASON
COURSE WAS TAKEN

	Reason Course Taken			
	Core Course	Degree Plan	Recommend Elective	Free Elective
Sample Size	25	25	25	25
Mean	38.3600	39.3200	41.9600	40.8800
Standard Deviation	7.5049	5.7787	6.8403	5.6074

Source of Variation	Analysis of Variance			
	Sum of Squares	DF	Mean Square	F Ratio
Between Groups	192.5105	3	64.1702	1.5283*
Within Groups	4030.7891	96	41.9874	
Total	4223.2969	99		

*An F value of 2.76 is significant at the .05 level.

significance. The mean ratings assigned the instructor as a function of the rater's grade point average as well as the results of the analysis of variance are found in Table 5.

The null hypothesis could not be rejected.

HO₅--College Enrollment

The fifth hypothesis stated that students would not differ in the ratings of the teaching performance of the instructor as a function of the college in which the student was enrolled. A significant difference in means was found for the situation where the college in which the student rater was enrolled was the critical variable. The means and standard deviation of ratings assigned by students in the seven groups are shown in Table 6. The analysis of variance resulted in an F ratio (6, 168 = 3.6025) that was significant beyond the .01 level. The null hypothesis was rejected.

A series of t tests was performed on the data in order to determine the source of variance. The results of those t tests are shown in Table 7. Students enrolled in Graduate School were the most favorable in their ratings while the Engineering students were the most critical. Graduate students rated instructors significantly higher than did students enrolled in Arts and Sciences, Business Administration, Engineering, and Education. Ratings assigned by Home

TABLE 5

INSTRUCTOR RATINGS AS A FUNCTION OF THE STUDENT'S
GRADE POINT AVERAGE

		Grade Point Average				
Less Than						
	1.56	1.56-1.99	2.00-2.49	2.5-2.9	3.0-3.49	3.5-4.0
Sample Size	25	25	25	25	25	25
Mean	40.2000	41.2400	39.7200	41.6800	42.7600	40.5200
Standard Deviation	5.0249	5.0272	7.8979	4.8795	4.4933	5.1000
Analysis of Variance						
Source of Variation	Sum of Squares	DF	Mean Square	F Ratio		
Between Groups	153.1010	5	30.6202	1.0044		
Within Groups	4838.8242	144	30.4849			
Total	4542.9219	149				

*An F value of 2.29 is significant at the .05 level.

TABLE 6

INSTRUCTOR RATINGS AS A FUNCTION OF THE COLLEGE IN WHICH THE STUDENT IS ENROLLED

	College					
	Agricultural Science	Arts and Sciences	Business Ad.	Engineering	Home Economics	Education Graduate
Sample Size	25	25	25	25	25	25
Mean	42.6800	41.1200	39.9600	37.8800	42.9600	39.7200
Standard Deviation	6.4918	3.8978	6.7668	6.6415	5.2716	5.6533
						4.1178

Analysis of Variance

Source of Variation	Sum of Squares	DF	Mean Square	F Ratio
Between Groups	691.5076	6	115.2513	3.6025*
Within Groups	5374.6172	168	31.9918	
Total	6066.1211	174		

*An F value of 2.96 is significant at the .01 level.

TABLE 7

t TESTS OF PAIRS OF MEAN RATINGS ASSIGNED INSTRUCTORS AS A FUNCTION OF THE COLLEGE IN WHICH THE STUDENT IS ENROLLED

College	College					
	Arts & Sciences	Business Ad.	Engineering	Home Economics	Education	Graduate
Agricultural Sc.	<u>t</u> =1.0043 NS	<u>t</u> =1.4210 NS	<u>t</u> =2.5320 .05*	<u>t</u> =.1640 NS	<u>t</u> =1.6846 NS	<u>t</u> =.8157 NS
Arts & Sciences		<u>t</u> =.7277 NS	<u>t</u> =2.0612 .05*	<u>t</u> =1.3750 NS	<u>t</u> =.9991 NS	<u>t</u> =2.4538 .05*
Business Administration			<u>t</u> =1.0747 NS	<u>t</u> =1.7134 NS	<u>t</u> =.1333 NS	<u>t</u> =2.4739 .05*
Engineering				<u>t</u> =2.9351 .01*	<u>t</u> =1.0335 NS	<u>t</u> =3.8117 .01**
Home Economics					<u>t</u> =2.0535 .05*	<u>t</u> =.7324 NS
Education						<u>t</u> =2.9700 .01**

*t value of 2.014 is significant at .05 level.

**t value of 2.690 is significant at .01 level.

Economics students were significantly greater than those granted by students in Engineering and Education. Instructors received ratings from students enrolled in the College of Arts and Sciences which were significantly higher than those assigned by Engineering students. Students enrolled in the College of Agricultural Sciences were significantly more favorable in their instructor ratings than Engineering students. All other differences between pairs of ratings were not significant.

HO₆--Sex and Marital Status

The sixth hypothesis stated that students would not differ in the ratings of the teaching performance of the instructor as a function of the sex and/or marital status of the student. In the situation where the sex and marital status of the student was the critical variable, means of 41.48, 40.76, 42.92, and 41.88 were obtained for the single male, married male, single female, and married female, respectively. Although the females gave slightly higher ratings than the males and single students tended to rate instructors more favorable than married students, the differences in the means were not statistically significant. The analysis of variance resulted in an F ratio (3, 96 = .7243) that was not significant at the .05 level, as shown in Table 8. The null hypothesis was not rejected. ✱

TABLE 8

INSTRUCTOR RATINGS AS A FUNCTION OF THE SEX AND
MARITAL STATUS OF THE STUDENT

	Sex and Marital Status			
	Single Male	Married Male	Single Female	Married Female
Sample Size	25	25	25	25
Mean	41.4800	40.7600	42.9200	41.8800
Standard Deviation	4.9254	6.0227	4.4527	5.6445

	Analysis of Variance			
	Sum of Squares	DF	Mean Square	F Ratio
Between Groups	60.9601	3	20.3200	0.7243*
Within Groups	2693.2717	96	28.0549	
Total	2754.2317	99		

*An F value of 2.76 is significant at the .05 level.

HO₇--Student Classification

The seventh hypothesis stated that students would not differ in ratings of teaching performance of the instructor as a function of the academic classification of the student. In the situation where the classification of the rater was made the critical variable, means of 42.20, 40.32, 40.68, 42.20, and 43.08 were obtained for freshmen, sophomore, junior, senior, and graduate students, respectively. The graduate student was more favorable in rating the instructor, but the differences between means did not yield a value that was significant ($F(3, 96) = .7243$). The results are reported in Table 9. The null hypothesis was not rejected.

Course Variables

Three hypotheses were stated concerning the influence of selected course variables in the rating process. Those hypotheses were tested and the results are reported in the following section.

HO₈--Course Classification

The eighth hypothesis stated that students would not differ in ratings of the teaching performance as a function of the level of the course. In the condition where the level of the course was the critical variable, means of

TABLE 9
INSTRUCTOR RATINGS AS A FUNCTION OF THE ACADEMIC
CLASSIFICATION OF THE STUDENT

	Classification				
	Freshman	Sophomore	Junior	Senior	Graduate
Sample Size	25	25	25	25	25
Mean	42.2000	40.3200	40.6800	42.2000	43.0800
Standard Deviation	5.8949	7.1398	6.5747	5.0332	5.4537

Source of Variation	Analysis of Variance			
	Sum of Squares	DF	Mean Square	F Ratio
Between Groups	133.7286	4	33.4321	.9083*
Within Groups	4416.7070	120	36.8059	
Total	4550.4336	124		

*An F value of 2.45 is significant at the .05 level.

40.80, 40.10, 39.90, 40.10, and 44.30 were obtained for the 100-, 200-, 300-, 400-, and 500-level courses, respectively. The analysis of variance for the five categories resulted in a significant F value, as presented in Table 10. The null hypothesis was rejected.

In order to determine the source of variance, t tests for differences between pairs were performed. The results of the multiple comparisons are reported in Table 11. The mean rating assigned in the 500-level courses was significantly higher than those given by participants in courses at the other four levels. No significant differences between the mean ratings given instructors of courses at the 100, 200, 300, and 400 levels were obtained.

HO₉--Time

The ninth hypothesis stated that students would not differ in ratings of the teaching performance of the instructor as a function of the time of day that the class met. An analysis of variance was performed on the data. Means of 41.40, 40.60, 41.00, and 42.60 were obtained for the before 9:00 A.M., 9:00 A.M. through 11:30 A.M., 12:00 noon through 2:30 P.M., and 3:00 P.M. and later, respectively. The obtained F ratio for the differences did not exceed the .05 level of significance, as shown in Table 12. The null hypothesis was not rejected.

TABLE 10
INSTRUCTOR RATINGS AS A FUNCTION OF THE ACADEMIC
LEVEL OF THE COURSE

	Academic Level of Course				
	100	200	300	400	500
Sample Size	10	10	10	10	10
Mean	40.8000	40.1000	39.9000	40.1000	44.3000
Standard Deviation	4.2374	2.3309	3.2472	3.9001	1.7670

Source of Variation	Analysis of Variance			
	Sum of Squares	DF	Mean Square	F Ratio
Between Groups	137.5197	4	34.3799	3.2889*
Within Broups	470.3994	45	10.4533	
Total	607.9189	49		

*An F value of 2.61 is significant at the .05 level.

TABLE 11

t TESTS OF PAIRS OF MEAN RATINGS GIVEN INSTRUCTORS
AS A FUNCTION OF LEVEL OF COURSE

	Level of Course			
	200	300	400	500
100	<u>t</u> =.4342	<u>t</u> =.5058 NS	<u>t</u> =.3646 NS	<u>t</u> =2.2870 .05*
200		<u>t</u> =.1501 NS	<u>t</u> =0 NS	<u>t</u> =4.3077 .01**
300			<u>t</u> =.1182 NS	<u>t</u> =3.5706 .01**
400				<u>t</u> =2.9428 .01**

*A t value of 2.101 is significant at .05 level.

**A t value of 2.878 is significant at .01 level.

TABLE 12
INSTRUCTOR RATINGS AS A FUNCTION OF THE TIME OF DAY
THAT THE CLASS STARTED

	Time			
	8:30 A.M. or Before	9:00- 11:30 A.M.	12:00- 2:30 P.M.	3:00 P.M. and After
Sample Size	10	10	10	10
Mean	41.4000	40.6000	41.0000	42.6000
Standard Deviation	3.0623	2.5033	3.5277	3.2042

Analysis of Variance				
Source of Variation	Sum of Squares	DF	Mean Square	F Ratio
Between Groups	22.3999	3	7.4666	0.7787*
Within Groups	34.1997	36	9.5889	
Total	367.5996	39		

*An F value of 2.92 is significant at the .05 level.

HO₁₀--Class Size

The tenth hypothesis stated that students would not differ in ratings of the teaching performance of the instructor as a function of the number of students enrolled in the class. The size of class condition resulted in obtained means of 42.80, 41.70, 41.60, and 40.50 for class sizes of 15 and less, 16 through 25, 26 through 40, 41 through 60, and 61 and above, respectively. The analysis of variance resulted in an F ratio ($4,45 = .6102$) that was not significant at the .05 level, as reported in Table 13. The null hypothesis was not rejected.

Instructor Variables

Two hypotheses were stated concerning the involvement of selected instructor variables in the rating process. Those hypotheses were tested and the results of those tests are reported in the present section.

HO₁₁--College Assignment of Instructor

The eleventh hypothesis stated that students would not differ in ratings of the teaching performance of the instructor as a function of the college assignment of the instructor. In the situation where the college assignment of the instructor was the variable, instructors who were faculty members in the colleges of Arts and Sciences, Education, Business

TABLE 13
 INSTRUCTOR RATINGS AS A FUNCTION OF THE NUMBER OF
 STUDENTS ENROLLED IN THE CLASS

	Number of Students Enrolled in the Class				
	15 and Fewer	16-25	26-40	41-60	61 and More
Sample Size	10	10	10	10	10
Mean	42.8000	41.7000	40.9000	41.6000	40.5000
Standard Deviation	2.2998	4.9001	2.9231	4.0879	2.9907

Analysis of Variance				
Source of Variation	Sum of Squares	DF	Mean Square	F Ratio
Between Groups	31.0005	4	7.7501	0.6102*
Within Groups	571.4995	45	12,7000	
Total	602.5000	49		

*An F value of 2.61 is significant at the .05 level.

Administration, Agricultural Sciences, and Home Economics received mean rating scores of 41.80, 43.20, 41.30, 43.10, and 43.50, respectively. As noted earlier, data were not available from the College of Engineering. The differences in the ratings given instructors from the five colleges were not found to yield an F value that achieved significance ($F(4, 45) = 1.0848$). The results of the analysis of variance are shown in Table 14. The null hypothesis was not rejected.

HO₁₂--Academic Rank of the Instructor

The twelfth hypothesis stated that students would not differ in ratings of the teaching performance of the instructor as a function of the academic rank of the teacher. The four instructional ranks employed were: Instructor, Assistant Professor, Associate Professor, and Professor. The differences in ratings for the four groups were found not to be significant, as recorded in Table 15. The null hypothesis was not rejected.



Summary

Twelve null hypotheses were stated concerning the involvement of certain selected variables in the student evaluation process. An analysis of the data resulted in the rejection of three of those hypotheses. A significant

TABLE 14
INSTRUCTOR RATINGS AS A FUNCTION OF THE COLLEGE
ASSIGNMENT OF THE INSTRUCTOR

College Assignment of Instructor					
	Arts & Science	Education	Business Ad.	Agricul- tural Sc.	Home Economics
Sample Size	10	10	10	10	10
Mean	41.8000	43.2000	41.3000	43.1000	43.5000
Standard Deviation	4.2635	2.4404	3.2335	1.3703	2.5927

Analysis of Variance				
Source of Variation	Sum of Squares	DF	Mean Square	F Ratio
Between Groups	37.4808	4	9.3702	1.0848*
Within Groups	388.6995	45	8.6378	
Total	426.1802	49		

*An F value of 2.61 is significant at the .05 level.

TABLE 15
INSTRUCTOR RATINGS AS A FUNCTION OF THE ACADEMIC RANK
OF THE INSTRUCTOR

	Academic Rank			
	Instructor	Assistant Professor	Associate Professor	Professor
Sample Size	10	10	10	10
Mean	43.1000	40.7000	41.7000	39.7000
Standard Deviation	2.3310	3.8887	3.3350	4.5959

Analysis of Variance
Between
Academic Rank of Instructor

Source of Variation	Sum of Squares	DF	Mean Square	F Ratio
Between Groups	63.1987	3	21.0662	1.5959*
Within Groups	475.1997	36	13.2000	
Total	538.3982	39		

*An F value of 2.92 is significant at the .05 level.

difference in the mean ratings earned by instructors as a function of the grade which the students anticipated receiving in that course was found. Differences in ratings as a function of the college in which the student was enrolled were found to be significant. Statistically significant differences in student ratings as a function of the academic level of the course were also obtained. Differences in the means in each of the other nine experimental conditions were not great enough to be deemed significant beyond the .05 level.

CHAPTER V

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

The primary purpose of this study was to evaluate the involvement of 12 selected variables in the process of student evaluations of the teaching effectiveness of the college instructor. Such information would have value for those contemplating the use of student ratings in the faculty evaluation process. Also, information derived from the present study should facilitate the interpretation of ratings received by instructors who employ student evaluations as a means of enhancing their own teaching effectiveness. The current chapter is devoted to a discussion of the results of that investigation and suggestions for additional research.

Student Variables

Seven of the 12 variables were termed student variables. The results of the investigation concerning each of those variables are discussed in this portion of the study.

Anticipated Grade

The results of the data analysis indicate that students who anticipate receiving better grades in a course give higher ratings on teaching performance of the instructor. A significant difference in ratings was found between those

expecting a B or better and those that anticipated a grade of C or lower. No difference was found between the rating assigned by students expecting A or B, nor was a significant difference in ratings detected between the C and D groups.

The hypothesis of no significant differences in ratings as a function of the grade that is anticipated was rejected, and this conclusion is consistent with the findings of other studies (Stewart & Malpass, 1966; Weaver, 1960). However, these results are in conflict with a number of investigations which found no relationship between ratings assigned and course grades (Blum, 1936; Colliver, 1972; Detchen, 1940; Eble, 1972; Eckert & Keller, 1954; Elliott, 1950; Gaverick & Carter, 1962; Hudelson, 1951; Remmers, 1930; Voeks, 1960).

Several interpretations of the findings are evident. It could be inferred that instructors who were expected to give higher grades received better evaluations from the students. If such was the case, the potential value of formal student ratings as an instrument in faculty evaluation would be diminished considerably. Obviously, it would be possible for the instructor to obtain a good rating by giving the students good grades rather than by being proficient in his classroom teaching performance.

On the other hand, the results could indicate that the students who expected to make A's and B's in a course have in fact become more competent in that particular area of study than the students who anticipated C's and D's. Good grades could well be indicative of better teaching performance on the part of the instructor. Superior grades in a course could suggest that the students have attained a high level of mastery of the content material. Additional investigation of this possible relationship seems imperative.

Age of Rater

In the situation where the critical variable was the age of the student, no significant differences in ratings as a function of the age of the rater were found. The findings of the present study do not agree with the results obtained by Walker (1969) that older students were less critical in their ratings than younger. However, the results of the current study are consistent with Grazin and Painter's (1973) findings that ratings of instructors did not differ significantly as a function of the rater's age.

Assuming that greater age is an indicator of greater maturity of judgement, the results of the present study are in conflict with Bryant's (1967) conclusion that college students lack the maturity to adequately evaluate the

teaching performance of their instructors. The students in the age group of 25 and older did not differ significantly in their ratings of the instructor than the 18 and younger age group.

The results of the present study indicate that the age of the rater, within the limits of the college population, is not a critical variable in the evaluation process of instructor teaching effectiveness. Therefore, the null hypothesis which stated that students would not differ in ratings as a function of the age of the student was not rejected.

Reason for Course

No significant difference was found where the reason for taking the course was the critical variable. Some investigators reported that the ratings of instructors who taught elective courses were given higher ratings than teachers of required subjects (Cohen & Brawer, 1969; Downie, 1952; Gage, 1961; Grazin & Painter, 1973).

The students in the two elective course groups did rate their instructors somewhat higher than those in required courses, but the differences between the obtained means of the elective and required groups were not significant. In the literature reviewed, no findings were reported which agreed with the present results. Perhaps the design of

this study was not sensitive enough to identify the differences between the groups.

An alternative interpretation is that the ratings of the student population at Texas Tech University are not affected by whether the course is required or elective. Perhaps the perceived teaching performance is the criterion for evaluation rather than the attitude of the student toward the required or elective nature of the course. The apparent lack of relationship should be investigated following any future student evaluations in order to determine if, indeed, the student is not so influenced.

Grade Point Average

The grade point average of the student was found not to be a significant factor in the evaluation of teaching performance. The result is consistent with evidence collected by other researchers (Grazin & Painter, 1973; Guthrie, 1954; Rayden, 1968).

The expectation that students who had enjoyed greater academic success in the college situation might be somewhat less critical in their evaluations of their instructors was not confirmed. The null hypothesis which stated that no difference in ratings would occur as a function of the student's grade point average was not rejected.

College Enrollment

Differences in instructor ratings as a function of the college in which the student was enrolled were found to be significant. The ratings assigned by Graduate students were significantly greater than ratings given by students in the colleges of Arts and Sciences, Business Administration, Engineering, and Education. The ratings of the Home Economics group were significantly greater than those of Engineering and Education. Students enrolled in the College of Agricultural Sciences rated instructors significantly more favorably than did students in the College of Engineering. Ratings obtained from the students enrolled in the College of Arts and Sciences were superior to the ratings given by Engineering students. All other differences between pairs of mean ratings were not significant. Of the seven groupings, Graduate School students rated the highest and Engineering students rated instructors the lowest.

The reason for the difference in ratings is not readily apparent. Unfortunately, no previous studies were found which investigated that particular relationship. The obtained result could be due to sampling error. However, significant differences between eight different pairings were obtained. The probability of obtaining so many

different points of variance due to sampling alone would be somewhat unusual. Additional research focusing on that particular relationship seems in order. An attempt to replicate these results using different samples from the Student Association's data might prove to be worthwhile.

Sex and Marital Status

In the situation where sex and marital status of the rater were the critical variables, the single students rated their instructors slightly higher than did the married students. Female students were also somewhat more favorable in their evaluations than were the males. Those differences in ratings were not found to be statistically significant. A number of other investigators also found no statistically reliable relationship between sex of the student and magnitude of instructor ratings (Bendig, 1953; Lovell & Haner, 1955; Rayden, 1968). Grazin and Painter (1973) did find that females tended to be somewhat less critical in their evaluations. The data from the present study indicate that the sex and/or marital status of the rater is not a critical variable in instructor evaluations.

Student Classification

Individuals classified as graduate students rated instructors more favorable than did students at other academic levels; however, the differences between the obtained

means were not significant. The fact that ratings given by the group classified as graduate did not yield a significant result is somewhat peculiar considering that a significant difference was obtained for the Graduate School group in the college enrollment situation. Also, the graduate level courses received significantly higher ratings than the undergraduate courses. Perhaps the inconsistency is due to sampling error, or that the present situation lacks the sensitivity to detect the differences. Although the means did not differ significantly, a superior rating trend was indicated in the graduate classification group.

Other investigators have reported conflicting results concerning the relationship between ratings and student classification. Some researchers have found that upper classmen tended to rate their instructors higher (Clark & Keller, 1954). On the other hand, several studies have found upper classmen to be more critical in their ratings (Bendig, 1952; Eckert & Keller, 1954). In some cases, findings were reported that are consistent with the results obtained in the present study (Detchen, 1940; Grazin & Painter, 1973; Rayden, 1968).

Course Variables

The three variables which were termed course variables and investigated in this study were: course level

classification, time of day that the class was scheduled to begin, and number of students enrolled in the class. Differences in student ratings of the teaching performance of instructors as a function of those variables were studied. The following discussion is concerned with findings concerning those variables.

Course Classification

In the examination of the condition where the level of the course was the critical variable, it was found that the 500-level classes were rated significantly higher than each of the other classifications. There were no significant differences between the ratings given in the other four course level classifications. The findings conflict with Gage's (1961) reported results which indicated that teachers of lower division courses received lower ratings.

There are several unique features of 500-level courses which could account for the more favorable ratings. Generally, the 500-level classes tend to have fewer students than lower level classes. Possibly, the superior rankings were related to the number of students enrolled in the class. The conclusion, however, is not consistent with the results obtained in the present study which found no functional relationship between class enrollment and magnitude of ratings. The 500-level courses are customarily taught by

faculty of higher academic rank. Conceivably, the greater rating could be a function of the higher rank of the teacher. But again, the present study did not identify a difference in student ratings as a function of the teacher's rank. The 500-level students have tended throughout this study to rate instructors more favorably. For some undetermined reason, the quality of instruction is indeed rated superior in the 500-level courses. Further investigation is needed to resolve that question.

Time

In the current study, it was found that classes which met before 9:00 A.M. or after 3:00 P.M. were rated slightly higher than those classes scheduled to meet during the middle part of the day. The differences were not found to be significant. A number of studies reported findings which indicated that classes that met during the middle part of the day were given better instructor ratings than early or late classes (Clark & Keller, 1954; Eckert & Keller, 1954).

The current study possibly lacks the sensitivity to detect differences which may exist. Such an explanation is not convincing, considering the fact that the 3:00 P.M. and later classes were given the highest rating even though it was not significant. Perhaps the fact that 500-level classes often meet during that time interval contributed

to these results. An analysis of class ratings while controlling for the course level would clarify the involvement of that particular variable.

Class Size

The instructors of classes with 15 or fewer students enrolled were rated somewhat higher than the other class size categories. The differences in ratings were not significant, however. Results from other studies are in agreement with these findings (Colliver, 1972; Heilman & Armentrout, 1936). In other studies, results were obtained which showed that larger classes were given lower ratings (Lovell, & Haner, 1955; McDaniel & Feldhusen, 1970; Wilson, 1932). Cohen and Brawer (1969) found that instructors of medium sized classes (30 to 39 enrollment) were rated lower than instructors of larger and smaller classes.

The evidence from the present study suggests that there was no reliable relationship between the size of a class and the ratings which students assigned to the instructor.

Instructor Variables

Two variables which were termed instructor variables are included here for discussion. Differences in student ratings as a function of the college assignment of the instructor were analyzed. Also, the relationship between

the academic rank of the instructor and ratings assigned by students was investigated.

College Assignment of Instructor

When the college to which the instructor was assigned was the critical variable, no significant differences were found between the ratings assigned faculty members in the Colleges of Arts and Sciences, Education, Business Administration, Agricultural Sciences, or Home Economics. Research concerning the relationship between faculty assignment of the instructor and student ratings is limited. Walker (1969) reported that math and science teachers received higher ratings than did teachers of other subjects. The data from the present study indicate that effective teaching as evaluated by the student is not a function of the college membership of the instructor.

Academic Rank of the Instructor

When the data were analyzed according to the academic rank of the teacher, it was found that Instructors were rated higher than members of the other three academic ranks. The differences between the four groups were not found to be significant. Some studies have reported that teachers with the higher academic rank received more favorable student ratings (Clark & Keller, 1954; Eckert & Keller, 1954; Elliot,

1950; Gage, 1961; Guthrie, 1954; Lovell & Haner, 1955). Other investigators have reported results which are consistent with the results of the present study (Colliver, 1972; Downie, 1952, Wilson, 1932). The results of this study suggest that years of teaching experience which goes along with advancement in academic rank does not necessarily enhance student ratings of teaching performance.

Summary

The purpose of this study was to obtain information which would be beneficial to anyone planning to make use of student evaluations of teacher effectiveness. Administrators who plan to employ student ratings as a part of the evidence accumulated about an instructor for purposes of making critical decisions should find data in this study which is of value to them. College teachers who employ student evaluations as a means of improving their teaching performance should find information contained in this study useful in the interpretation of ratings received.

Student Variables

The results of the current study did detect a functional relationship between the grade that a student anticipated in a course and the rating assigned to the instructor. Students who anticipated a grade of B or above rated the instructor's teaching effectiveness significantly higher

than students who expected a C or lower. These results are subject to several interpretations. An undue influence of anticipated grades on the rating process could be suspected. On the other hand, those results could also imply that students who gain a better mastery of the subject matter tend to be less critical in their evaluations.

A significant relationship between the college in which the student was enrolled and instructor ratings was found. Students enrolled in the Colleges of Agricultural Sciences, Arts and Sciences, Home Economics, and the Graduate School were more favorable in their ratings than students enrolled in Business Administration, Engineering, and Education. A rational explanation of these results is not readily apparent. Additional research information is needed in order to clarify the involvement of that particular variable in the student rating process.

Although the differences were not significant, there was a tendency for the youngest (18 years old or younger) and the oldest (25 years old or older) age groups to be less critical in their ratings than the other age groups. Instructors of elective courses tended to be rated more favorably than teachers of required courses, although the difference was not of sufficient magnitude to yield a significant result.

Female as well as single students tended to be more favorable in their ratings than males and married students. The differences were not large enough to be significant.

Graduate students assigned higher instructor ratings than students of other academic classifications. The differences, however, were not of sufficient magnitude to be statistically significant. The trend is consistent with the findings that students enrolled in Graduate School assigned significantly higher ratings than students enrolled in four other colleges. Instructors of 500-level courses, which generally consist of graduate level students, were also rated significantly higher than courses of the other four academic levels.

Course Variables

Instructors of 500-level courses, it was found, were assigned a rating that was significantly higher than instructors of undergraduate courses. There are several features of 500-level courses which could account for the superior ratings. The 500-level courses usually have a smaller enrollment than lower division classes, are generally taught by faculty of higher rank, and grades are ordinarily higher than in lower level courses. The obtained differences could be a function of one or more of those factors. It is conceivable that some unique aspect of the

graduate student accounts for the difference. Or perhaps the instructor simply does a better job teaching that level class.

Although classes scheduled to begin at 3:00 or later were rated higher than the other three time groupings, the difference was not significant. Many of the 500-level courses meet during that time interval, which could possibly account for the trend.

Classes with student enrollments of 15 or fewer were assigned the highest ratings, but no significant differences were found.

Instructor Variables

There were no significant differences in ratings as a function of the college assignment of the instructor. Such results indicate that effective teaching, as measured by student ratings, is not typical of a certain area of instruction.

No significant differences in student ratings were obtained in the situation where the academic rank of the instructor was the variable. The result suggests that the years of teaching experience required to attain the rank of professor do not result in higher student ratings of teaching performance than the relatively inexperienced instructor.

Conclusions

The results from the present study seem to indicate that the college student's rating of his instructors' teaching effectiveness is largely a function of some variable or variables other than the ones which were investigated.

Perhaps as Grazin and Painter (1973) suggested, students use perceived performance as their frame of reference in rating the teaching performance of an instructor.

The data from the current study did indicate a relationship between the grade that the student anticipated in the course and how he rates his instructor. Ratings assigned instructors by students were found to differ significantly as a function of the college enrollment of the student. Graduate level courses were rated more favorably than courses at other academic levels.

Recommendations for Further Study

Listed below are some questions concerning student rating of instructor teaching performance which offer opportunities for additional research.

Parts of this study need to be replicated to determine if the results are consistent for the Texas Tech University students. Namely, are the differences which were obtained in ratings assigned by students enrolled in different colleges reliable?

Studies should be conducted to seek answers to new questions evolving from this study.

1. Is there a difference in student ratings given to an instructor by his graduate as compared to his undergraduate classes?

2. Is there a difference in ratings assigned instructors by lower division students who anticipate a grade of B or above and graduate students?

3. Is there a difference between ratings received before and after a teacher receives tenure?

4. Is there a relationship between the student ratings of the teacher and other measures of teaching effectiveness?

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APPENDIX

- A. Instructor Release Form
- B. Student Instructions for Rating the Instructor
- C. Student Evaluation Form

APPENDIX A: INSTRUCTOR RELEASE FORM

I give my permission to the Student Association Government
to release my teacher evaluation forms for 1. _____
Fall 1974.

Signature _____

Department _____

Date _____

Department member _____

Additional Remarks:

APPENDIX B: STUDENT INSTRUCTIONS FOR
RATING THE INSTRUCTOR

The Student Association is conducting teacher evaluations this semester on a voluntary basis, and the results of these evaluations will be published and available to all students for Spring registration next January. This evaluation is NOT in conjunction with any other evaluating group, and is being established for the students' benefit.

Your professor has volunteered to publish the evaluations from this class. In order to make the results as accurate as possible, try to answer each question. Make all responses clearly. The completed forms will be taken to the computer center for processing in the closed envelopes. Your teacher will not handle any part of the evaluation process and will get the read-out sheet next semester.

Since there is no way for any student to be penalized or rewarded for his or her answers, please try to be as objective and responsible as you want your teacher to be.

APPENDIX C: STUDENT EVALUATION FORM

INSTRUCTIONS: Answer the following questions by making an X through the correct answer. The set of 7 questions are for statistical purposes only, but this information is needed if the validity of the questions for teacher evaluation is to be established.

A B C D E F G

1) Classification:

- A) Freshman
- B) Sophomore
- C) Junior
- D) Senior
- E) Graduate
- F) Occasional (non-credit, or single course)

A B C D E F G

2) Age:

- A) 18 years or less
- B) 19-20 years
- C) 21-22 years
- D) 23-24 years
- E) 25 years or older

A B C D E F G

3) I am currently enrolled in:

- A) Agriculture
- B) Arts & Sciences
- C) Business Administration
- D) Engineering
- E) Home Economics
- F) Education
- G) Graduate

A B C D E F G

4) Sex:

- A) Single Male
- B) Married Male
- C) Single Female
- D) Married Female

A B C D E F G

5) This course was taken because it is:

- A) required for graduation (core course, etc.)
- B) required as a part of my graduation program

C) a required or recommended
elective

D) a free elective

A B C D E F G

6) My current overall GPA is:

A) less than 1.00

B) 1.01-1.5

C) 1.56-1.99

D) 2.00-2.49

E) 2.5-2.9

F) 3.00-3.49

G) 3.5-4.0

A B C D E F G

7) My current grade in this course
to date is:

A) A

B) B

C) C

D) D

F) F

The second portion of the questionnaire concerns the professor. Place an X through the proper number in the left hand margin signifying your opinion on each question. If there is any doubt in your mind as to your understanding of the question or you do not feel qualified to give an opinion, leave the question blank. The scale is:

Almost Always	=	6
Usually	=	5
Occasionally	=	4
Seldom	=	3
Almost Never	=	2
Does Not Apply	=	1

1 2 3 4 5 6 1) The instructor stimulated your interest in
the subject matter.

1 2 3 4 5 6 2) The instructor was available to meet with
students outside of class (i.e., office
hours given and kept, etc.).

- 1 2 3 4 5 6 3) The instructor was willing to meet with students outside of class.
- 1 2 3 4 5 6 4) The instructor was receptive to new ideas, other's viewpoints, and encouraged students to express opinions.
- 1 2 3 4 5 6 5) Graded work, exams and/or quizzes were given frequently enough so you were able to determine your progress in this course.
- 1 2 3 4 5 6 6) Graded work, exams, and/or quizzes were returned quickly enough so you were able to determine your progress in this course.
- 1 2 3 4 5 6 7) Graded work, exams, and/or quizzes had value as a learning experience.
- 1 2 3 4 5 6 8) In an intellectual sense, you were reasonably challenged by this instructor.

THE LAST TWO QUESTIONS ARE YES-NO QUESTIONS AND ARE SUMMARIZING QUESTIONS.

- YES NO 9) If you were taking this course for the first time, knowing what you know now, would you take this course from this instructor?
- YES NO 10) Has this instructor been academically responsible to this class?

