

THE IMPACT OF STUDENT PERCEPTIONS OF “HOTNESS” AND EASINESS ON TEACHING EVALUATIONS

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Abstract

Student evaluations of teaching (SETs) play a major role in the career of a university professor. Decisions involving tenure, promotion, and merit pay are all greatly influenced by SETs, along with scholarly development and service. Although SETs are designed to measure teaching effectiveness, much research has been conducted to investigate other factors that may influence them. It is often argued that SETs are unduly influenced by the easiness of the course or the instructor, and the instructor’s personality, sense of humor, and attractiveness. This paper examines the SETs of the professors employed in the business school of a small southeastern university. The information from the evaluation instruments utilized by the college was augmented with student perceptions of “hotness” and easiness from the Ratemyprofessors.com website. Multiple regression was employed to determine if these perceptions of “hotness” and easiness had an impact on the teaching evaluations of these professors.