

Document 7.2 | Dr. Carstens's Response to Your Email

Hi [your name],

Thanks for sending me this outline. I'm glad to see you're getting into this project.

Let me say a little about the outline. I'm hesitant to use the instructors' names as the first-level headings. My goal is not to publicly praise or embarrass anyone, which is, I think, a danger if we link any student comments to particular instructors. (That goes for comments that explicitly name a professor or implicitly name a professor—such as the comment about a professor's accent.)

I guess what I'd prefer to see is more of a collection of best practices—what the students like and dislike. For instance, they like instructors who show up on time, treat students respectfully, present a good balance of theory and practice, and so forth.

Plus, there is a lot of good information about the course itself, from logistical details to content and evaluation methods, that I think the faculty would like to see.

As I look at all this information, I think it might be useful if you begin each section with a brief statement of the importance of the subject you're discussing. Then maybe figure out a way to summarize the data for that section. (I'm thinking maybe if you present the excerpts from the student comments with your own comments, the report will seem choppy and hard to use. What do you think about assembling samples of the student comments in some kind of appendix?)

So, please keep in mind that we're not interested in praising or blaming instructors. We want to create a constructive, cooperative environment. We want students to know that we are sincerely interested in their learning, that we value the trust they are placing in us.

Could you give me a new outline?

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Thanks so much.

Elizabeth Carstens