Atypical

Typical

Participants

Research Questions:

• How did a sudden change to remote instruction impact engineering instructors’ emotions?
  ○ To what extent do instructors feel these emotions are similar to those felt in a typical week prior to this forced change?

BACKGROUND

• COVID-19 pandemic forced universities to quickly transition their Spring 2020 courses to remote-only formats
• Instructors were compelled to use new modes of instructional methods and practices
• The impact the transition has had on instructors’ emotions sheds light on instructors’ adaptability during this forced change
• Adaptability is regulation of behavior in response to changing and/or uncertain circumstances and situations
• Adaptability enables an individual to efficaciously adjust to unanticipated circumstances
• It is important to examine instructors’ emotions and normality of their emotions to know how they adapted and what additional support may be necessary for instructional change

METHODS

• Weekly surveys were sent out to engineering instructors during the last seven weeks of the semester (April-May)
• Survey consisted of multiple choice and open-ended questions
• Survey Questions Analyzed:
  Which words best describe how you felt about teaching this past week? [Select all that apply]
  ○ There were 18 emotion choices for instructors
  ○ Emotions included 8 positive and negative categories
  ○ Categories included 3 items of varying intensity of emotion
  ○ To what degree do you agree with this statement: In general, the feelings I indicated above are similar to those that I felt in a typical week prior to the COVID-19 mandate for remote instruction.
  ○ Response options were a four-point scale that ranged from strongly agree (typical feelings) to strongly disagree (atypical feelings)

DEMOGRAPHICS

• 39 R1 University Instructors
• 26% Females
• 74% Males

FINDINGS

• Overall, emotions changed from atypical to typical as the semester progressed and instructors adapted to teaching remotely.
• Generally, relatively few instructors reported negative emotions as being typical. Negative emotions reported as atypical were more common during the initial transition period.
• Instructors were generally positive about teaching or hesitated to report negative emotions perhaps indicating a higher level of adaptability than expected.

CONCLUSION

• More than 50% of instructors’ felt their feelings about teaching were atypical during weeks 12-15 and typical during week 16 - Grades
• Happiness was frequently cited as both a typical and atypical positive emotion in the first three weeks
• During Finals Week and Grades, Instructors felt Accomplished as a typical positive emotion
• Instructors cited feeling Inadequate as an atypical emotion during the first two weeks and as a typical emotion in Week 15 – Finals with a peak during Grades

IMPLICATIONS

• Prior research around instructor change often suggests that instructors are reluctant to change. Taking an adaptability perspective allows us to reframe the discussion about supporting faculty change.
• This research contributes new knowledge on instructors’ ability to adapt during a national emergency and can serve to identify emotional supports needed during a forced change.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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References:


Atypical Positive Emotions

Atypical Negative Emotions

Typical Positive Emotions

Typical Negative Emotions

Number of participants and percent of agreement to normality (typical/atypical) by week

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Departments</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Typical</th>
<th>Atypical</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Arch. Constr.</td>
<td>10.3%</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>31</td>
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<tr>
<td>Biological</td>
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<td>82</td>
<td>18</td>
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<tr>
<td>Civil</td>
<td>25.8%</td>
<td>41</td>
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<tr>
<td>Computer</td>
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<tr>
<td>Engr.</td>
<td>17.9%</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>46</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mech. &amp; Mtls</td>
<td>17.9%</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>10.2%</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>66</td>
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<th>Positions</th>
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<th>Atypical</th>
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<td>Assistant</td>
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