

Becky Clay
Professor Jim Watkins
Philosophy 110
5-12-2010

Should Students Be Allowed to Grade Teachers?

Understanding the subject matter of any given course is vital to the academic success of any student. Teachers have an obligation to educate their students in a comprehensive fashion, and students should have an obligation to review the competency of their professors.

When registering for classes, students are often faced with the dilemma of which professor to select. It is often the case that this decision is made blindly, or based off the input from a friend that has taken the professor previously. The problem with this method is that students are left making choices with unreliable data. Clearly, it is not fair to rate the quality of a professor based on a single reviewer's opinions. In situations where this decision is made without any input at all, the consequences are equally detrimental. Without the ability to review their teachers, students are likely to continue making uninformed professor choices. Due to the lack of insight, students will be left with semesters of unnecessary confusion and a cheapened educational experience.

Some teachers argue that students should have no such opportunity to review their professors, and that the above argument mistakenly suggests that the majority of teachers are incompetent. It is argued that a student cannot accurately assess the competency of a professor, and that a teacher's credentials are enough to prove their qualifications. Every teaching professor has fulfilled the necessary requirements for them to instruct a classroom, and those credentials should not for any reason be opened up for scrutiny.

In response to the above objection, it is important to clarify that the original argument does not suggest that the majority of professors are unqualified to teach, but rather it suggests that students will benefit from such information. Furthermore, the original argument states that with access to student-teacher reviews, students will be better equipped with the knowledge necessary to make qualified decisions on which professors they should choose. By knowing which professors better fit their learning style, students will have a more effective learning experience in class, and an overall better understanding of the subject matter. Since students do not always have access to first-hand reviews, they are unable to make accurate decisions on which professor is a better fit for them, resulting in a less than optimal learning experience.

In summary, when students are informed of a professor's teaching style, they are able to more accurately register for a professor best suited for them. Without access to such reviews, students are left guessing which professor is best for them, resulting in an undesirable learning experience for the student as well as an inhibited understanding of the subject matter at hand. Thus, it is important for students to review their professors, and teachers should encourage them to do so.