A Guide to Improving Response Rates for Online-Administered SRTs

Office of Measurement Services
Office of the Vice Provost for Faculty and Academic Affairs

This document provides recommendations for instructors who wish to improve response rates of SRTs that are administered online. Recommendations are followed by instructions and templates.

If you implement any of these suggestions, the Office of Measurement Services would like to hear about your experience, change in response rates, etc. Please contact Assistant Director Stephanie Klein, kleins@umn.edu with information or questions.

Note: Other than suggestion #1 below, recommendations are designed to take place while your course's SRT data collection window is open. These data collection windows are based on the central database listing for the last class meeting prior to final exams:

- Last 24 days of instruction – for full-term courses and those 83 days or longer
- Last 25% of class instruction time – for all courses 5-82 days in length
- Last day of instruction – for courses that are 4 or fewer days

Recommendations

Any course type (classroom, blended, or online)

1. Include reminder to complete SRTs in course syllabus
2. Check response rates
3. If response rates are low:
    a. Send an email to students asking them to complete their ratings
    b. Place a reminder on Canvas course site

Courses with classroom component

4. Remind students during class to complete their ratings; tell them you value their input
5. Announce response rate during class and encourage students to do their part in increasing it
6. Schedule time in class (as listed in syllabus) for students to complete their ratings during the time that data collection is open

All-online courses: any "classroom" recommendations (above) relevant for your course structure

Resources on following pages:

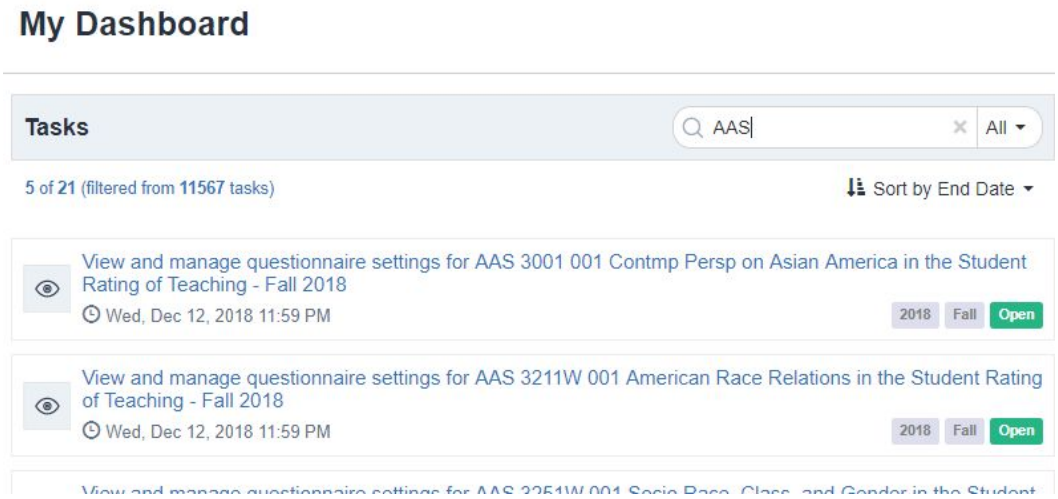
- How to view response rates (p. 2)
- Sample reminders: email and in class (p. 3)
- Creating a Canvas announcement (p. 4-5)
- Protocol for in-class administration of online SRTs (p. 6)

How to View Response Rates

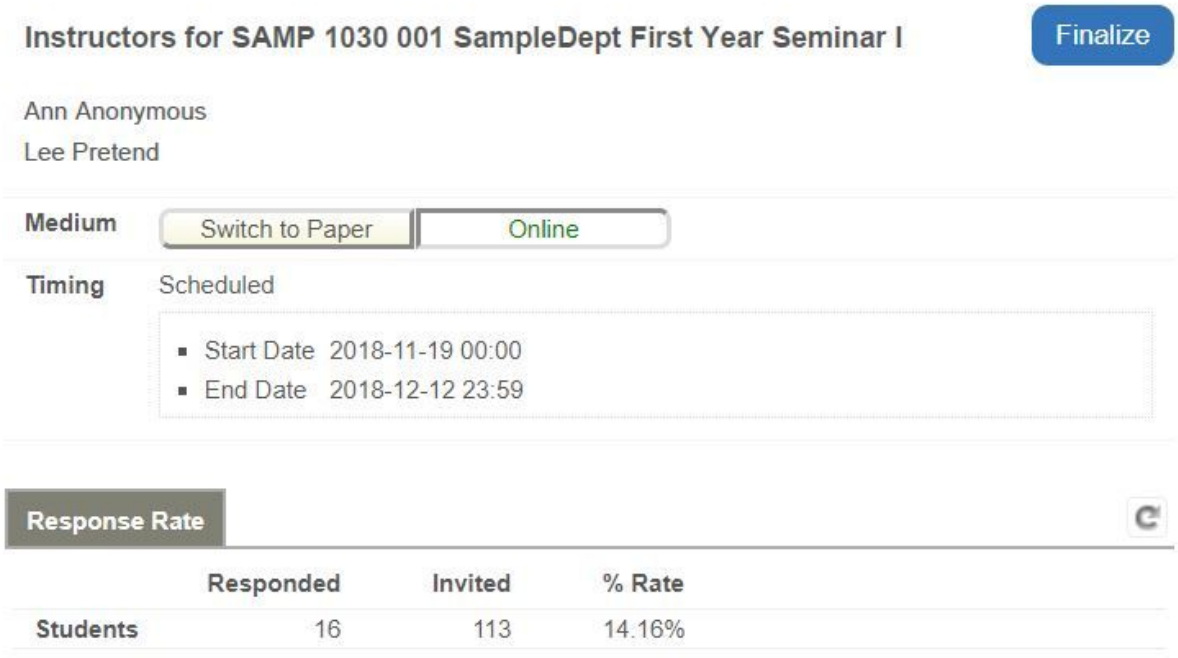
1. Go to srt.umn.edu/blue

2. If you are not already logged into your University-associated account, you will be prompted to

3. After logging in, you will land on **My Dashboard**.



4. Click on the “View and Manage” link or the green **OPEN** button to see the following page. Response rates will change as additional students complete their ratings.



Sample Reminder Email from Instructor to Students

Although students receive system-generated invitations and reminders, an email received directly from an instructor may receive closer attention.

Email Subject: Reminder: Please complete your course/instructor ratings

Suggested Email Content (please feel free to modify):

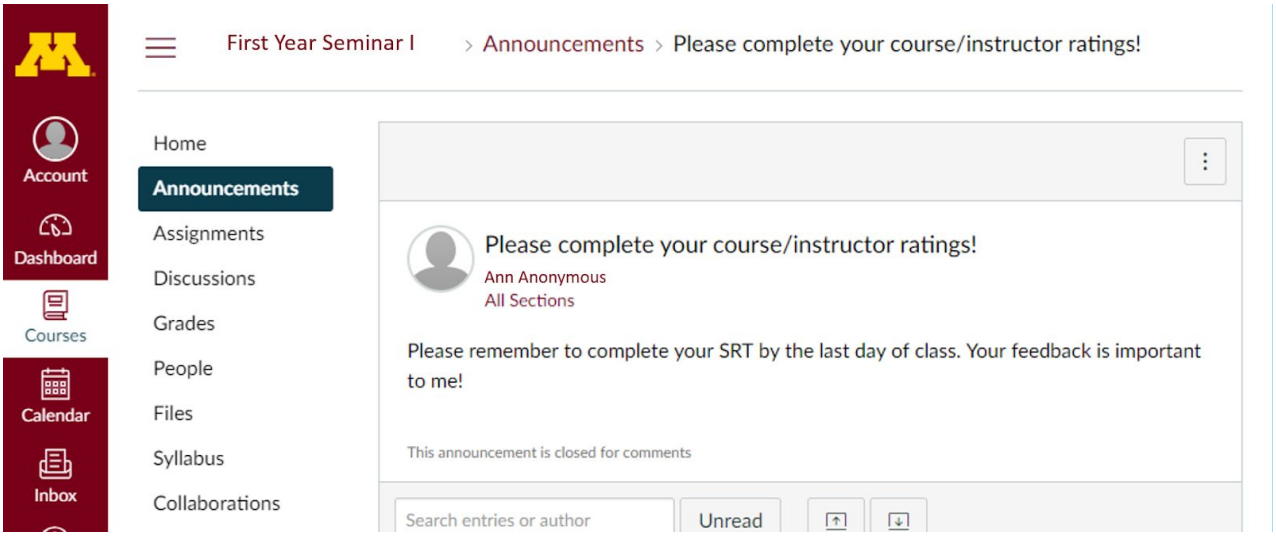
> Hello to my [Course and Number] students -
>
> Please remember to complete your Student Ratings of Teaching (SRT) by the last day of class. Finding your active SRTs is easy:
>
> 1. Go to srt.umn.edu/blue
> 2. If you're not already logged into your UMN account, you'll be prompted to log in
> 3. You will see a list of any of your courses with available SRTs
>
> I appreciate your time and attention - your honest feedback is important to me.
>
> Thank you!

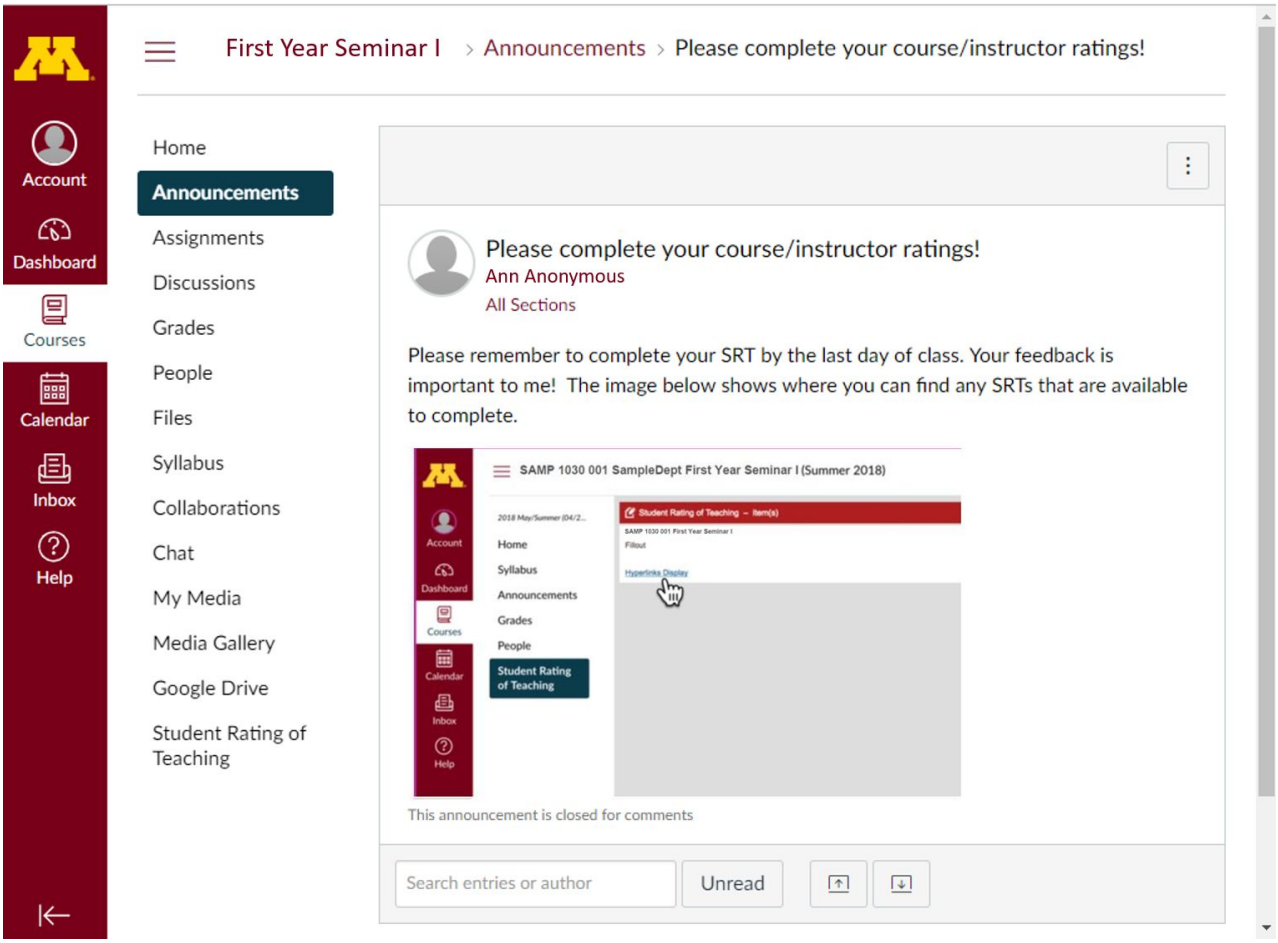
Sample In-Class Reminder (Verbal Announcement)

> "Everyone - a quick reminder about completing your SRTs for this course. When I last checked, **___%** of you had submitted ratings. I would love to see that number get a lot higher before the last day of classes. Your input is important to me, and I truly appreciate any feedback you provide."
>
> - *Optional: state how you value their input, for example, "At the end of each term, I review the feedback I received and incorporate it into my teaching for the next term. Critical feedback helps me improve, and positive feedback helps keep me up to date on what my students find most effective."*
> - *Optional: consider an incentive for a high response rate. Ratings are anonymous, so you will not be able to reward individual students based on whether they completed their SRT. However, you could offer a class-wide incentive if they achieve a target response rate - say, 85%. Incentives, if any, should be appropriate and reasonable*

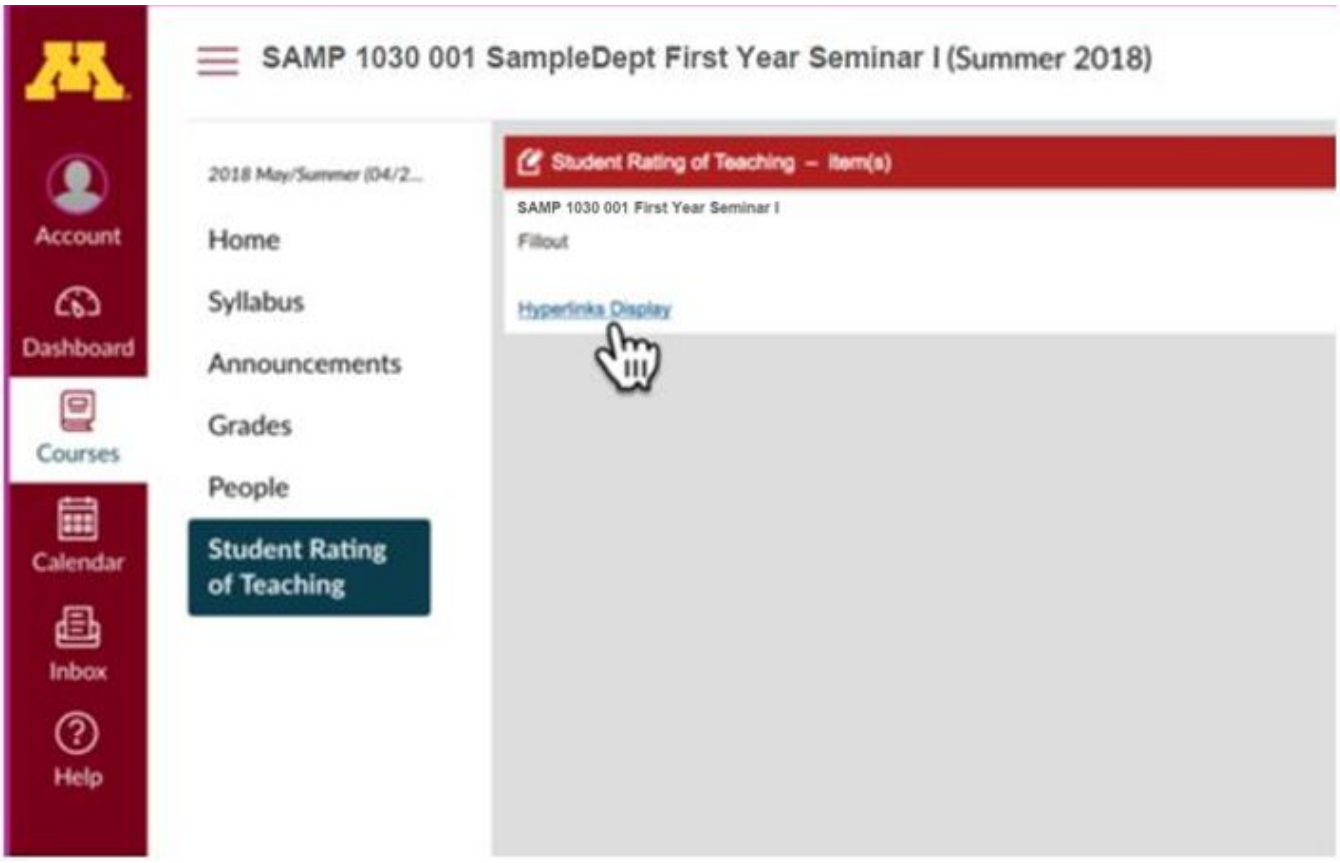
Creating a Canvas Reminder from Instructor to Students

1. In your Canvas course site, click Announcements & click “+ Announcement” button (upper right)
2. Enter your topic and message; 2 examples below. Note:
    a. Students will receive an email informing them the announcement has posted - unless they have disabled email notifications for Canvas announcements
    b. If the announcement includes an image (see second example), the image may not display in the email notification - only when the student views it in Canvas





If you would like to include the student Canvas view in your message (as shown in the second example above), here is the screen capture used in the example:



Protocol for In-class Administration of Online SRTs

Initial Preparation

- If possible, note in syllabus or course schedule the date on which SRTs will be administered online.
- Our recommendation is that this should be 1-2 weeks before end of term (or an equivalent amount for shorter classes).
- At least a week in advance, remind your students to bring their device on that date.

Ensure this date is within your data collection window (based on the last pre-exams class meeting as listed in the central database):

- Last 24 days of instruction – for full-term courses and those 83 days or longer
- Last 25% of class instruction time – for all courses 5-82 days in length
- Last day of instruction – for courses that are 4 or fewer days

For the Day of In-Class Administration

On the day, consider bringing an extra device or two (laptop, tablet) for students who forgot theirs.

Managing the SRT Completion Period

1. Sample announcement to kick off SRT completion period:
    - As you know, I have set aside time in today's class for you to complete your online ratings for this course.
    - I will not be in the room while you're completing your ratings, as required by policy. In a few minutes, I will step outside of the classroom for 15 minutes - just a couple of quick announcements:
        - *Optional - state how you value their input, e.g., "At the end of each term, I review the feedback I received and incorporate it into my teaching for the next term. Critical feedback helps me improve, and positive feedback helps keep me up to date on what my students find most effective."*
        - How to complete the SRTs (see #2 below, choose the most relevant option)
2. Where to go online to complete their SRTs
    a. If your class has a Canvas site, direct students there
        i. In the course, there's a menu on the left (Announcements, Assignments, etc.) - at the bottom of the list is Student Rating of Teaching.
        ii. If they click on Student Rating of Teaching, they will see links to any courses they're taking that are collecting ratings at that time and can click on your course there
    b. If you do not use Canvas, write (or project) this URL: **srt.umn.edu/blue**
3. Ask a student to come and get you after 15 minutes or whenever students have completed the survey.