Improving Return Rate on the Electronic Course Instructor Survey (eCIS)

The following practices are grounded in research and focus on actions faculty can take without changes to administrative systems, procedures or policies.

For classroom-based courses:
- Allow class time for students to complete the mobile-adaptive eCIS. As with the paper-based CIS, the instructor should not be present in class when the eCIS is being administered.

For online and classroom-based courses:
- Share this short video about giving meaningful feedback with students.
- Demonstrate that you value student input throughout your course. Some ways you can do that include:
  o Conduct a mid-semester evaluation and use student feedback to make adjustments in the course.
  o Poll students to get input on their preferences and needs.
  o Invite student input outside of polls and surveys.
  o Explicitly and repeatedly tell students you value their input.
- Tell students that their feedback on the eCIS is important because it is used by the college and department as one way to evaluate your teaching and you use student input to improve your teaching.
  o Add a statement in your syllabus.
  o Discuss it in your course introduction.
  o Remind students as the end of the course approaches.
- Send multiple reminders to students through the Canvas messaging system and/or announcements.
  o Early warning before the eCIS window opens
  o When the eCIS window opens
  o Last chance notice just before the eCIS window closes
- Include a link to the eCIS in your Canvas course and in your reminder messages.
  o https://utdirect.utexas.edu/ctl/ecis/results/mycis.WBX
- Consider giving a point-based micro-incentive worth $\leq 0.5\%$ of the overall course grade to the entire class if $80\%$ of students complete the eCIS. Research shows that point-based micro-incentives are the single most effective tactic to improve student evaluations. A class-wide micro-incentive can be as effective as an individual extra credit micro-incentive, and it is easier to administer. You can require students to submit a screenshot of the eCIS completion confirmation screen as evidence that they completed the survey.
  o If you offer point-based incentives, it should be only one of multiple ways to earn extra credit. Students should be able to earn all available extra credit through other means. This should be part of a holistic array of approaches for improving response rates. Another approach would be to add a bonus question to a final or last exam if the proportion of responses meets a threshold.