Feedback Fruits Survey Report

Results of UW's 2022-23 Pilot - Winter & Spring Quarters

During the 2022-23 academic year, in response to instructor requests, UW Information Technology partnered with multiple campus units to pilot two tools from the Feedback Fruits tool suite: Peer Review and Group Member Evaluation. While the tools were available in late fall, 2022, the official pilot began in 2023.

In winter and spring quarters combined, 65 instructors, instructional designers, or TAs from the UW's three campuses utilized the Feedback Fruits tools Peer Review and/or Group Member Evaluation (GME). Over the same time period, 2,987 students used the tools. Instructors implemented FF tools in a wide range of courses, including business, information management, fisheries, English, public health, environment, and physical therapy. Instructors and students (via instructors) were invited to provide feedback on their experiences through an end-of-quarter survey. In total, 20 instructors responded to the survey, as well as 65 students (from 12 different courses).

Survey results from winter (based on feedback from seven instructors and 22 students from five courses) varied widely. We learned from the results that:

- The tools offer a great deal of flexibility, and therefore require a number of selections when setting up. If an activity is set up incorrectly, it is difficult to correct once published.
- Instructors who received 1:1 support (primarily from instructional designers) had a more positive experience than those who did not have this support.
- Instructors needed more clarification about each tool and the pedagogical purposes each served, and how the feedback activities might be incorporated into course design.
- Students had a positive experience with the tools when the review process worked smoothly and when they saw the value of the activity in relation to their learning.

In response to the winter survey results, we took several steps to better prepare instructors to use the tools in spring quarter courses. These included:

- Sharing with pilot participants what we learned from winter quarter and encouraging them to reach out for help setting up activities or getting their setup reviewed before publishing.
- Reminding pilot participants about the support resources available. In addition, the instructional design team in the iSchool offered support to anyone using the tools across UW.
- Continuing the Feedback Fruits Community of Practice weekly "lunch & learn" sessions throughout spring quarter.

Results from the spring survey suggest these steps had a positive impact. Below we summarize the spring quarter results and provide recommendations for adoption.

Spring quarter survey results

Instructors used Feedback Fruits tools in 32 courses in spring quarter. Respondents to the spring quarter survey included 13 instructors (11 faculty members and two instructional designers) and 43 students (from six courses).

Respondents who reported using **Group Member Evaluation** (GME) during the quarter included

- 10 of the 13 instructors (77%)
- 38 of the 43 students (88.4%)

Respondents who reported using **Peer Review** included

- 7 of the 13 instructors (54%)
- 27 of the 43 students (62.8%)

Overall impression of Feedback Fruits tools is positive

Although the questions were worded differently, both instructors and students were asked to provide an overall rating on each tool and elaborate on their answers. Both groups rated the tools positively.

Instructors were asked to rate GME and/or Peer Review overall as an educational tool.

- Seven of the nine users of GME (77.7%) rated the tool “good” (33.3%) or “great” (44.4%) while the remaining two rated it “fair.”
- All of the seven instructors using Peer Review rated the tool either “good” (57%) or “great” (43%).

We also asked instructors to provide specific feedback about what, if anything, each tool did exceptionally well and what, if anything, they thought was missing from each tool. Summaries of the comments are provided below. Comments about what instructors appreciated about the tools tend to focus on efficiency and tool features/functionality, while things missing from the tool tend to focus on ways instructors would like to see the interface improved.

Liked/Exceptional

GME	Peer Review
• Organizes and streamlines a complex process • Ability to configure how students should review one another; automatically matches students • Guides students step-by-step through review process	• Seamlessly combines in the same window the work under review and the grading scales/criteria, simplifying work for the reviewer • Set up is well structured • Allocates the peer reviewer and reviewee, breaks down the steps of a peer review, provides options to rate the reviewer

• Provides a single place for students to self-assess, review peers, and see their peers' feedback • Allows students to provide anonymous feedback • Rubrics provide for clear descriptions of each level of performance for different criteria • Activity reports support high quality analyses of student performance and participation in peer review activities • Color-coded outcomes and graphs (from activity report) simplify assessment	• Embedded criteria stepped students through the review process • PR worked as planned even in a huge class (14 sections of 25 students) and was a dramatic improvement over Canvas; logistics took much less time and learning benefits improved, almost no support required for students. • Online support was excellent and response came within minutes

Desired features/Missing

GME	Peer Review
• More intuitive user interface for setup • Ability to correct errors made in assigning students to groups once activity is published • Easier way for instructor to find students' completed feedback • Want to be able to see student view to make sure setup is correct or help students troubleshoot • Would like an overall score across all criteria • Would like to see results within the tool without downloading activity report • Would like text editor in the instruction field	• Would like to be able to import rubrics from Word, Excel, or Canvas instead of entering directly into PR • Easier way for instructor to find students' completed reviews • Would like to be able to correct/change some aspects of setup (e.g., allocations, anonymous reviews) after publishing activity • Want to be able to see student view to troubleshoot and ensure everything works before publishing assignment • Want to be able to leave instructor review if student did not receive a review from a peer • Would like a simpler way to adjust grades in tool

Students were asked to provide an overall rating for each tool and then to explain their rating. Like the instructors, students' ratings were overwhelmingly positive.

- For GME, 84.4% of students rated the tool either "good" (44.7%) or "great" (39.5%)
- For Peer Review, 81.5% of students rated the tool "good" (51.9%) or "great" (29.6%)

Positive comments (explanations of "good" or "great" ratings) tended to focus on ease of use, features students especially liked, or the simplicity of the interface.

Liked

- *This platform was easy to use on my computer, and great for rating and providing feedback. I like that the sliding scale populated a description of the expectations of that rating, and I LOVED that you could tag your comment as suggestion or compliment.* (GME)
- *Simple interface to use and had no problems using it to evaluate teammates.* (GME)
- *Easy platform to use. I had no troubles making comments and it was nice to highlight on the document.* (Peer Review)
- *Took a lot of time, but FF was much better user experience than what I previously experienced doing similar through Canvas.* (Peer Review)

Students' negative comments (elaborations on "fair" or "poor" ratings) tended to focus on the complexity of the ratings interface or describe the activity as burdensome. As the comments make clear, the number of ratings or comments required for each review, and the number of reviews required for each student can have an impact on students' assessment of the activity. These are choices made by instructors.

Disliked

- *Not super user friendly and required a lot of drop down boxes and scrolling horizontally, but did give a nice example of what each rating meant. It also felt cumbersome and more time consuming*
- *It was very time consuming to write individual paragraphs for each aspect of each individual's evaluation….Either having a "bubble in" option with numerical ratings, or just having us write 1 paragraph that summarizes how our group members did would be much more worth our time.*
- *It was incredibly time consuming since my group was large (5 people)* (Peer Review)

Feedback Fruits tools promote student learning

Instructors and students were both asked to evaluate whether the FF tools achieved the goal of making the feedback process smooth and manageable. Instructors and students were similarly positive about each tool's effectiveness in this regard, with students who had used Peer Review rating it slightly higher than instructors.

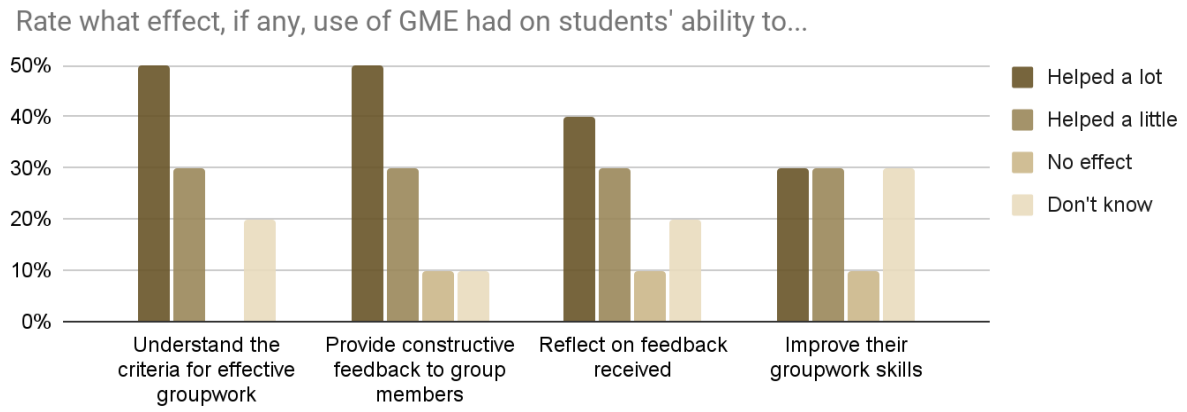
FF tools were created in part to streamline the process of giving and receiving feedback. In your view, does [GME/Peer Review] achieve this?

GME	**Yes, definitely**	Somewhat	No	Definitely not
Instructors (N=10)	**70%**	30%		
Students (N=38)	**68.4%**	23.7%	5.3%	2.6%

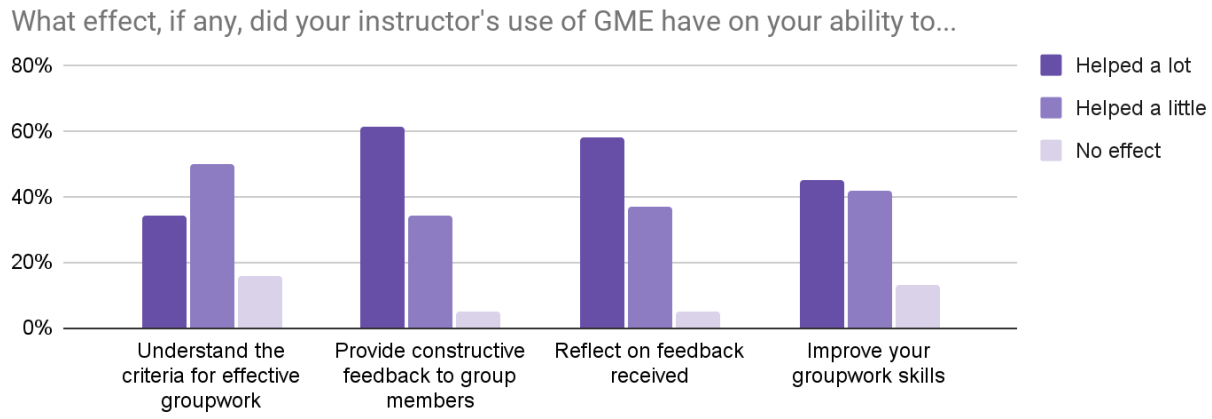
Peer Review	Yes, definitely	Somewhat	No	Definitely not
Instructors (N=7)	**57%**	43%		
Students (N=27)	**70.4%**	22.2%	3.7%	3.7%

In addition, both instructors and students were asked to rate what effect, if any, their instructor's use of the Feedback Fruits tools had on students' ability to accomplish particular learning objectives associated with either collaborative groupwork (for GME) or with peer review. As demonstrated in the charts below, while the patterns may be slightly different, the majority of instructors and students indicated that tools either "helped a lot" or "helped a little" with student learning objectives associated with each activity.

Instructors (N=10), Group Member Evaluation



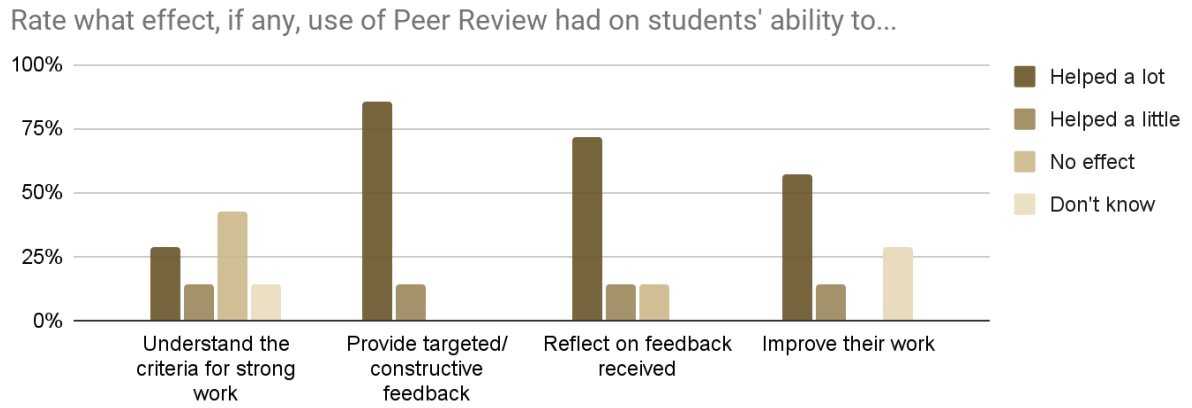
Students (N=38), Group Member Evaluation



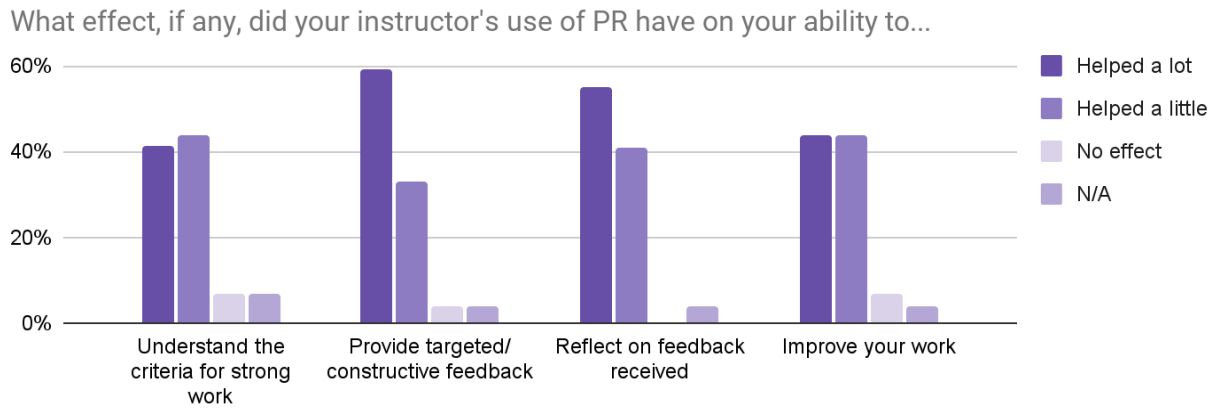
Of note in the charts below is the discrepancy between instructor and student ratings in regard to the first learning objective. A combined 43% of instructors indicated that use of the FF Peer

Review tool either “helped [students] a lot” or “helped a little” in understanding the criteria for producing strong work, while twice as many students (86%) indicated the same.

Instructors (N=7), Peer Review



Students (N=27), Peer Review



These results, as well as write-in comments, suggest that students were aware of the value of both GME and Peer Review in facilitating their learning.

- *The feedback helped me have a better understanding of what my group mate wanted from me, and how I could continue to improve moving forward with the quarter.*
- *It's just so much better than through Canvas - I have no idea where the feedback I have previously been assigned went or where I was supposed to have viewed mine on the receiving end. This had it all in one place AND was user-friendly.*

Tools are easy for students to use, more challenging for instructors

In a question that included both GME and Peer Review, students were asked to rate the ease/difficulty of using the Feedback Fruits tools in general. Two-thirds of the 43 students rated the tools either “very easy” (37.2%) or “easy” (30.2%), and another 27.9% selected “neutral.” Only two students found the tools “difficult” to use.

In a separate question, students were asked if they were able to get help with FF tools if they needed it. Seventeen students (40.5%) said yes, and over half (57.1%) reported that they did not need help.

Given the complexity of set-up options in both Group Member Evaluation and Peer Review, we were not surprised to find that instructors’ ratings reflected more challenges with the tools than students’. Seven of the thirteen instructors (53.8%) rated the tools “difficult” to use and another four (30.8%) gave them a “neutral” rating.

Interestingly, two instructor respondents found the tools “very easy” to use, suggesting that for some, the mental model behind the tools makes sense and/or the tools are easy to use with some familiarity. Indeed, when asked if FF tools are worth the time and effort to learn, all but one instructor responded “yes.”

Both instructors and students recommend use of FF tools

Despite the learning curve required, 85% of instructors reported that they were “likely” (53.8%) or “very likely” to recommend Feedback Fruits to other instructors interested in peer feedback tools. One reported that they were “not sure” and only one selected “unlikely.”

While students were not asked directly whether they would recommend further use of the tools in their courses, voluntary write-in comments at the end of the survey suggested that at least some felt this way:

- *I ultimately liked it and would love to see other instructors use it… [F]eedback is always given to the professor and all the student receives in return is a number grade. Feedback fruits has allowed for us to see actual responses which are way more beneficial [than a grade alone]..*
- *Great tool for students learning how to give and receive feedback, comparable to professional feedback tools*
- *I enjoyed the software. I wouldn’t mind using this for more classes that require group work.*
- *I thought it was very useful and should have been used before in this program!*

Conclusions and recommendations

From data acquired throughout the Feedback Fruits tools pilot, we've learned that the two tools we chose to test in 2022-23 offer the flexibility to support a range of use cases for group member evaluation and peer review. They are also among the more complex tools to configure in the Feedback Fruits suite. When instructors get the support they need to correctly configure the tools and use them in their courses, however, both instructors and students have positive experiences with the tools, and both see the benefits of the tools for student learning.

Feedback from survey respondents also suggests that there are ways the tools could be improved. Feedback Fruits' success coaches welcomed and noted feedback during the pilot, and several changes to the tools were made during this time in response to suggestions from pilot coordinators. This report will be shared with Feedback Fruits, and we anticipate a continued high level of vendor responsiveness.

While user feedback is but one criterion considered in an evaluation pilot, it is the primary one after which others are considered (accessibility, vendor responsiveness, support required, cost). Based on user feedback gathered via end-of-quarter surveys and informally during lunch & learn sessions with users, we recommend central adoption of the tools, with the following caveats:

- Ensure that all service management components are in place prior to launch in fall 2023
- Ensure that additional support resources are developed and in place before formal rollout to instructors beyond pilot participants (e.g., templates, pedagogical content, decision tree)
- Assess adequacy of support resources before encouraging adoption among new users
- Continue FF Community of Practice for ongoing user support and education
- Continue follow-up surveys to gauge user satisfaction with tools and support