Comparison of Student and Faculty Perceptions of Characteristics of Effective Teachers

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Introduction
Throughout our schooling there are teachers who have had an ability to enhance our lives for the better. This study looks to students and faculty for their opinions on what constitutes a good teacher. This research is conduite to a successful learning experiences because it will help students be able to voice their opinions about certain teaching behaviors and styles. The results of the study can prove useful to both current and future students, as well as teachers and faculty.

Method
A survey was used to understand the perceptions of both students and faculty regarding qualities of an effective teacher. The survey consisted of two questions: 1) think of the best teacher you have had in your life, then please write 3 words that you feel best describe that teacher; 2) what year in school are you (students), for how many years have you been full-time teaching (faculty). A total of 125 students responded, ranging from college freshmen to college seniors. Seventy-two faculty responded, with anywhere from 0 to 41 years of teaching experience.

Results
The characteristic reported most by both students and faculty was caring.

There were similarities between faculty and student perceptions of characteristics of effective teachers. Caring and knowledgeable were both in the top six responses from both faculty and students.

Figures 1, 2, and 3 have been included to present the top answers from faculty and students, as well as student responses by year in school.

Conclusion
After the survey results were compiled, the number one quality listed from faculty and students was caring. Many other qualities mentioned were also the same between the two groups. This research also indicated that as students progress in their college career, their priorities tend to lean towards a more serious and mature nature. However, caring and fun educators remained a common theme.