What Factors Affect Web-Based Professor Ratings?

Hannah Magathan
*Fort Hays State University*, hrmagathan@mail.fhsu.edu

Sam Schreyer
*Fort Hays State University*, smschreyer@fhsu.edu

Follow this and additional works at: [https://scholars.fhsu.edu/sacad_2020](https://scholars.fhsu.edu/sacad_2020)

**Recommended Citation**
Magathan, Hannah and Schreyer, Sam, "What Factors Affect Web-Based Professor Ratings?" (2020). 2020 SACAD Entrants. 58.
[https://scholars.fhsu.edu/sacad_2020/58](https://scholars.fhsu.edu/sacad_2020/58)

This Poster is brought to you for free and open access by the John Heinrichs Scholarly and Creative Activities Day (SACAD) at FHSU Scholars Repository. It has been accepted for inclusion in 2020 SACAD Entrants by an authorized administrator of FHSU Scholars Repository.
What Factors Affect Web-Based Professor Ratings?
Lexi Boeck, Kacie Brous, Heidi Gottschalk, and Hannah Magathan, Fort Hays State University

Abstract
The relationship between professors and students is often a topic discussed among students around enrollment periods on campus. The factors that play into whether a professor is “good” or not is often not discussed in great detail. RateMyProfessor is a website for students to input their ratings of different professors based on preset criteria on the forum. This study explores other research papers that have tested similar hypotheses along with our own research on the relationship between the ratings given to professors in each of these categories and the quality professors that are currently employed at the Robbins College of Business at Fort Hays State University.

Introduction
The research topic that we are analyzing is over the website RateMyProfessor and what factors influence the overall positive or negative relationship between the professors at the Robbins College of Business at Fort Hays State University and students attending the college. This topic is both important and relevant to students and active professors. Some of the interesting things about this research topic is that it shows some of the different relations with the professors at Fort Hays State and their difficulty levels of classes they teach. In the next section we talk about the different literature on a variety of different studies that shows other data relating the correlation between professor’s quality and the type of classes they teach. The section also shows a different study that relates the “hotness” of a professor to how well a student does in the class. These different studies help to clarify the direct relation of how Rate My Professor and the different factors that influence how the student ratings are determined.

Methodology & Model
This data was obtained through examining the reviews on Rate My Professor for the professors in the Robbins College of Business at Fort Hays State University. Upon the examination of these reviews, the data for each professor was entered by hand into a Google Sheets document. This data consisted of the names of the professors, the overall rating for each professor, whether the class was taken online, the grade received in the class, whether the class was an upper or lower division course, which department the course was in, gender of instructor, level of difficulty of the class, and if the attendance for the class was mandatory or not.

Selected Results
Our final model regressed professors’ overall ratings on the grade the student received in the class, the difficulty of the class, whether the course was classified as upper or lower division, whether the course was virtual or on-campus, the professor’s gender, and the department to which the class was related.

Our results show that there is a positive correlation between rating and grade received, and it is statistically significant at all conventional levels of alpha. This matches our expectations because if a student receives a higher grade in a class, it makes intuitive sense that they would give their professor a higher rating. Our model also shows a negative correlation between rating and difficulty, and it is statistically significant at the 5% and 1% levels. These results are consistent with prior studies that found a positive relationship between overall ratings and easiness levels.

Our results show that professors who teach BCOM classes receive, on average, an overall rating that is 0.704 points lower than professors who teach ACCT classes. Professors who teach ECON courses receive ratings that are an average of 1.049 points higher than those who teach ACCT classes. Lastly, professors who teach classes in the INT field receive ratings that are 0.928 points lower than professors who teach accounting classes on average. The ratings received by professors teaching classes in all other business departments receive ratings that are not statistically different from the ratings received by ACCT professors.

Conclusion
The data was gathered from RateMyProfessor and regressions were analyzed based off the data. We conducted the Szroeter’s test (testing for heteroscedasticity) and VIF (tests for multicolinearity). We did not test for autocorrelation due to cross sectional data, not time series data. Our intention was to prove there was direct factors that influenced the professor’s ratings. Several factors met this expectation, and there are similar results in previous studies conducted at different universities. Our research found that level of difficulty had a negative correlation with professor ratings, while grade received had a positive correlation with ratings. The only limitations are that while investigating data for patterns we had poor scatter plots. Also has to excluded professors’ names and mandatory attendance as a factor.

Selected References