

Guidelines for Conducting Peer Teaching Observation

Peer teaching observation reports are critical elements in the formal review process involving reappointment for all full- and part-time time faculty, as well as promotion and tenure for tenure-track faculty. These observations also help us ensure the quality of our teaching by helping faculty members build and polish teaching skills, and observations aid in sharing best teaching practices throughout our faculty. All full-time instructors can expect to be called upon to conduct these observations.

As a reviewer, you should begin by meeting with the faculty member you are to observe. During this meeting, seek to understand the nature and goals of the course you will observe and the pedagogical approach the instructor applies to it. Ask the instructor to provide you with course materials such as the syllabus, descriptions of assignments, handouts, and other relevant material. During this meeting, confirm arrangements for the class observation (must provide at least 48 hours notice) and discuss the evaluation form with the faculty member (see next page for details).

The observation must be for the duration of the class period for classes scheduled for 1 hour 15 minutes or less. For longer classes, you and the faculty member reviewed should agree on an appropriate observation length. During the observation session, maintain thorough notes of your observations, keeping in mind categories to be addressed on the evaluation form. Soon after the observation, complete the observation form. You may be flexible in completing the form; feel free to use bullet statements or narrative style in any of the categories, and feel free to increase or decrease the size of any category's allotted space (using basic Word tools).

Within 10 days of the observation, meet with the faculty member reviewed to discuss your completed evaluation form. Focus especially on teaching strengths, areas for improvement (and strategies for doing so), and effective strategies that merit passing along to other faculty. Both you and the faculty member sign the form and provide it to the Chair within 14 days of the observation. The instructor reviewed is permitted to provide written comments of clarification or explanation to the Chair within 30 days of the observation.

Here is a summary of regularly scheduled peer teaching observations:

INSTRUCTOR REVIEWED	FREQUENCY OF REVIEWS AND OTHER ACTIONS	CONDUCTED BY
Adjunct instructors	First <u>semester</u> and every third <u>semester</u> thereafter (1 st , 4 th , 7 th , etc.)	Full-time instructors
Lecturers	1 st & 2 nd years, then every 5 th year after first Reappointment	Tenured and Tenure-track instructors
	Reappointment every 3 rd year	Chair
Assistant Professors	1 st , 2 nd , 4 th & 5 th years	Tenured Professors
	Reappointment during 3 rd year; promotion & tenure during 6 th year	Department Review Committee & Chair
Tenured Professors	Every 5 th year after achieving tenure	Department Review Committee & Chair
Other categories	As per contract	Determined by Chair

Explanation of Evaluation Form Categories

General Description of Class: Name, designation and time (e.g., COMM 1101, Introduction to Public Speaking, Tuesday 2-3:25 p.m.). How many students? What level? Lecture? Discussion? Team project session? etc. Type of classroom? A/V technology available? Distractions?

1. **Encourages and Facilitates Communication:** Evidence of frequent contact in and outside classroom. Channels of communication in place and clear. Communication helps student develop values and goals.
2. **Encourages and Facilitates Collaboration and Cooperation:** Learning is enhanced through balance of individual and team efforts. Students learning to work together. All students are involved in efforts. Students share experiences and ideas, respond to those of others.
3. **Active Learning:** Teaching strategies go beyond having students listen and memorize. Students talk about what they're learning, write about it, relate it to their own experiences, learn to apply it. They make what they're learning part of themselves.
4. **Prompt Feedback:** Prompt and appropriate feedback provided regularly through formal assessments and active engagement during class. Students have opportunity to demonstrate and reflect upon acquired knowledge and competence in class. They learn how to self-assess.
5. **Time on Task:** Students encouraged and taught to budget time and energy on learning. Taught to be productive, acquire time management skills. Tasks are realistic and purposeful.
6. **High Expectations:** Instructor sets and maintains high expectations for self and students. Expectations are clear, positively reinforced, linked to application.
7. **Diverse Talents and Ways of Learning:** Recognizes and demonstrates need to approach subjects using various strategies as appropriate: lecture, seminar, hands-on, coaching, small group discussion, etc. Balances and reveals link between theoretical and applied.
8. **Organized, Clear, Accurate:** In control of classroom. Effective use of class time. Unambiguous in teaching, providing instructions for tasks, etc. Strong grasp of subject matter. Responsive to questions. Effectively guides discussion to achieve learning goals.
9. **Supplemental Material and Technology:** Incorporates current events and other aids into teaching. Where appropriate, uses "Smart Classroom" tools and on-line Blackboard environment. Leads students to supplemental sources outside classroom.
10. **Overall Assessment:** Enumerate and emphasize strengths and areas for improvements. Suggest strategies for effecting any recommended improvements. Identify approaches and techniques meriting sharing with other faculty and suggest means for doing so. Conclude with summary assessment of instructor's performance.