



Peer Review of Teaching Project: Guidelines and Recommendations

Rationale/Purpose Statement for Formative Peer Review

- 40% of colleges and universities now use peer classroom observation.
- Observations offer insight to reflect on and improve teaching.
- CUW's approach is formative to improve teaching over time for the benefit of the person observed.
- Not using a summative evaluation approach, not a final judgment on quality
- Consistent with CELT mission in that this process "encourages self-reflective, scholarly teaching among Concordia faculty through consultation, collaboration, and community."

Strengths/Advantages of Peer Observation

- Process creates an opportunity for faculty dialogue on effective teaching.
- Participants gain new ideas and perspectives about teaching from colleague(s).
- Both observer and observed may improve teaching.
- Creates opportunity to build collegial relationships

Four Step CUW Peer Review of Teaching Process

- Step 1: Pre-classroom visitation meeting, review of materials (syllabus, plan etc.)
- Step 2: Classroom visitation – observing the teaching and learning
- Step 3: Preparing a written report (observer); self-evaluation by person observed
- Step 4: Post-classroom meeting (written report is provided only to instructor observed)

Plan a Schedule in Advance: Get these on the Calendar

- Step 1: Meeting one week prior to observation
- Step 2: Classroom observation - between the 4th and 12th weeks of semester course
- Step 3: In the week following the observation: prepare written reviews
- Step 4: One week following observation: post-visitation meeting

Pre-classroom Visitation Meeting

The purpose of the pre-observation conference is to review the teacher's plan and materials for the day of the observation, including the lesson(s) goal(s), objectives, strategies/methods, and means of learning assessment.

Classroom Visitation Guidelines

- The observer should arrive early
- The observer can be briefly introduced to the students, with an equally brief explanation of why the observer is present. Then move on!
- Observers should not ask questions or participate in activities during class.

Preparing a Written Report (Self-Reflection/Observer Form)

Participants (both observer and observed) use the developed form or a variation thereof.

Post-classroom Meeting Guidelines

- Review results from the completed form/self-evaluation.
- Remember to build relationship as you give feedback.
- Ask the instructor how he/she thought the session went: "What went well? How do you know? What would you like to improve?" These comments could be the basis for discussion.
- Provide honest useful feedback (see qualities of useful feedback below)

Characteristics of Useful Feedback

Useful feedback

1. Describes rather than evaluates
2. Is specific rather than general
3. Focuses on observed behavior rather than on the person
4. Builds up rather than tearing down
5. Focuses on behavior that the instructor can do something about
6. Arrives in an amount that is not overwhelming
7. Focuses on "what" or "how" (observed behavior) not "why" (inferences or motives)
8. Can be rephrased by the receiver
9. Uses easy-to-understand language
10. Creates opportunity for further discussion and dialogue

(Adapted from the University of Minnesota Center for Teaching and Learning)