

# Evaluation of Faculty Teaching: Methods of Evaluation

## Peer Review of Classroom Instruction

### Section III. Observation Guidelines, Rubrics, and Questions

Pre-Observation Questions .....	2
Pre-Observation Conference Form .....	3
Classroom Observation Questions 1 .....	4
Classroom Observation Questions 2 .....	6
Sample Classroom Observation Guide 1 .....	8
Sample Classroom Observation Guide 2 .....	11
Post-Observation Questions .....	13
Pre- and Post-Observation Questions .....	14



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## **Pre-Observation Questions**

- What is the topic of the lecture that I will observe?
- What teaching approaches will you use (lecture, homework discussion, handouts, video presentations, computer demonstrations)?
- What kind of students do you have in this class (seniors, majors)?
- What can I expect you to be doing in class?
- What are your goals for this class session?
- What do you expect students to be doing in class to reach your stated goals?
- What do you hope students will gain from this session?
- What have students been asked to do to prepare for this class?
- What was done in earlier classes to lead up to this one?
- Will this class be generally typical of your teaching? If not, what will be different?
- Is there anything in particular that you would like me to focus on during the class?

*Temple University*

## Pre-Observation Conference Form

Instructor \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_ Time \_\_\_\_\_

Course Number \_\_\_\_\_ Course Title \_\_\_\_\_

Course Meeting Time \_\_\_\_\_ Level of Students \_\_\_\_\_

1. What are the goals for the class that I will observe?
2. What are your plans for achieving these goals?
3. What teaching/learning activities will take place?
4. What have students been asked to do in preparation for this class?
5. Will this class be typical of your teaching style? If not, why?
6. What would you like me to focus on during the observation?
7. Are there other things I should be aware of prior to the observation?

Chism, Nancy. *Peer Review of Teaching: A Sourcebook*. Bolton, MA: Anker, 1999.

# Classroom Observation Questions 1

## Knowledge of the Subject

- Is the depth and breadth of material covered appropriate to the level of the course and the group of students?
- Does the instructor incorporate recent developments in the discipline?
- Is the content presented considered important within the discipline and within related disciplines?
- Does the instructor exhibit mastery of the content?
- Is the instructor able to solve or otherwise deal with problems raised during the lecture?

## Enthusiasm

- Does the instructor use facial expressions, posture, or motion to sustain student interest?
- Does the instructor maintain eye contact with students?
- Does the instructor talk to the class, not to the board or windows?
- Does the instructor demonstrate enthusiasm for the subject?
- Does the instructor demonstrate enthusiasm for teaching?

## Sensitivity

- Is the instructor able to call on the students by name?
- Does the instructor ask questions that allow the instructor to gauge students' progress?
- Do the instructor's questions match the difficulty level of the material?
- Does the instructor pause after questions to allow students time to think of an answer?
- Does the instructor, when necessary, ask students to clarify their answers?
- What level of questions does the instructor ask? Lower level questions generally have a right answer and require students to recall or list facts. Higher-level questions ask students to generalize, compare, contrast, or analyze information.
- Does the instructor encourage student questions and receive student questions politely and, when possible, enthusiastically?
- Is the instructor receptive to student suggestions or viewpoints contrary to his or her own?
- Does the instructor recognize and respond to signs of puzzlement, boredom, and curiosity?
- What do the students think can be done for the instructor to improve the class?

## Preparation and Organization

- Does the instructor provide an overview of the lecture content?
- Is the sequence of the content covered logically?
- Is the instructor able to present and explain the content clearly?
- Does the instructor provide smooth transitions from topic to topic?
- Does the instructor make distinctions between major and minor points?
- Does the instructor provide occasional summaries and restatements of important ideas?
- Does the instructor use clear and simple examples and illustrations to clarify difficult or abstract ideas?
- Does the instructor provide alternative explanations to explain new concepts?

- Does the instructor summarize and integrate major points of the lecture or discussion at the end of class?
- Are homework or reading assignments listed in the syllabus or announced hurriedly?
- Does the instructor do more than what textbooks, well-constructed readings, and other materials can do?
- Overall, does the instructor appear well prepared for class?

### Clarity

- Can the instructor's voice be easily heard?
- Was the instructor's voice raised or lowered for variety and emphasis?
- Is the rate of speech appropriate for notetaking; neither too fast nor too slow?
- Does the instructor use speech filters or end sentences with meaningless words (e.g., “you know,” “ahm,” “OK” )?
- Does the instructor engage in any habits that distract from the presentation (e.g., excessive pacing, fiddling with objects, etc.)?
- Is the board work legible and organized?
- Are overheads readable and uncluttered?

*Temple University*

## **Classroom Observation Questions 2**

This checklist is intended to help both who are being observed and those who are observing. The focus is on the mechanics of the classroom interaction, not on the content of the course.

### **1. PHYSICAL FEATURES**

- seminar room?
- medium sized lecture hall?
- large lecture hall?
- lighting?
- position of seats?
- doors (e.g., at front or back)?
- blackboards, other equipment, podium?
- general noise level (does room echo; is there street noise, air conditioning noise, etc.)?
- ventilation (stuffy, cold, hot, etc.)?

### **2. TRAFFIC FLOW**

- where do students sit? in back? down front?
- disruptions if people come late? (having to find a seat in middle, squeaky doors, etc.)
- where are handouts placed?
- number who attended (compare to enrollment)
- is material handed out at beginning/end/how?

### **3. PRELIMINARY ACTIVITIES**

- material on the board (outline of the day)
- interactions with audience while handing out material?

### **4. BEGINNING**

- is there a real beginning or does it just start?
- does the beginning encourage audience, make them feel welcome?

### **5. THE MAIN EVENT**

- outline of what will be accomplished today?
- is lecture easy to follow (even if detail of the subject matter aren't easily accessible to observer)?
- are there distinct sections?
- are there clear transitions between sections?
- summaries of points?
- time for questions?
- is lecture material read? are notes used? extensively?

### **6. INTERACTION WITH AUDIENCE**

- eye contact? or reading or board work without reference to audience?

- encourages questions? when? how?
- how are questions handled? repeating them? can everyone hear all questions? are the answers clear?
- are questions from students treated seriously or as interruptions?
- asks questions? is it clear that they are questions to be answered?
- is the interaction continuous/frequent/occasional/rare?

## **7. VOICE**

- is it clear/ loud enough for the room?
- varied?
- are important points properly emphasized?
- other characteristics of the voice, e.g., does tone indicate interest in the subject/in the audience/in their questions?

## **8. PACE**

- seems about right
- seems too slow
- seems too fast
- all one speed; no variation
- does the speech/workshop seem to end where it should?
- does all material planned for the day get covered?
- is class kept beyond scheduled time?

## **9. AUDIENCE**

- what are they doing?--taking notes; looking over prepared notes?
- general attentiveness

*University of California, Berkeley*

## Sample Classroom Observation Guide 1

Instructor \_\_\_\_\_ Course \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_ Observer \_\_\_\_\_

Directions: Below is a list of instructor behaviors that may occur within a given class or course. Please use it as guide to making observations, not as a list of required characteristics. When this worksheet is used for making improvements to instruction, it is recommended that the instructor highlight the areas to be focused on before the observation takes place.

Respond to each statement using the following scale:

*1 = Not observed*

*2 = More emphasis recommended*

*3 = Accomplished very well*

Circle the number at the right that best represents your response. Use the comment space below each section to provide more feedback or suggestions.

### Content Organization

1. Made clear statement of the purpose of the lesson	1	2	3
2. Defined relationship of this lesson to previous lessons	1	2	3
3. Presented overview of the lesson	1	2	3
4. Presented topics with a logical sequence	1	2	3
5. Paced lesson appropriately	1	2	3
6. Summarized major points of the lesson	1	2	3
7. Responded to problems raised during the lesson	1	2	3
8. Related today's lesson to future lessons	1	2	3

Comments:

### Presentation

9. Projected voice so easily heard	1	2	3
10. Used intonation to vary emphasis	1	2	3
11. Explained ideas with clarity	1	2	3
12. Maintained eye contact with students	1	2	3
13. Listened to student questions & comments	1	2	3
14. Projected nonverbal gestures consistent with intentions	1	2	3
15. Defined unfamiliar terms, concepts, and principles	1	2	3
16. Presented examples to clarify points	1	2	3
17. Related new ideas to familiar concepts	1	2	3
18. Restated important ideas at appropriate times	1	2	3
19. Varied explanations for complex and difficult material	1	2	3



20. Used humor appropriately to strengthen retention & interest	1	2	3
21. Limited use of repetitive phrases	1	2	3

Comments:

### **Instructor-Student Interactions**

22. Encouraged student questions	1	2	3
23. Encouraged student discussion	1	2	3
24. Maintained student attention	1	2	3
25. Asked questions to monitor students' progress	1	2	3
26. Gave satisfactory answers to student questions	1	2	3
27. Responded to nonverbal cues of confusion, boredom, & curiosity	1	2	3
28. Paced lesson to allow time for note taking	1	2	3
29. Encouraged students to answer difficult questions	1	2	3
30. Asked probing questions when student answer was incomplete	1	2	3
31. Restated questions and answers when necessary	1	2	3
32. Suggested questions of limited interest handled outside of class	1	2	3

Comments:

### **Instructional Materials and Environment**

33. Maintained adequate classroom facilities	1	2	3
34. Prepared students for the lesson with appropriate assigned readings	1	2	3
35. Supported lesson with useful classroom discussions and exercises	1	2	3
36. Presented helpful audio-visual materials to support lesson organization & major points	1	2	3
37. Provided relevant written assignments	1	2	3

Comments:

### **Content Knowledge and Relevance**

38. Presented material worth knowing	1	2	3
39. Presented material appropriate to student knowledge & background	1	2	3
40. Cited authorities to support statements	1	2	3
41. Presented material appropriate to stated purpose of the course	1	2	3

42. Made distinctions between fact & opinion	1	2	3
43. Presented divergent viewpoints when appropriate	1	2	3
44. Demonstrated command of subject matter	1	2	3

Comments:

45. What overall impressions do you think students left this lesson with in terms of content or style?

46. What were the instructor's major strengths as demonstrated in this observation?

47. What suggestions do you have for improving upon this instructor's skills?

*University of Texas*

## Sample Classroom Observation Guide 2

Instructor evaluated \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Course \_\_\_\_\_ Number of Students Present \_\_\_\_\_

Evaluator(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Pre-Observation Conference \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Post-Observation Conference \_\_\_\_\_

5 = Highest

4

3 = Satisfactory

2

1 = Lowest

N/A = Not Applicable

Criteria	5	4	3	2	1	N/A
Defines objectives for the class presentation						
Effectively organizes learning situations to meet the objectives of the class presentation						
Uses instructional methods encouraging relevant student participation in the learning process						
Uses class time effectively						
Demonstrates enthusiasm for the subject matter						
Communicates clearly and effectively to the level of the students						
Explains important ideas simply and clearly						
Demonstrates command of subject matter						
Responds appropriately to student questions and comments						
Encourages critical thinking and analysis						
Considering the previous items, how would you rate this instructor in comparison to others in the department?						
Other:						
Other:						
Overall rating						

Would you recommend this instructor to students you are advising?

What specific suggestions would you make concerning how this particular class could have been improved?

Seldin, Peter. Changing Practices in Evaluating Teaching. Bolton, MA: Anker, 1999.

## **Post-Observation Questions**

- In general, how did you think the class went?
- How did you feel about your teaching during the class?
- Did students accomplish the goals you had planned for this class?
- Is there anything that worked well for you in the class today that you particularly liked? Does that usually go well?
- Is there anything that did not work well in class? Is that typically a problem area for you?
- What were your teaching strengths?
- Did you notice anything you improved on or any personal goals you met?
- What are your teaching problems-areas that still need improvement?
- Do you have any suggestions or strategies for improvement?

*Temple University*

## **Pre- and Post-Observation Questions**

Before an observation, the observer and the class instructor should get together for a pre-session. Discussing and agreeing on answers to the following questions will help you at this important planning stage:

1. What do each of you hope to learn from the classroom observation experience?  
What feedback from students and/or others does the instructor already have?  
What follow-up questions or concerns does the instructor want the observer to look for and address?  
What other things is the observer planning to look for?
2. What can the observer expect?  
What are the course goals?  
How are sessions typically conducted, and will the session to be observed be different?  
What is students' typical response to planned activities?
3. What effect is a classroom visitor likely to have?  
Will students notice? Will they have questions?  
How, if at all, should the observer's presence be acknowledged?  
Is the observer expected to participate in classroom activities and, if so, to what extent?

After the observation, the class instructor and the observer should schedule a post-session, at which they can consider the following questions:

1. What was the overall impression of each party?  
Did the session go as expected? Were there any surprises?  
Can the observer directly address questions or concerns the instructor raised in the pre-session?
2. How would the observer describe the instructor's relationship with students?  
How effectively were student questions addressed?  
How comfortable did students seem interacting with the instructor and each other?
3. What is the observer's response to the instructor's presentation of key concepts and illustrative examples or demonstrations?  
What alternatives would the observer recommend, and why?
4. What is the instructor's response to these observations? How will they be followed up?

*Penn State University*