

BUFF Classroom Observation Framework

Frameworks with specific observation criteria can provide more structure to classroom observations. The CTL's BUFF Classroom Observation Framework was developed by CTL professional staff and tested by 19 faculty from a variety of disciplines over a 2-year pilot of the Teaching Circles program (formerly Teaching Triads). It covers four dimensions of teaching: **B**e Prepared, **U**se Active Learning Strategies, **F**oster an Inclusive and Equitable Learning Environment, and **F**eedback & Assessments. Each dimension can be further divided into subcategories and example behaviors. This framework serves as a jumping off point for conversations about teaching and teaching development, and can be used to guide pre-observation meetings, to take notes during observations, and to help organize live notes after an observation to provide more concrete feedback.

Please keep in mind that it is not expected that every course will attend equally to all dimensions, or that you could observe all dimensions within a single class period.

A recommended approach to using the framework

1. Study the BUFF observation framework dimensions, subcategories, and example behaviors. Periodically revisit the framework to refresh your memory, especially before you meet with someone you will observe and/or before observing a course.
2. During a pre-observation meeting, be sure to ask if there are any framework dimensions or subcategories that they are particularly interested in getting feedback on (focus areas).
3. Keeping in mind the framework generally, or if relevant, instructor-specified focus areas, observe the class and take notes on what you see happening in the class.
4. Immediately after the observation, compare your notes to the framework dimensions and make note of specific example behaviors you observed and any other relevant notes/feedback for the instructor. What feedback and questions arose that you'd like to discuss with the instructor during the post-observation consultation?

Please note that this framework is in development (last updated 08/04/25). Please feel free to contact sarah.andrews-1@colorado.edu with any questions or suggestions.

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Classroom observation process checklist

<input type="checkbox"/>	Before: Request & review the course syllabus and optionally any other course materials provided, e.g., Canvas site/LMS, lesson plans, assessment materials.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Before: Meet with the faculty member to understand course goals, teaching practices, observation focus areas, etc., and to schedule the class visit.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Before: Create a copy of this framework and enter known information into the Course Information section.
<input type="checkbox"/>	During: Arrive early. Find an unobtrusive place to sit in the classroom. Sit where you can best observe students' interactions and engagement with the instructor and the learning environment.
<input type="checkbox"/>	During: Complete the Course Information and Course Setting sections below.
<input type="checkbox"/>	During: Use the framework as a guide to take notes during the observation.
<input type="checkbox"/>	After: Review your live notes immediately after the observation. Map notes to the BUFF Framework dimensions. Summarize takeaways for the instructor.
<input type="checkbox"/>	After: Meet with the observed faculty member to share observation takeaways, discuss any feedback, and help them make a plan for any changes they may want to implement.
<input type="checkbox"/>	After: Share a final report summarizing pre-meeting notes, key takeaways from the observation, and post-observation meeting notes with the observed instructor. If a formal peer letter based on the observation/interview is requested, you may use the template peer letter provided at the end of this document and/or follow departmental guidelines for writing and submitting a peer letter.

Course Information

Observer name	
Instructor name	
Course number and section	
Course Title	
Course Building & Room	
Observation date & time	
Did class start on time? (Yes/No, if No enter start time)	
Did class end on time? (Yes/No, if No, enter end time)	
Semester and Year	
Number of TAs and LAs who assisted with the class (or N/A)	
Does this course have any associated labs, recitation, or discussion sessions? (Y/N and which)	
# Learners who attended* / # Learners enrolled** *for very large classes where it may be difficult to count, you may approximate, or ask the instructor for attendance if they collect it. **if you didn't get the enrollment from the instructor you can find that info at https://classes.colorado.edu/	

Course Setting

Use this space to briefly describe the physical classroom setting in which the lesson took place, including a description of the room, seating arrangements, audiovisual setup (sound, screen visibility), etc.

Look for evidence of student engagement

Note that student engagement also appears in several of the BUFF dimensions (e.g., under Use Active Learning Strategies), but it can also be helpful to periodically scan the room and note the way(s) students are engaged or disengaged. Who's participating? How many? In what ways? Are they more/less engaged during different parts of the class session?

Example engaged behaviors

- Listening
- Taking notes (by hand or on a device)
- Asking questions (verbally, Zoom chat, etc.)
- Answering questions (verbally, clickers/polls, Zoom chat, etc.)
- Participating in discussions, group work, or other class activities
- Using devices as instructed for course work

Example disengaged behaviors

- Using their phone computer, or other device for non-class work
- Talking to peers about non-course work
- Asleep or otherwise tuned out (e.g., listening to music)

Notes on additional observed behaviors or other observation notes related to student engagement, including instructor actions to promote student engagement:

Live observation notes

Record events (e.g., topic transitions, start/stop times for group work) and other notes about what you are observing that may help in connecting observations to the BUFF framework and/or your feedback to the instructor. Most people have found it easier to take live notes during the observation and then later map those notes to the framework dimensions, so this is a space to accommodate that. However, you may also/alternatively take live notes directly in the framework dimensions below.

Be Prepared

Observable behaviors that demonstrate instructor preparedness, readiness, and classroom management techniques for the purpose of providing a structure for learning to occur. Covers Agenda & Objectives, Clarity, Organization, and Classroom Management.

Agenda & Objectives

Follows an agenda or plan for the day and shares [learning objectives](#) with learners.

Example behaviors

- Introduces learning objectives for the class period at the beginning of the session
- Shares agenda for the class session
- Shares guiding questions for the class session or unit
- Shares slides in advance of the class session (e.g., students have slides up on their devices, instructor refers to the shared slides)

Additional observed behaviors and other observation notes:

Clarity

Clearly communicates context, concepts, and instructions to learners.

Example behaviors

- Provides context for session and relevance of the information
- Clearly summarizes key points/concepts of the lesson
- Provides clear instructions for activities
- Invites learners to ask questions prior to starting (and during) learning activities
- Emphasizes important ideas as necessary
- Explains complex concepts in multiple ways
- “Chunks” information into smaller elements, helping to prevent cognitive overload

Additional observed behaviors and other observation notes:

Organization

Structures the class session and clearly communicates structure to learners.

Example behaviors

- Structures content and activities in an organized and coherent manner
- Uses transitions to guide learners through the class session (e.g., before transitioning to a new topic or activity, pauses to ask if there are questions; summarizes key points; allows time for students to organize their notes; uses [minute papers](#), Clickers or other tools to gauge understanding)
- Provides a brief overview of the next session

Additional observed behaviors and other observation notes:

Classroom Management

Manages classroom pacing to allow adequate time for content, activities, and questions.

Example behaviors

- Class begins and ends at its scheduled time
- Paces lesson appropriately
- Provides timing cues for activities (before and during activity, e.g., 2-minute warning)
- Allows adequate time for learners to complete and debrief activities
- Provides out-of-class activities to prepare for in-class activities (e.g., prep tasks, pre-reading, annotating shared documents, discussion boards)
- Regularly looks around the room / makes eye contact with students

Additional observed behaviors and other observation notes:

Use Active Learning Strategies

The use of learner-centered strategies that engage learners in doing activities/problems, thinking and writing about what they are learning, and/or idea-sharing with their peers and instructors. Covers Challenge & Support, Discussion, Collaboration, Reflection, and Innovation/Technology/Educational Tools.

Challenge & Support

Academic challenge that supports learning and growth (Artze-Vega et al., 2023).

Example behaviors

- Fosters a [growth mindset](#) (e.g., through raising learners' confidence; normalizing struggle, failure, and mistakes as part of the learning process; encouraging learners to challenge themselves; and providing guidance on how to improve)
- Demonstrates instructor support throughout the class
- Encourages learners to contribute ideas
- Encourages learners to try again
- Solicits alternative explanations
- Encourages learners to consider multiple or conflicting perspectives/ideas
- Asks learners to build/expand on ideas
- Uses verbal affirmations to encourage, praise, and validate learner contributions
- Provides [scaffolding](#) and clarifies concepts for better understanding
- Provides opportunities to practice skills while learning is in progress
- Gives students hard problems or challenging experience to help them get ready for learning
- Creates a safe space for students to take risks and share their perspectives honestly, e.g., giving permission / encouraging them to share something that isn't correct or fully fleshed out
- Enables student agency (e.g., they can choose their partner, topic, materials, whether to write or type an assignment, whether to work alone or in a group)

Additional observed behaviors and other observation notes:

Discussion

Encourages thought-provoking discussions; posits critical, open-ended, and follow-up questions leading to higher-order thinking skills.

Example behaviors

- Presents open-ended questions and stretches thinking
- Provides [critical thinking](#) opportunities for learners (e.g., related to interdisciplinary approach, political, social, or environmental discourse)
- Uses a variety of discussion techniques (e.g., [debate](#), [case study](#), [think-pair-share](#), [Socratic questioning](#), [barn raising](#), [four-questions technique](#))
- Asks higher level questions (e.g., goes beyond the literal, such as asking learners for inferences)
- Encourages learners to support their positions
- Encourages learners to provide constructive responses to their peers' comments
- Pauses to allow learners adequate time to think and respond ([Wait Time](#))
- Encourages and actively manages participation of all students (e.g., through handraising; [multiple hands](#), [multiple voices](#); prioritizing students who haven't spoken)

Additional observed behaviors and other observation notes:

Collaboration

Interactions reflect collaborative working relationships and productive discourse among learners and between instructor(s) and learners.

Example behaviors

- Provides opportunities for learners to engage with each other in small groups
- Provides clear guidance/instructions for group work
- Provides clear outcomes for the groups
- Interacts with individual groups
- Provides opportunities for groups to problem-solve and make decisions

Additional observed behaviors and other observation notes:

Reflection

Gives learners opportunities to gather their thoughts/reflections on the learning that is occurring (e.g., examines underlying beliefs, perspectives, attitudes, experiences and/or actions/interactions during the learning process).

Example behaviors

- Provides opportunities for learners to reflect on their learning, e.g., through [minute papers](#) or journal prompts
- Encourages learners to explain their understanding of concepts
- Encourages learners to discuss how they solved a problem/share processes
- Encourages [metacognitive processes](#) to think about what approaches are helping them learn and evaluate their own progress
- Encourages self-reflection and appreciation of one's strengths in order to build learner confidence

Additional observed behaviors and other observation notes:

Innovation/Technology/Educational Tools

Utilizes innovative instructional techniques, technology, and/or other educational tools to promote active learning. Use of innovative techniques should consider context, e.g., discipline, course size/type/level, needs of students, and instructor experience.

Example behaviors

- Utilizes advanced active learning techniques such as [experiential learning](#), [self-directed learning](#), or activities such as [role playing](#), [simulations](#), games, [gallery walks](#), etc.
- Uses technology in a way that promotes active learning for the task, such as Poll Everywhere, iClickers, PlayPosit, class wikis, Padlet, Perusall, Hypothesis, etc.
- Incorporates narrative-based pedagogies / [storytelling](#) into instructional communication (e.g., communicates personal experiences, invites learners to enter into the stories of others through [case studies](#) or sharing / listening to stories from peers, creating stories together)
- Encourages learners to explore and learn to use different tools to achieve the goals of the task (unless the goal is to learn a specific tool)
- Use of technology and innovative techniques is driven by learning goals (e.g., the instructor makes clear why and how a particular technology or technique will help students learn)

Additional observed behaviors and other observation notes:

Foster an Inclusive and Equitable Learning Environment

Inclusive and equitable learning environments promote learning through strategies that identify and are responsive to the respective needs of students, while fostering belonging among all students. Covers Belonging, Universal Design for Learning, Relevance, and Diverse/Global Examples.

Belonging

Engages in actions to foster learners' sense of comfort, acceptance, and their value in the classroom, socially (e.g., by their peers), and in different settings within the broader campus community.

Example behaviors

- Addresses learners by their names
- Engages in actions/statements that empower all learners (i.e., affirmations, encouragement)
- Challenges or disrupts (potentially) harmful interactions or incidents
- References established [classroom community norms](#)
- Creates a caring environment by listening to learners
- Engages in actions that are responsive to the needs of learners
- Explicitly promotes access and equity for all students (e.g., stating the importance of diverse perspectives in the discipline, sharing why they are using a particular teaching strategy, communicating that they want and expect everyone in the classroom to be successful in learning the discipline/topic)
- Promotes relationship building (e.g., instructor shares personal stories or information about themselves, facilitates an activity where students share information about themselves, gives time for students to talk with one another on topics beyond course material, asks informal questions about students' co-curricular activities or engagements, asks students to switch partners so that they can talk with someone new in the class)
- Creates space for learners to find joy through connections to their identities, sense of self, and communities
- Facilitates the sharing of coping strategies/needs from learners to encourage learners to take care of one another

Additional observed behaviors and other observation notes:

Relevance

The instructor makes meaningful connections between course content and the discipline's big ideas, as well as to other curricular areas and/or real-world applications and/or gives learners an opportunity to make their own connections.

Example behaviors:

- Explains the relevance of the course content to learners' lives, interests, goals, identities, and/or communities
- Encourages students to give examples from their everyday lives related to the topic
- Makes a comparison to something in everyday life (e.g., baking, weather, etc.)
- Attempts to connect learner interests to learning content
- Creates opportunities for learners to interpret the importance of the learning materials
- Gauges learner interests in the materials
- Instructor gives examples from their own life and connects it to the course topic
- Uses [authentic learning and/or assessments](#) that mirror real-world tasks and problem-solving learners would use in their field
- Links to relevant prior knowledge (e.g., making connections to concepts from prior class topics or prior courses, highlights previously learned skills that can be used to solve unfamiliar/new problems, embeds opportunities to revisit key ideas and linkages between ideas)
- Embeds new ideas in familiar ideas and contexts (e.g., use of analogy, metaphor, drama, music, film, etc.) to make learning more relatable

Additional observed behaviors and other observation notes:

Diverse/Global Examples

The instructor provides examples that present a diversity of people, situations, perspectives, or ideas.

Example behaviors

- Uses examples of people from diverse cultural backgrounds or [social identity groups](#)
- Examples challenge [stereotypes](#)/assumptions
- Use of opposing perspectives OR perspectives from marginalized groups

Additional observed behaviors and other observation notes:

Universal Design for Learning (UDL)

Instructor employs methods and practices from the [Universal Design for Learning framework](#) by offering multiple ways for learners to engage with content, represent their learning, and express what they know. Note that many UDL principles are reflected elsewhere in the BUFF framework, especially [Challenge & Support](#), [Collaboration](#), [Reflection](#), [Belonging](#), [Relevance](#), and [In-time Feedback](#).

Example behaviors:

Engagement

- Uses [modeling](#) to demonstrate a concept, skill, or behavior for learners, showing them how to approach a task or solve a problem before having them practice independently
- All learners are engaged: actively listening to the teacher or a peer, writing, using a computer or other technology or are engaged in a project or activity alone or with a peer.
- Uses activities that foster the use of imagination and creativity to solve novel, complex, and/or relevant problems

Representation

- Uses multiple media to present lesson content or makes multiple media available to students to explore content (e.g., magazines, articles, literature, online resources, audio/visual files, drawings, manipulatives/models, interactive white board).
- Provides descriptions (text and/or spoken) for all images, graphics, videos, or animations.
- Provides auditory cues for key concepts and transitions in visual information
- Provides visual diagrams, charts, or notations of music or sound
- Provides visual (e.g., digital timers) or tactile (e.g., vibrations) equivalents for alerts
- Uses captions, automated speech-to-text (voice recognition), and/or sign language for spoken communication
- Clarifies unfamiliar syntax (in language or in math formulas) or underlying structure (in diagrams, graphs, illustrations, extended expositions, or narratives)

Action & Expression

- Embeds flexibility in the requirements for timing, speed, and range of motor action required to interact with instructional materials, physical manipulatives, and technologies
- Offers alternatives for physically responding or indicating selections (e.g., alternatives to marking with pen and pencil)
- Provides opportunities for learners to demonstrate knowledge/learning in a variety of ways (i.e., presentations, small group learning, partner sharing, etc.)
- Encourages learners to compose in multiple media such as text, speech, drawing, comics, storyboards, design, film, music, storytelling, dance/movement, visual art, sculpture, etc.
- Encourages the use of social media or interactive web tools for expression (e.g., discussion forums, chats, web design, annotation tools, storyboards, comic strips)
- Uses TAs, LAs, co-instructors, or student peers to provide different approaches to inform, guide, provide feedback, and motivate learners

Additional observed behaviors and other observation notes:

Feedback & Assessments

Assesses learning and the learning environment through frequent and varied low-stakes means, provides equitable and timely feedback to learners, and uses feedback and assessments to improve learning and the learning environment. Covers Formative Assessment, Equitable Feedback, In-time Feedback, and Collects Learner Feedback.

Formative Assessment

Frequently conducts low-stakes check-ins with learners to assess comprehension and progress in the course

Example behaviors

- Routinely asks for learner input and questions
- Embeds regular opportunities for learners to reflect and share about their learning (e.g., [minute papers](#), [muddiest point](#))
- Embeds regular opportunities for learners to participate in ungraded or low-stakes formative quizzes
- Measures students' baseline knowledge or skills using a formal or informal assessment at the beginning of a class session or before transitioning to a new topic ([prior knowledge assessment](#))
- Circulates during activities to monitor learner progress
- Asks questions to learners as a means of monitoring their understanding
- Encourages learners to explain their understanding of concepts
- Encourages learners to discuss how they solved a problem

Additional observed behaviors and other observation notes:

In-time Feedback

Regularly provides in-time, actionable feedback to learners

Example behaviors:

- Regularly uses clickers, other learner response systems, or online polls to provide immediate feedback on in-class quizzes, [think-pair-share](#), etc.
- Circulates during activities to ask / answer questions
- Follows up during class discussions to acknowledge, clarify, and/or affirm learner answers
- Helps learners to extend their responses during class discussions or in response to a learner answer to an instructor question
- Reviews assignments/activities from previous session/week as a class (e.g., reviewing common mistakes/misunderstandings)
- Ensures learners can accurately gauge their progress and grade standing at any time (e.g., reminds learners during class that Canvas grades are visible, explains to learners how to check/understand what their grade is)
- Details when learners should expect instructor feedback (for questions, emails, projects, tests, etc.)
- Utilizes class time for peers to review and provide feedback to each other (using a rubric or clear grading criteria)
- Utilizes class time for structured self-assessment

Additional observed behaviors and other observation notes:

Equitable Feedback

Treats each individual learner with equal respect when providing constructive feedback and encouragement

Example behaviors

- Conveys the same level of confidence in the abilities of all learners (e.g., isn't overly protective or unduly strict toward any group of or individual learners; conveys that all learners are capable of growth)
- Is even-handed in acknowledging learners' strengths and areas for growth (e.g., doesn't restrict praise or feedback on areas of improvement to only certain learners / certain groups of learners)
- Emphasizes high standards with verbal assurances that they will help learners succeed
- Takes care not to perpetuate [stereotypes](#)
- Shares rubrics or other clear, pre-established grading criteria with learners

Additional observed behaviors and other observation notes:

Collects Learner Feedback

Gathers informal and formal feedback on the course learning environment learning experience and acknowledges feedback provided by learners

Example behaviors

- Clarifies how and when learners can provide feedback on their experiences in the course
- Explains to learners specific ways their feedback will be used to improve the current and/or future learning environment
- Facilitates discussions on the utility of and/or interest in course materials from the learners' perspective
- Solicits learner feedback via anonymous surveys or short writing prompts
- Invites a colleague in to facilitate a classroom interview about learning experiences
- Shares feedback so all learners see the diverse responses, experiences, and perspectives and to validate learners' input and perspectives

Additional observed behaviors and other observation notes:

Summary Notes

Immediately after the observation, review your observation notes and summarize some takeaways for the instructor. What feedback and questions arose that you'd like to discuss with the instructor during the post-observation meeting?

Strengths

Describe strengths of the course and/or the instructor's teaching practices.

Curiosities

Describe moments that sparked your interest and/or questions you have for the instructor.

Actionable suggestions

Describe opportunities for the instructor to strengthen the course and/or their teaching.

Supplementary Observation Materials

Pre-Observation Meeting Guide

Plan for a 30-minute conversation (or one hour if you will observe each other and are scheduling a single meeting to discuss both observations). **Recommended: request and review the course syllabus before the meeting.**

Purpose of the pre-observation meeting

- Establish comfort and trust in the process
- Understand the instructor's goals for the observation and/or their course
- Discuss particularly relevant BUFF framework dimensions
- Identify a date to observe their course

Get an understanding of their goals for the specific class session to be observed, e.g., you might ask:

- How's class going this semester?
- How is a "typical" class session structured?
- How do you get students to engage with one another and with you as the instructor?
- How do you know if students are engaged in class and with the content?
- Are there any new things you're considering trying out (e.g., an active learning technique, an inclusive practice, a new module, etc.)?
- What are you aiming to improve, and why?
- What advice would you like for improving?
- What are they hoping to learn and/or do with what they learn from this process?

Select focus areas from the BUFF Classroom Observation Framework

- Collaborate to identify dimension(s) or specific subcategories from the BUFF classroom observation framework to focus on during the observation
 - What dimension(s) best fit the needs/goals of the observation?
 - Which areas are they trying something new and want feedback?

Identify an observation date

- When selecting a class session (or sessions) to observe, it should be a typical class session. In other words, avoid test days, days with guest speakers, or days with back-to-back student presentations.
- The observation will need to be completed in time to have a post-observation meeting before the Teaching Triads wrap-up meeting near the end of the semester.
- Ideally also identify a date for the post-observation meeting at this time.

Is there anything else about the course/class you would like to discuss prior to the observations?

Post-Observation Meeting Guide

Plan for a 30-minute conversation (or one hour if you observed each other and are scheduling a single meeting to discuss both observations).

Purpose of the post-observation meeting

- Share and discuss insights from the observation
- Engage in reflection on teaching practices in light of the observation
- Set goals for short- and/or long-term changes

Share observer insights from the observation, e.g.,

- Focus on dimensions from the BUFF classroom observation framework (above)
- Highlights (what you observed or didn't observe)
- "Curiosities" and/or questions you have based on your observations
- "Actionable Suggestions"

Reflection questions (for the observer to pose to the instructor)

- How do you feel the class(es) went?
- What worked (or didn't work) in the class?
- What questions came to mind as you reviewed observation feedback?
- What are important / interesting things you learned about your teaching practices from this process? What makes this important / interesting to you?
- What, if anything, surprised you?

Next steps / actions

- What is a small / easy to implement change you would like to make?
- What is a larger / longer-term goal you'd like to work towards?

Is there anything else you would like to discuss?

Template Peer Observation Letter

This template can be used if helpful as a baseline to write your own letter for the peer you observed. All highlighted portions should be updated to reflect the actual observation, but you can of course also change any part of this template, use other templates or departmental examples, or start from scratch.

—

Letterhead

Date

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing to share a teaching evaluation of (name of observee). I observed (title of course) course on (date). The class met from (time/location).

I used the CTL's BUFF Classroom Observation Framework to evaluate (name of observee). The BUFF Framework draws from scholarship on teaching, department examples of classroom observation protocols, and the CTL staff's experience observing classes across multiple disciplines. This framework covers four dimensions of teaching: Be Prepared, Use Active Learning Strategies, Foster an Inclusive and Equitable Learning Environment, and Feedback and Assessments. Across all four dimensions, (name of observee) demonstrated... (e.g., exceptional teaching ability).

[include a brief description about the design/sequencing/flow of class session]

[write 2-3 short paragraphs describing some of the instructor's strengths in the context of the framework, providing specific examples that you observed. E.g.,

"(Name) was well-prepared for the course meeting, sharing an agenda, providing context for the session, clearly summarizing the lesson's key points, and providing adequate time for students to complete and debrief in-class activities."

"During the class, (Name) used multiple active learning strategies, including asking learners to contribute their ideas and experiences to the concepts covered in the class-wide discussion and using small group discussions to enable students to collaborate and build knowledge."

"In class-wide discussions, (Name) was exemplary in fostering an inclusive and equitable learning environment. He made efforts to learn students' names, he incorporated movement into the course activities, and his course materials were multi-modal, with an engaging mix of text, video, and audio elements."

"(Name) utilized low-stakes feedback and assessment. In his interactions with small groups, he checked for understanding and asked them to explain their understanding of the concepts discussed during that class. In offering affirmations for students' ideas, he

was even-handed in his encouragement, providing all students the same level of assurance.]

[Include some suggestions for improvement or opportunities to try some new teaching strategies, e.g.,

“There may be opportunities to engage more students in discussion, however engagement was high (more than half of the class contributed verbally and the rest appeared to be engaged through listening), and students were clearly listening to each other. In my post-observation meeting with (Name) we discussed some strategies related to bringing more students into discussion during class time, e.g., incorporating brief reflection / writing during class and/or think-pair-share to engage students in small group discussions before full class discussion. “]

(Name) is an exemplary educator based on the four dimensions of the BUFF Framework. [include a sentence or two summarizing key observations].

If you have any questions or if I can be of further assistance, please do not hesitate to contact me at the email below.

Sincerely,

(Signature of observer, program name, contact information)

References and Further Reading

Books

Addy, T.M., Dube, D., Mitchell, K. A., & SoRelle, M. (2021). *What Inclusive Instructors Do*. Stylus.

Artze-Vega, I., Darby, F., Dewsbury, B., & Imad, M. (2023). [*The Norton Guide to Equity-Minded Teaching*](#), New York, NY: W.W. Norton & Company, Inc.

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Wlodkowski, R., & Ginsberg, M. (2017) *Enhancing adult motivation to learn: A comprehensive guide for teaching all adults (4th ed.)*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Deeper dives into each BUFF Dimension

Be Prepared

Orr, R.B., Csikari, M.M., Freeman, S., & Rodriguez, M.C. (2022) [Evidence Based Teaching Guide: Learning Objectives](#). *CBE – Life Sciences Education*.

Use Active Learning Strategies

Center for STEM Learning, CU Boulder. [Instructional Innovations](#).

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BUFF Framework Glossary

Authentic Assessments/Activities/Learning: Learning that involves the application of knowledge and skills to real-world situations, scenarios, or problems; can take place inside or outside of the classroom ([Authentic Assessments](#)).

Barn Raising (discussion technique): A teaching strategy where a learner shares a newly formed or not-yet well thought out idea and the classroom community comes together to put together that idea ([Barn Raising: Collaborative Group Process in Seminars](#)).

Case Study: An instructional method that presents learners with real-world or hypothetical scenarios, allowing them to apply their knowledge, analyze situations, and solve problems collaboratively or individually.

Classroom Community Norms: A set of guidelines to hold classroom community members accountable to a collaborative, respectful, and inclusive learning environment. Typically co-created by students and instructor, but at minimum, something that all community members agree to uphold. Also referred to as community agreements, contracts, or guidelines ([Establishing Community Agreements and Classroom Norms](#)).

Critical Thinking: The ability to analyze, evaluate, and synthesize information to make reasoned decisions or solve problems effectively.

Debate: A structured discussion technique where learners are divided into teams or individuals to argue opposing viewpoints on a particular topic, encouraging critical thinking and defense of perspectives.

Experiential Learning: A learning process where students gain knowledge and skills through direct experience, such as hands-on activities, fieldwork, or practical application, followed by reflection on the experience.

Four-questions technique: A reflective learning technique where learners respond to four questions before a quiz or other assessment to encourage analyzing (i.e., what was learned), reflecting (i.e., why it is important), relating (i.e., how the material related to their personal lives), and generating (i.e., what questions they now have about the material) ([Using the Four-Questions Technique to Enhance Learning](#)).

Gallery Walks: A collaborative strategy where learners create visual displays of their work and move around the classroom to view and provide feedback on each other's projects ([What is Gallery Walk?](#)).

Growth Mindset: The belief that ability is malleable and can be improved with effort, feedback, and using effective strategies for learning, often contrasted with a fixed-mindset belief that abilities cannot be changed ([Effective Growth Mindset Culture Messages](#)).

Learning Objectives/Outcomes: Clear, concise statements that define the expected outcomes of a lesson or course. They outline what learners should know or be able to do by the end of the instruction ([Creating and Using Learning Outcomes](#)).

Metacognitive Processes: Encouraging students to think about their own thinking and learning processes, promoting self-awareness and strategies for improvement ([Evidence-based Teaching Guide: Student Metacognition](#)).

Minute Papers: A quick formative classroom assessment technique where learners write brief responses (usually within a minute) to reflect on what they have learned, helping both the instructor and learners gauge understanding ([Minute Papers](#)). [Muddiest Point](#) is a subset of minute papers where students point out what is still confusing to them and clearly explain why it is confusing.

Modeling: A teaching strategy where the instructor demonstrates a concept, skill, or behavior for learners, showing them how to approach a task or solve a problem before having them practice independently ([Why is modeling important in the classroom?](#)).

Multiple Hands, Multiple Voices: A strategy to encourage the voice of more students in the class by waiting for multiple hands to raise before calling on students; prioritize students who haven't spoken yet or who raise their hands later (e.g., wait and call on the third learner to raise their hand).

Prior Knowledge Assessment or Probe: A questionnaire that students fill out at the beginning of a course or start of a new unit that helps instructors identify the best starting point for the class as a whole ([Background Knowledge Probe](#)).

Role Playing: An instructional activity where learners take on roles in specific scenarios to explore perspectives, practice skills, or solve problems ([Role Play](#)).

Scaffolding: Instructional support provided by the teacher to help students understand new concepts, gradually removed or reduced as the learner gains independence ([How Do I Provide Scaffolding for Learning?](#)).

Self-Directed Learning: An approach in which learners take responsibility for their own learning process, including setting goals, selecting resources, and evaluating their progress, with minimal instructor guidance ([Self-Directed Learning: A Core Concept in Adult Education](#)).

Simulations: An experiential learning technique that uses models or virtual environments to recreate real-world scenarios, allowing learners to apply concepts and test hypotheses in a controlled setting ([Simulation as a Teaching Strategy](#)).

Social Identities: The aspects of a person’s identity shaped by societal groups they belong to, including but not limited to race, gender, class, or religion, influencing their experiences and perspectives.

Socratic Questioning: A method of encouraging deep thinking through a series of thought-provoking, open-ended questions that challenge assumptions, explore ideas, and promote dialogue ([Tips and Examples for Using Socratic Questioning](#)).

Stereotypes: Oversimplified and widely held beliefs or assumptions about a group of people, often based on factors such as race, gender, or other social categories. These can be harmful and perpetuate biases.

Storytelling: Using narrative to convey concepts or lessons in a way that is engaging and relatable to learners ([Narrative/Storytelling in the Classroom](#)).

Think-Pair-Share: A collaborative discussion technique where learners first think about a question or topic individually, then pair up to discuss their thoughts with a partner, and finally share their ideas with the larger group ([Think-Pair-Share](#)).

Wait Time: The practice of pausing for 3-5 seconds at minimum after asking questions before soliciting student responses to provide students with time to think about the question and develop a response; a technique to encourage more voices and/or more thoughtful responses ([Wait Time: Making Space for Authentic Learning](#)).