**[DEPT] Peer Teaching Evaluation Plan**

[TEMPLATE]**[[1]](#footnote-1)**

[NOTE THAT ALL HIGHLIGHTED TEXT IS INTENDED TO BE MODIFIED OR DELETED. FOR EACH SECTION BELOW, EXAMPLES ARE INCLUDED - THESE ARE INTENDED TO BE MODIFIED DEPENDING ON DEPARTMENTAL NEEDS, POLICIES, APPLICABLE PERSONNEL, ETC.].

**Overview/Purpose**

The [DEPT] has collectively committed to developing best practices in teaching. The process outlined here will utilize the voices of faculty peers towards a) improving individual teaching development, and b) for evaluative reporting, such as for Reappointment, Promotion, and Tenure Review. It is designed with several goals: a) to provide greater consistency in the scheduling of observations and in evaluating components of teaching that the department values as effective practices; b) to be formative and developmental for faculty at all ranks in improving teaching over time; and c) to foster a departmental culture of scholarly teaching and shared visions. To achieve these goals, the process implements strategies that are backed by research, including employing a standard protocol for classroom observations and incorporating those observations within a broader process of consultation and conversation (e.g., Brinko, 1993; AAAS, 2012)[[2]](#footnote-2).

**Selection of Observers**

[DESCRIBE THE PROCESS FOR WHO WILL APPOINT FACULTY TO CONDUCT OBSERVATIONS, AND ANY CONDITIONS AROUND HOW THEY ARE TO BE SELECTED].

The [insert applicable body(ies)] will meet twice annually (August and December) to determine who will be observed in the upcoming semester based upon the frequency detailed below, and prioritizing those due for Reappointment, Promotion, and Tenure Review. The committee [or insert applicable body(ies)] will also appoint faculty to conduct observations. In most cases, the observer will be familiar with the course and/or course content, come from the same program, and be senior in rank to the observed faculty member. Faculty members may notify the committee if they prefer not to be observed by a specific colleague. However, in order to balance workload, schedules, etc., the [insert appropriate body(ies) as inserted above] will have final say in the selection of observers.

**Procedure for Classroom Observations**

[DESCRIBE THE PROCESS FOR CLASSROOM OBSERVATIONS, INCLUDING GUIDANCE ON THE REPORT TO BE SUBMITTED AND ANY REQUIREMENTS/RECOMMENDATIONS AROUND PRE- AND/OR POST-OBSERVATION CONSULTATIONS WITH THE FACULTY MEMBER TO BE OBSERVED, CONDUCTING CLASSROOM INTERVIEWS, ETC].

1. All first-time observers, or observers who are new to this process, shall meet with the [insert applicable body] to review and become familiar with this process.
2. The observer should talk to the faculty member in advance of the observation in order to understand the objectives for that class and how it fits with the overall course and to provide an overview of the observation to be conducted. During this consultation, it is also recommended that the observer and instructor discuss the possibility of supplementing the course evaluation process with additional forms of data, such as: student interviews ([FTEP CLIP service](https://www.colorado.edu/ftep/classroom-learning-interview-process-clip) or a modified version - see [insert link to departmental classroom interview guideline, e.g., [this template](https://www.colorado.edu/teaching-quality-framework/classroom-interview-guide-template), if relevant]), other [FTEP services](https://www.colorado.edu/ftep/services), and/or [ASSETT’s VIP service](https://www.colorado.edu/assett/faculty-resources/services/vips).
3. Faculty members are required to provide their observer with the course syllabus, and may provide other materials they deem relevant, including access to the learning management system, lesson plans, assessment materials, or outlines explaining the pedagogical goals of classroom activities.
4. The number of classroom visits is to be determined by the instructor to be observed and the observer. When feasible, 2-3 classroom visits per observation period are recommended. Note that this does not mean filing multiple reports as the final report will be a summation/evaluation of all classroom visitations.
5. All observers should use the provided form [insert link to your departments’ peer observation protocol] for note taking during the classroom observations. These forms will not be collected, however, they may be shared with the observed instructor during post-observation discussions and should be used as evidence when completing your final report. [IF THE PROTOCOL WILL BE TURNED IN INSTEAD OF WRITING A SEPARATE REPORT, REVISE TO REFLECT THIS].
6. The observer should meet with the observed faculty member after the classroom observation(s) but prior to submitting their report to resolve any questions of factual data, discuss concerns or questions the faculty member or observer may have, and to provide formative and constructive feedback to the faculty member. If the evaluation includes multiple classroom visits, you may also schedule meetings in between classroom visits if appropriate.
7. The observer should review their notes/evidence from the peer observation protocol, syllabus and other materials shared with them, their meetings with the faculty member, and any other applicable evidence (e.g., interactions with students) and prepare a report in the form of a letter summarizing the observations and assessments. This report must address the most relevant items from the standardized protocol. Note that most reports include some suggestions for improvement - it is not expected that any class would ever be perfect. [IF THE PROTOCOL WILL BE TURNED IN INSTEAD OF WRITING A SEPARATE REPORT, REVISE TO REFLECT THIS].
8. The peer observation protocol should be retained by the observer for their records. Within one month following the close of the semester observed, the report should be submitted to [insert applicable body], who will file it in the faculty member’s personnel file. [IF THE PROTOCOL WILL BE TURNED IN INSTEAD OF WRITING A SEPARATE REPORT, REVISE TO REFLECT THIS].
9. An observed faculty member has the opportunity to provide a written response to the observation report, including additional evidence on their teaching practices if relevant. This response may be submitted to the [insert applicable body], who will file the report in the faculty member’s personnel file.

The peer observations should be done in a way that promotes improvement.If the observed class doesn’t meet an acceptable standard, the report should be written in the spirit of being formative. The [insert applicable body] will schedule a follow-up classroom observation and consultation. The second observation can be conducted by the same or different faculty member; this will be decided by the [insert applicable body] in consultation with the observed faculty member and the observer.

**Frequency of Observation**

[FOR EACH RANK DESCRIBE HOW OFTEN THEY SHOULD BE OBSERVED].

1. **Pre-tenure faculty (assistant professors)** require three classroom observations with written reports on file prior to comprehensive review. It is important to complete observations early in the pre-comprehensive review stage where feasible, with the first observation taking place in the first year of teaching. However this may be adjusted as necessary to accommodate those with reduced teaching loads. After comprehensive review, pre-tenure faculty should be observed at least once per year.
2. **Post-tenure associate professors** should be observed at least once every other year until at least three reports are on file. Thereafter the schedule can be more flexible and responsive to the needs of the faculty and department as a whole, keeping in mind that at least one observation close to the time of promotion review is desirable.
3. **Full professors** should be observed at least once every 5 years as part of the post-tenure review process.
4. **Instructors** should be observed at least once per year and **senior instructors** should be observed at least once every other year.
5. **Lecturers, postdocs, and other ranks not included here** should be observed at least once in their first semester of teaching and then at the discretion of the chair.

The frequency of observation listed here should be understood as the minimum requirement. Additional observations can be requested by the Department Chair. A faculty member may also request to be observed at any time, and the Department Chair is responsible for accommodating reasonable requests for observation, as personnel and schedules allow.

1. Developed by the Teaching Quality Framework Initiative (<https://www.colorado.edu/teaching-quality-framework/>) in collaboration with partnering departments at the University of Colorado Boulder. This work was sponsored by the National Science Foundation (DUE-1725959) - any opinions, findings, and conclusions or recommendations expressed in this material are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of the NSF. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. American Association for the Advancement of Science. 2012. Describing & Measuring Undergraduate STEM Teaching Practices. <http://ccliconference.org/files/2013/11/Measuring-STEM-Teaching-Practices.pdf>; Brinko, K.T. 1993. The practice of giving feedback to improve teaching: What is effective? The Journal of Higher Education 64(5): 574-593. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/2959994> [↑](#footnote-ref-2)