

School of Communication Guidelines for Peer Evaluation of Teaching (Updated August 2022)

All instructional faculty on a promotional ladder should receive a peer evaluation of teaching at least once per academic year. This evaluation should be done during the fall semester or early in the spring semester so that the peer review will be available for the Personnel Committee during its spring deliberations. Peer evaluations of teaching are required documents in promotion dossiers at all levels, so it is important to complete these reviews to ensure faculty have peer reviews to submit with their dossier.

THE REVIEW DOCUMENT

- Prepare a letter or memo on letterhead addressed to the School Director.
- In an introductory paragraph, describe evaluation process: What course was evaluated? How many classes did you attend? Was evaluation day known by faculty under observation before the visit? Did you review syllabus and other materials with faculty member? Did you meet to discuss pedagogical strategies in advance of the visit?
- In the body of the letter, provide a detailed observation by using the criteria recommended below.
- Make suggestions, if appropriate, for improvement and of resources available for development, such as participation in CEUT workshops or other professional development related to teaching.
- Submit the original to the department head and provide a copy to the person reviewed.

PROCEDURE

It is recommended that reviewers and reviewees meet prior to the peer evaluation. Discussion about course learning outcomes, pedagogical approaches and philosophies, strategies used for student engagement, help ensure the reviewer is knowledgeable of both course and instructional goals. Peer reviewers should contact the person they are to review early in the semester to arrange for classroom visits (minimum of two suggested, if possible). Before the reviewer visits the class, it is recommended that the students be informed that a visitor will be joining the classroom on the designated review date. While students may recognize the visiting faculty member, disclosure that a visitor will be in the class on designated review dates should help reduce any anxiety or discomfort that could result from the reviewer's presence.

The following are standards and guidelines established by the Academy of Teaching Excellence. These items are not meant to limit comments, but these suggestions are to guide you to writing a well-developed, substantive critique. Suggested areas for peer reviews include:

COURSE ORGANIZATION AND MATERIALS

- Syllabus complies with all requirements described in the *Faculty Handbook*; expectations, objectives, grading structure clearly stated, etc.
- Canvas structure (if used), use of technology. TLOS has a guide for evaluating online courses that offers concrete categories for evaluation.
- Evaluation and assessment strategies (review a sample test, assignment criteria, use of rubrics or other assessment strategies).

When you visit the class, consider the following categories for evaluation:

PEDAGOGICAL STRATEGY

- Is pedagogy appropriate for the class and material (lecture; activity, discussion; workshop)?
- Does the pedagogical strategy match learning objectives for the class period?

Considerations for Lecture

Content

- Is material sufficient for class time?
- Is material presented at appropriate level of class?
- How does the instructor use examples: clarity, illustrative value, appropriate authorities, variety?
- Does the instructor define terms and use them consistently?
- How well does the instructor distinguish factual material from opinions?

Organization

- How does the instructor introduce lecture material (via summary or other method)?
- How does the instructor demonstrate relationship between previous lecture(s) and this one (demonstrated continuity)?
- How clearly is the body of material structured?
- Does the instructor restate ideas where appropriate?
- Does the instructor use appropriate transitions to demonstrate relationships?
- How does the instructor conclude material (summarized, reviewed, and/or previewed)?

Considerations for Non-Lecture

- Does the instructor provide clear organization and structure?
- Does the instructor state goals clearly?
- Does the instructor monitor and direct activity or discussion effectively?
- Does the instructor provide sufficient time for processing?
- Does the instructor debrief the activity or discussion?
- Is the activity pacing appropriate (sufficient time to complete activity)?

PRESENTATION STYLE

- Does the instructor present and/or respond to divergent viewpoints where appropriate?
- Does the instructor listen and respond to student remarks/questions?
- How well does the instructor respond to student feedback and to the classroom environment?
- Does the instructor speak at appropriate volume and rate and with adequate vocal variety?
- Does the instructor use visual/audio materials that has instructional value?
- Does the instructor use language suitably (clear, appropriate level, nonsexist)?
- Does the instructor ask questions to stimulate thought/discussion?
- Does the instructor begin class on time and end it appropriately?
- Does the instructor maintain appropriate classroom atmosphere for topics, level, and class?

STUDENT ENGAGEMENT AND CLASSROOM CLIMATE

- Are students prepared for class?
- Are students engaged in class (participate easily in discussion; follow instructions readily)?
- Does the class have a sense of expectation about behavior (prepared to start on time; ready to take notes or otherwise participate)?
- Are students attentive?

POST-REVIEW

Following the initial class visit, it is recommended that the peer reviewer and reviewee meet to discuss observations from the visit. This is an important opportunity for reviewer and reviewee to discuss pedagogical approaches used in the class, expected outcomes from class exercises and activities, assessment or evaluation materials, and additional strategies that could reinforce learning or support instructional outcomes. A discussion between reviewer and reviewee prior to the submission of the peer review document, while not a requirement, provides an important mentoring opportunity.

When complete, please share a signed copy of the peer review to the reviewee and submit the peer review to the School of Communication director for review and placement in the reviewee's personnel file so that it is available to share with the Personnel Committee and on record for inclusion in promotion dossier.