



The Peer Review of Teaching: Handout for Peer Reviewers

Formative Peer Review Program – Resource (Updated February 10, 2016)

Things to think about when conducting a classroom observation of teaching

Throughout the process, think about what you will do to put the reviewee at ease (e.g., meet in a comfortable place, smile, make eye contact) and tell them a bit about yourself and your experience with teaching and/or peer reviews.

Before your first face-to-face meeting

- Contact the reviewee and ask about his/her timeline to ensure it is doable for you
- Schedule a face-to-face pre-observation meeting
- Determine whether you are being asked to conduct a summative peer review or a formative review
 - In some departments, the person conducting a summative review must follow a specific process, write a report according to particular guidelines and/or be at the same or a higher rank than the reviewee
- Request instructional materials that will help with the review (e.g., lesson plan, course syllabus)

The first face-to-face meeting (before the classroom observation of teaching)

The purposes of the pre-observation meeting are to meet and develop some rapport with your reviewee, share something about your respective backgrounds and teaching philosophies, and learn about the reviewee's goals for the review. Here are some questions you may want to ask:

- What are your goals for the review and how can I help you achieve these?
- What are your learning objectives for students in this class? In other words, what do you expect the learners to be able to know, do, and/or have experienced by the end of your session?
- What strategies and methods will you use to help the learners reach these objectives?
- How will students show that they know and can do what you expect of them and/or that they have reflected on the experience(s) they have had?
- Is there any other information that would be helpful for me to have prior to reviewing the class? E.g. relevant student background and course history, previous experience with peer review
- Do you have any concerns about the process?
- Would you like me to use a particular feedback form or other review instrument?
- What would you like to know about me?



You will also want to:

- Discuss any of the instructional material that has been shared with you
- Confirm the dates/times of the classroom observation(s), and schedule a post observation meeting to take place within 1 week of the classroom observation
- Ask the reviewee where s/he would like you to sit in the class, whether s/he will introduce you to the class and whether s/he would like you to participate in any of the activities
- If, for any reason, you cannot stay for the entire class, or need to leave immediately after class, let the reviewee know (they may expect to be able to touch base with you right after class even though you have scheduled a post-observation meeting)

The classroom observation of teaching

- Arrive early and sit in the spot you and your reviewee agreed upon
- If appropriate, the reviewee will introduce you and explain your role/participation in the class
- Consider the goals/issues that you and the reviewee discussed in the pre-observation meeting and record your findings -what are you noticing? What strengths do you recognize? What suggestions for improvement do you have? (You may find it helpful to design a form to bring to the classroom observation to help you remember the reviewee's goals)
- Before you leave the class, you may wish to quickly touch base with the instructor and share one or two positive comments about the class as this may help ease the reviewee's anxiety

The post observation meeting

- Focus on the reviewee's goals
- Invite reviewee to discuss how things went
- Starting with the positives, communicate your observations and reflections with respect to the goals/issues you and the reviewee discussed in the pre-observation meeting
- Blend reviewee's active self-reflection with your supportive and constructive feedback
- Provide written and verbal feedback from the classroom observation(s) of teaching so that your reviewee can refer back to and reflect on your comments over time
- Determine and discuss any follow up in terms of resources, additional support etcetera
- Let the reviewee know what you have learned/gained from the process

Additional Resources

For sample questions relevant to the pre- and post-observation meeting, and to the classroom observation session, see the *Process tab* in the *Peer Review of Teaching* section of the CTLT website (<http://ctlt.ubc.ca/programs/all-our-programs/peer-review-of-teaching/>).

