

Faculty Personnel Committee Guidelines for Peer Evaluation of Teaching

This document should be given to all observers and faculty members whose class is being observed.

1. During each evaluation year, ***the department chair and one other senior faculty member*** (normally from the same department) shall observe the classes of the junior or senior colleague undergoing evaluation.
2. In consultation with the colleague under evaluation, the department chair shall schedule the classroom visits and select the other senior faculty member to serve as an observer.
3. For ***junior*** faculty reviews, ***each observer should visit at least one class meeting (or laboratory or studio session) in two different courses.*** The minimal expectation, then, is that there shall be a total of ***four*** class visits (***two*** by each observer) for every ***junior*** faculty evaluation.

For ***senior*** faculty reviews, each observer should visit at least ***one*** class meeting (or laboratory or studio session). The minimal expectation, then, is that there should be a total of ***two*** class visits, ***one*** by each observer, for every ***senior*** faculty evaluation.

- 3.1. A peer teaching evaluation submitted by a senior faculty member who has team-taught a course with the individual undergoing evaluation may substitute for the second observer's classroom visit(s).
- 3.2. Additional evaluative visits may be performed in years when no regular personnel evaluation is scheduled if the chair and the colleague to be evaluated so agree, e.g., in a course that will be offered only during a semester when no regular evaluation will take place.
4. **Prior to the classroom visit**, the observers shall review teaching materials (syllabi, assignments, exams) provided by the colleague undergoing evaluation. Ideally, the observers shall discuss with him/her the goals and methods of the course and the place of that particular class in the context of the course.
5. **During the class visit**, the observers shall refrain from participating in the class. The observers shall not ask questions or make comments to the professor or students.
6. **Following the class visits**, the observers may meet with the colleague under evaluation to clarify issues regarding the classes observed.
7. After these discussions, **each observer shall write a separate formal peer evaluation letter** to the colleague undergoing evaluation with a copy to FPC. Guidelines for writing peer evaluation letters are on the back of this sheet.
8. **After the evaluation is submitted**, the observers shall meet with the colleague to provide **constructive feedback**. This discussion should be viewed as independent of the formal peer evaluation letter that the observers have written.
9. The department chair shall provide the colleague undergoing evaluation with an opportunity to discuss these letters. The colleague undergoing evaluation also shall have the opportunity to write a letter to the department chair (with a copy to FPC) responding to these evaluations of his/her teaching if he/she so wishes.

Guidelines for Writing Peer Teaching Evaluation Letters

Peer evaluation letters have two purposes: 1) to help the Faculty Personnel Committee assess the quality of the faculty colleague's performance as a teacher, and 2) to provide constructive input and advice that might help colleagues improve their teaching. To those ends, the letter should be evaluative rather than merely descriptive in content, and it **should discuss the following items**:

- a. the course syllabus, including the extent to which it suggests an appropriate level of academic rigor and whether it provides students an adequate overview of course expectations;
- b. the instructor's preparation for class and effective use of class time;
- c. the content of the class observed and its appropriateness for the course level;
- d. the instructor's pedagogical methods and the extent to which they effectively worked to facilitate achievement of the goals for the class observed;
- e. the level of student attention and engagement in the class session observed;
- f. the overall degree of success of the class session observed and the factors that affected the degree of success achieved;
- g. specific recommendations to the instructor for improving this class.

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