



Pedagogical Observation Form (For Non-fully online courses)

Instructor Name: _____ Observer: _____ Date: _____

Course: _____ Number of students enrolled: _____ Room Number: _____

Class type:

List any aspects of the physical classroom environment that might affect the class (hot/cold, noise, time of day, length of class):

Date of Preconference: _____

Date of Post-conference: _____

Pedagogical Observer

Pedagogical Observer is a tenured faculty member trained to observe, document, and support effective teaching practices that promote student learning. Instructors will receive a pedagogical observation during their first and second year plus at least one additional time during their probationary period.

Pre-Conference

1. The Observer meets with the Instructor for a pre-conference and gathers information about the course including syllabus, objectives, etc. During this meeting, the observation process will be discussed, an observation date will be determined, and the Pedagogical Observation form will be shared. The Observer will review the process and talk about the developmental purpose of the pedagogical observation process. The Instructor is informed that the observation will be sent to them, their department chair, and will become part of the annual review. The Observer and Instructor will also discuss whether or not the Instructor should let students know that the Pedagogical Observer will be present.
2. The Pedagogical Observer is encouraged to consider the following context markers: a) Is this a new course for this Instructor?; b) Is this a pilot course? c) Are there specific things about this class that would be helpful to know? (Gatekeeper or General Education course, courses with high fail rates, courses with controversial topics, course materials prepared by others, etc.) d) Are there any other concerns or issues that the Instructor would like to share to help contextualize the observation?

Observation

3. The Observer observes class for at least 50 minutes and takes detailed, objective notes about the Instructor and student behavior throughout the session.
4. The Observer will complete the Pedagogical Observation form, based on observation notes.

Post-Conference

5. The Observer meets with the Instructor within two weeks for a post-conference to discuss the practices observed, identify strengths of teaching, offer suggestions (if relevant). The Observer and Instructor will engage in a supportive discussion about teaching practice
6. Optionally, the Instructor may choose to write a reflection or clarification (within one week) which should be submitted to the Observer to attach to the Observation form.
7. A copy of the signed Pedagogical Observation Form will be provided to the Instructor and a copy of the signed Pedagogical Observation Form will be confidentially sent to the Chair.

Use the items below to comment on each area of the Instructor’s teaching. If an item is not applicable, or if there was no opportunity to observe a particular item, note “N/A or no opportunity to observe”. Please note that a given observation is only a small snapshot of teaching practice so many N/A’s is not necessarily a cause for concern.

PROFESSIONAL TEACHING	Observer’s Notes	Ranking
1. Starts and ends class on time.		
2. Provides students with learning objectives/outline/overview for the class session. [3]		
3. Has organized the material into an obvious, explicit and logical framework using clear transitions between topics and parts of the class. [3]		
4. Employs audio and/or visual media (PowerPoint, writing on board/doc cam, handouts, videos) appropriately for learning (e.g., readable, not too much text, etc.). [3]		
5. Is approachable, in command of session, and willing to engage with students. [19]		
6. Is aware of and responsive to students’ needs (e.g., raised hands, puzzled looks).		
7. Provides adequate time for completion of in-class activities.		

INCLUSIVE TEACHING	Observer's Notes	Ranking
1. Makes an effort to use student names. [19]		
2. Demonstrates enthusiasm about working with students.		
3. Uses respectful and inclusive language, images, and examples to ensure an accessible and welcoming learning community. [7]		
4. Encourages and facilitates dialogue, discussion, and student-student interaction for all students (e.g., helps people find partners, structures activities to promote equal participation). [7] [17] [18]		
5. Has chosen content to reflect a diversity of voices, where appropriate. [14] [15]		
6. Draws upon student experience/real-world examples/other disciplines where appropriate. [5] [6]		

CLASSROOM COMMUNITY, THE STUDENTS...	Observer's Notes	Ranking
1. Seem engaged (answer questions, participate in activities, take notes) and are not distracted (having side conversations or surfing the web). [20][21]		
2. Listen to and build on each other's ideas.		
3. Appear to be comfortable in class (asking questions, approaching the Instructor, etc.).		

EFFECTIVE TEACHING PRACTICES	Observer's Notes	Ranking
1. Shows confidence with delivery of material.		
2. Class content appears relevant to overall course objectives. [1] [2]		
3. Incorporates small-group discussions or problem-solving sessions into the class. [8] [9] [10]		
4. Engages students with the subject matter (e.g., through storytelling [11]; compelling case studies [12]; commentary about the skills, values, or formation of the discipline). [3]		
5. Incorporates low-stakes assessment (such as polling, one-minute papers, muddiest point, etc.) to help instructor and students gauge progress. [11] [12] [13]		
6. Asks a variety of types of questions (e.g., factual, application, critical) and responds to student answers/comments appropriately.		
7. Encourages students to reflect on their learning (e.g., by asking students to write an end-of-class summary, identify the day's muddiest point, or write about what they know now that they didn't several weeks ago). [13]		

Notes from Preconference:

Notes from Observation:

Overall Impression and Feedback:

Observer Signature: _____

Date: _____

Instructor Signature: _____

Date: _____

Signature acknowledges that the information has been explained to the Instructor.

Works Cited

- [1] J. B. Biggs and C. Tang, *Teaching for Quality Learning at University: What the Student Does*, 4th ed., Maidenhead, Berkshire: Open University Press, 2011.
- [2] G. Wiggins and J. McTighe, *Understanding by Design*, 2nd ed., Alexandria, Virginia: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, 2005.
- [3] S. A. Ambrose, M. W. Bridges, M. DiPietro, M. C. Lovett and M. K. Norman, "Chapter 2: How Does the Way Students Organize Knowledge Affect Their Learning?," in *How Learning Works: Seven Research-Based Principles for Smart Teaching*, Hoboken, New Jersey: Jossey-Bass, 2010.
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- [7] L. Nilson, *Teaching at Its Best: A Research-Based Resource for College Instructors*, 3rd ed., San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2010.
- [8] L. Deslauriers, E. Schelew and C. Wieman, "Improved Learning in a Large-Enrollment Physics Class," *Science*, vol. 332, pp. 862-864, 2011.
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- [11] P. C. Brown, H. L. Roediger and M. A. McDaniel, *Make it Stick: The Science of Successful Learning*, Cambridge, Massachusetts: Belknap Press, 2014.
- [12] C. Dirks, M. P. Wenderoth and M. Withers, *Assessment in the College Classroom*, New York: W. H. Freeman, 2014.
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- [14] J. Handelsman, S. Miller and C. Pfund, "Chapter 4: Diversity," in *Scientific Teaching*, New York, W. H. Freeman, 2007.
- [15] S. A. Ambrose, M. W. Bridges, M. DiPietro, M. C. Lovett and M. K. Norman, "Chapter 6: Why Do Student Development and Course Climate Matter for Student Learning?," in *How Learning Works: Seven Research-Based Principles for Smart Teaching*, Hoboken, New Jersey: Jossey-Bass, 2010.
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- [17] S. L. Eddy, S. E. Brownell and M. P. Wenderoth, "Gender Gaps in Achievement and Participation in Multiple Introductory Biology Classrooms," *CBE-Life Sciences Education*, vol. 13, no. 3, pp. 478-492, 2014.
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