

Woody L. Hunt College of Business

Policy on Peer Review of Teaching

Objective:

The primary objective of a peer review of teaching is to improve learning by providing feedback that can help instructors make meaningful improvements. As the instructor is the primary catalyst in the learning process, concrete, timely, and meaningful feedback is essential in creating a community of effective teachers.

Policy:

Beginning in Fall 2023, each tenure-track faculty member in the College of Business Administration shall have at least one course reviewed every two years before tenure for a total of three reviews. The first such review shall be conducted during a faculty member's first year at UTEP. All reviews shall be included in the promotion and tenure portfolio, two of which must also be included in the third-year comprehensive review.

Tenured faculty members shall have at least one review conducted every two years. Post-tenure reviews shall include one peer review of teaching during the post-tenure evaluation year. All teaching reviews since the last post-tenure evaluation shall be included in the post-tenure evaluation portfolio.

Non-tenure track faculty shall have one review of teaching conducted annually but not for the same course in two consecutive years. The first review shall occur during the first semester at UTEP. Part-time instructors shall have one review per four teaching semesters, including the first semester at UTEP.

Faculty members are expected to demonstrate evidence of continuous teaching improvement throughout their careers. Therefore, peer reviews described in this document are normative in nature. In other words, the primary purpose of conducting such reviews is to provide developmental feedback, which is direct and practical. Reviewers are encouraged to provide valuable feedback to the faculty members under review and consult with them regarding ways to enhance learning beyond this official peer review process. The College encourages individual faculty members to keep reviews constructive, as the primary aim of reviews is to bring about a positive change in one's teaching over time. All peer reviews shall be uploaded to Faculty Success for record-keeping and to demonstrate adherence to this peer review policy.

Review Components:

Each review of teaching is comprised of four steps:

1. **Pre-observation:** the reviewer is expected to gather as much background information as possible about the course and the instructor. S/he examines course materials, including the syllabus, a Blackboard course site, and any assignments, exams, and major projects. The purpose of pre-observation is to help the reviewer develop a clear understanding of the class, learning objectives, the activities the instructor employs to accomplish the learning objectives, and what types of assessments have been deployed to verify that the objectives have been or will be met by the end of the semester.
2. **In-class observation:** the reviewer attends at least one regularly-scheduled class session and observes the learning environment and the interactions between the instructor and students. One of the main goals of the observation is to experience the class from the student's perspective to identify ways to improve the learning that occurs in the classroom.
3. **Post-observation:** the instructor and reviewer/observer meet to have a constructive discussion regarding the impressions formed from both the pre-observation and observation. The reviewer must share a document with the instructor, which describes in as much detail as possible the impression that s/he formed regarding teaching and learning issues.
4. **Reflective summary:** the instructor has an opportunity to summarize the takeaways from the review process as a means of enhancing student learning. Additionally, the reviewer and instructor shall collaborate on a summary section guiding future reviewers on what the instructor agreed to modify about the course and their teaching. The latter serves as a form of accountability and can also be used to demonstrate a record of continuous improvement.

Review Criteria:

The following aspects of teaching are to be reviewed:

1. The link among clear learning objectives, activities performed in class to accomplish the objectives, and the corresponding assessments.
2. The intellectual content of the material taught (appropriateness, breadth, evidence-based, and depth).
3. The instructor's perceived grasp of the material: the ability to communicate clearly and logically and place the material in the proper context, making it useful to the students.
4. The ability of the instructor to engage students in the learning process through critical thinking exercises and other compelling projects and activities.
5. The instructor's use of innovative approaches to teaching, including the novel use of technology and the application of scholarly research in teaching.

6. The instructor's organization of the course throughout the semester and in the classroom.
7. The use, frequency, and appropriateness of feedback to students.

Procedure:

Each faculty member shall initiate the peer review process, select courses to be reviewed, and designate the faculty member who will conduct the review of teaching after consulting with the Department Chair. The faculty member designated for the peer review must hold an academic rank equal to or higher than the reviewed faculty member. Reviews shall be conducted to achieve a holistic understanding of one's teaching from undergraduate and graduate courses or various courses whenever possible.

Reviews shall include:

- a review of syllabi, exams, projects, exercises, etc. It is recommended that the faculty member being reviewed provide access to Blackboard for the review to include online student activities,
- at least one classroom visit for the observation, and
- one review document with two parts: the actual review and the reflective summary by the faculty being reviewed.

The reviewer shall prepare and sign the written review addressing the criteria above. Similarly, the reflective statement must bear the signature of the instructor. After the completion of the review, the document shall be submitted to the Department Chair, who will upload it to Faculty Success.

Forms to be used for peer observations:

- [Pre-observation form](#) (see Appendix A)
- [Peer observation form](#) (see Appendix B)
- [Reflective summary prompts](#) (see Appendix C)

Other relevant sources:

- UT System Guidelines:
<https://www.utsystem.edu/sites/default/files/offices/academic-affairs/forms/Final%20Fac%20Eval%20Guidelines.pdf>
- UTEP Peer Observation Policy:
<https://www.utep.edu/faculty-development/Teaching-and-Learning/Additional-Tools-and-Resources/peer-observation.html>
- CETaL Peer Observation Booklet:

https://www.utep.edu/faculty-development/Files/docs/utep_peer_observation_booklet.pdf

Appendix A
Pre-observation Form

1. What learning and skills do you want students to take away from this class?
2. How do you want students to engage with the learning process during this class?
3. What should I know about the context of the course? [PROMPT: <i>Where does it fit in the program of study?</i>]
4. What should I know about the context of this particular class? [PROMPT: <i>What has happened before? What work have students already done?</i>]
5. Is there anything else I should know about the students so I can understand what is going on in the class? How are students expected to prepare for this class? [PROMPT: <i>What modules, texts, activities should they have begun or completed to be ready?</i>]
6. What strategies/methods will you use to help students reach that goal? What do you see as the student's role and responsibility in doing that? How will you know if they "got" it?
7. What do you want to learn from this observation experience?
8. What specific areas of interest, questions, or concerns would you like me to focus on?

Appendix B
Peer Observation Form



Peer Observation of Teaching

This instrument contains of several parts. The pre-observation data sheet (first page) should be completed during the pre-observation visit with the teacher. The second page is completed during the observation, and the remaining parts immediately afterwards. Please study them carefully before the teaching observation.

Pre-Observation Background Information

DEMOGRAPHIC DATA			
Teacher Name		Date	
Observer Name		Time of visit	Start: End:
Course/Section		# Students Enrolled	
Room Location		Required or elective? Primary student major(s):	
LEARNING OBJECTIVES FOR THE SESSION (FOCUSED ON FOUNDATIONAL KNOWLEDGE/COMPREHENSION) (NO NEED TO COMPLETE IF LESSON PLAN IS AVAILABLE; PLEASE ATTACH THE LESSON PLAN):			
1.			
2.			
3. Expand as needed			
LEARNING OBJECTIVES FOR THE SESSION (FOCUSED ON APPLICATION, ANALYSIS, EVALUATION, CREATIVE PROCESSES):			
1.			
2.			
3. Etc			
PLANNED ASSESSMENTS OF STUDENT PERFORMANCE DURING THE LESSON:			
1.			
2.			
3. Etc			
PLANNED LEARNING ACTIVITIES FOR THE LESSON (MAY ALSO BE INFORMAL OR FORMAL ASSESSMENTS):			
1.			
2.			
3. Etc			
LESSON ALIGNMENT WITH THE LEARNING OBJECTIVES IN THE COURSE SYLLABUS			
Does the lesson align with the learning objectives of course syllabus? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> ; No <input type="checkbox"/> ; Not sure <input type="checkbox"/> ; If No or Not Sure, please explain: Click here to enter text.			

INSTRUCTOR PERCEPTION OF PHYSICAL FACILITIES (ROOM LAYOUT AND SETUP, ACOUSTICS, LIGHTING, AMBIENT NOISE, SEATING, ETC)

Room Layout

- Fixed auditorium seating
- Rows of moveable desk chairs
- Conference/seminar room with table(s) and chairs
- Classroom with tables and chairs

Other (please describe):

Does instructor note any concerns with physical environment? Yes ; No

If Yes, record concerns: [Click here to enter text.](#)

Notes or Comments

DISCOURSE PATTERNS (COMPLETE IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWING THE SESSION)

When the instructor asked a question that resulted in no answers by students, what was the most common response by the instructor?

broke question down into simpler building-block questions

had students discuss the question in small groups

provided the answer him/herself other: _____ Comments: [Click here to enter text.](#)

When students answered a question, what was the most common response by the instructor?

moved on to the next point/topic

asked students to give their reasoning, elaborate, or provide examples other: _____ Comments: [Click here to enter text.](#)

Please identify discourse pattern observed:

Silent (students are silent, teacher talks almost all the time)

Controlled (teacher controls interactions mostly by asking and answering questions;

Active (the teacher facilitates while the students talk primarily to each other);

Mix of Silent and Controlled;

Mix of Controlled and Active;

NOTES

CLASSROOM CLIMATE

Characteristic	Always	Mostly	Sometimes	Never	N/A
The instructor addressed students by name					
The instructor addressed and responded to students respectfully.					
The instructor looked at students in all parts of the room, turned in their direction and provided a sense of inclusion for all students					
The instructor walked throughout the entire room (assuming remote PPT clickers, microphone and other tools were available, and there was room to move between students)					
Student behavior suggested they were comfortable interacting with the instructor					
Instructor kindly and constructively provided goal-related feedback students could use to improve their learning and performance.					
If students disconnected from the learning process (side conversations, being disruptive, etc.), the instructor appropriately redirected their attention to the topics/task at hand					
Instructor demonstrated enthusiasm while teaching.					
Instructor asked questions beyond mere fact recall.					
			Yes	No	Uncertain
A noticeable number of students arrived late and/or left early					
Did you hear disrespectful comments, questionable jokes, defensive or prejudiced remarks, rude behavior, put downs or complaints from the <u>students</u> ?					
Did you hear disrespectful comments, questionable jokes, defensive or prejudiced remarks, rude behavior, put downs or complaints from the instructor?					

NOTES

ASSESSMENT ACTIVITIES COMPLETED BY STUDENTS TO SHOW UNDERSTANDING AND SKILL AND HOW THEY WERE USED BY THE INSTRUCTOR TO PROVIDE FEEDBACK

Activity (One Minute Paper, Muddiest Point, assessment question, quiz, reflection, performance, defending a choice, etc)	Feedback to students

NOTES	
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Please complete these four items if appropriate.

Balance of Use of Time (Teacher/Student Activity):

Highlights of most effective learning moments:

Highlights of least effective learning moments:

Additional Comments/Suggestions:

Appendix C
Reflective Summary Prompts

REFLECTIVE SUMMARY: PEER OBSERVATION

Please consider and comment on the following questions about the Peer Observation process.

What have you learned about your teaching?
What have you learned about how students learn?
How has this observation process supported your learning?
How has it worked for you?
Any concerns, recommendations, or suggestions you might make to the department about the process?
Other comments or concerns