

TEP Peer Teaching Observation Guide

This guide invites peer observers to look for teaching practices shown by research to support student learning. It may serve as a useful tool for self reflection; it also may help structure specific, collegial conversations between faculty about the overall effectiveness of a class session and inform written peer reviews of teaching. Not all the items included here are relevant or possible for a given course or class session. Conversely, it may be appropriate for an observer to comment on practices not specifically included here.

For many of the teaching practices included in this guide, we provide references to research showing the link between the practice and enhanced learning. Many of the references also contain suggestions for implementing the practices.

Suggestions for using this guide to observe a class session:

1. Obtain copies of the course syllabus, course learning objectives, and department learning objectives. Review them so you can assess how the class session you observe fits into the larger context of the course and curriculum.
2. Meet with the instructor to be reviewed to discuss the content of the class session to be observed, the approach they will take, particular teaching practices the faculty member has been working on to which they would like you to pay particular attention, and any other items outlined in your department's peer review procedure.
3. Perform a “fact-based” observation in class: record exactly what the instructor and students do, examples used, etc. while keeping this guide beside you to remind you what to look for.
4. After class, fill out the form that starts on page 2 of this document, adding comments and notes to give a complete picture of the class session.
5. Meet with the instructor again to discuss your observation and identify one or two areas the instructor might want to work on.

Date:		Has observer obtained course syllabus?	
Instructor:		Has observer obtained course learning objectives?	
Observer:		Has reviewer obtained department learning objectives?	
Course:		Have reviewer and instructor met prior to observation to discuss review procedures?	
Number of Students (approx.):		Will/have reviewer and instructor meet after observation to discuss results?	
Classroom Layout:		List any aspects of the physical classroom environment that might affect the class (hot/cold, noise, etc.)	
List audio/visual media or materials used (e.g. PowerPoint, board, document camera, handouts, polling devices, etc.)			

<u>Practices</u>	<u>Yes/Mostly/ Partially/No/ Not Applicable</u>	<u>Observations and notes</u>
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<u>Preparation and Organization: Alignment</u> [1] [2]		
<i>Class session</i> learning objectives aligned with <i>overall course objectives</i> . [3] [4]		
<i>Course</i> learning objectives aligned with <i>overall departmental objectives</i> .		
<i>Class session content</i> (knowledge, skills, or abilities) and activities aligned with the <i>class session learning objectives</i> .		

<u>Preparation and Organization: The instructor...</u>		
Has organized the material into an obvious, explicit, and logical framework. [3]		
Shows command of the material.		
Teaches the class at a level appropriate for most students. [4] [5] [6]		
Connects to students' prior knowledge, lessons, assignments, and/or readings. [7] [8]		

<u>Practices</u>	<u>Yes/Mostly/ Partially/No/ Not Applicable</u>	<u>Observations and Notes</u>
Explores and values connections with other disciplines and/or real-world phenomena (tangible examples when they exist). [5]		
Draws upon scholarly works, including current research/developments. [3]		
Draws upon student experience and/or current events. [5] [7]		

<u>Tactics: The instructor...</u>		
Provides students with learning objectives for the class session. [3] [4]		
Gives lesson outline at the beginning of class, verbally and visually (e.g., on board, slide, handout). [3]		
Employs methods (activities, examples, audio-visual aids) broken down into steps to scaffold student learning. [4]		
Invites students into the subject matter, e.g. through storytelling [9]; compelling case studies [10]; explicit commentary about the skills, values, or formation of the discipline; etc. [11]		
Incorporates small-group discussions or problem-solving sessions into the class period. [12] [13] [14]		
Poses questions and allots time for students to discuss them. [15]		
Asks a variety of types of questions (e.g., factual, application, critical).		
Builds off student answers/comments whether correct or incorrect.		
Incorporates low-stakes assessment (such as iClicker questions, one-minute papers, muddiest point, etc.) to help instructor and students gauge progress. [15] [16] [17]		
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 5 weeks ago). [17]		
Has chosen content to reflect a diversity of voices, where appropriate. [18] [19]		
Finishes with a summary or closing activity. [3]		

<u>Practices</u>	<u>Yes/Mostly/ Partially/No/ Not Applicable</u>	<u>Observations and Notes</u>
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<u>Mechanics: The instructor...</u>		
Starts and ends class on time.		
Seems excited about/interested in material.		
Conducts the lesson at a pace that supports learning (i.e., not too fast or too slow, suitable for note taking, questions and reflection).		
Provides adequate time for completion of in-class activities.		
Checks or is aware when students are lost, hurried, etc.		
Pauses to ask for student questions or clarifications		
Verifies that questions are answered to students' satisfaction.		
Waits 5 - 15 sec for answers before repeating, rephrasing, or moving on, and avoids answering own question. [20]		
Ensures that all in the classroom can hear questions and comments.		
Is aware of raised hands.		
Encourages and facilitates dialogue, discussion, and student-student interaction for all students (e.g. helps people find partners, structures activities to promote equal participation). [11] [21] [22]		
Has designed the class session to be accessible and welcoming to all (e.g. pictures show a variety of races, ethnicities, and genders; names used in problems are not ethnocentric). [11] [18] [19]		
Employs audio and/or visual media (PowerPoint, writing on board/doc cam, handouts, videos) effective for learning (readable, not too much text, etc.) and uses media skillfully. [11]		

<u>Interaction and Social Climate: The instructor...</u>		
Uses a system to signal beginning of class; students quiet quickly.		
Maintains an appropriate level of eye contact.		

<u>Practices</u>	<u>Yes/Mostly/ Partially/No/ Not Applicable</u>	<u>Observations and Notes</u>
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Uses respectful and inclusive language and works to ensure a respectful and open learning community. [11]		
Is relaxed, in command of session, and willing to engage with students. [23]		
Uses student names or makes attempts to learn them. [23]		

<u>Interaction and Social Climate: The students...</u>		
Arrive on time and remain until dismissed.		
Are attentive (e.g., not having side conversations or surfing the web [24] [25]).		
Take notes. [26]		
Gather around instructor after session to speak about material.		

Overall Impressions

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