Peer Review of Teaching Protocol

The protocol for peer review of teaching is designed to guide UA instructors in the process of *formative review* of peers' teaching, as well as *evaluation of teaching* for summative review.

Formative review is used to provide feedback for professional growth and development; it is usually confidential and non-judgmental and its goal is self-motivated change. It is grounded in the belief that instructors can be their own best resources for improvement of teaching. *Evaluation of teaching* (e.g., for annual reviews and P & T) is a more formal process; guidelines for using this protocol in that process are outlined later in this document.

The process of peer review of teaching includes three stages:

1. a pre-observation/review meeting to discuss the target class and goals for the review,
2. a classroom observation or review of the course site, and
3. a post-observation/review meeting to discuss the observer's feedback.

The Peer Review of Teaching Protocol includes:

- Guidelines for the Reviewee
    - selecting a reviewer for formative review
    - purpose of and preparing for the pre-observation/review meeting
    - selecting items from the Classroom Observation Tool/using the Online Course Review Tool
    - purpose of post-observation/review meeting
- Guidelines for the Reviewer
    - structuring the pre-observation/review meeting
    - selecting items from the Classroom Observation Tool/using the Online Course Review Tool
    - doing the classroom observation/course review and completing the Tool
    - structuring the post-observation/review meeting
- Classroom Observation Template (for the reviewer to record notes during class session)
- Classroom Observation Tool
    - observation items in eight areas: Lesson Organization, Content Knowledge & Relevance, Presentation, Instructor-Student Interactions, Collaborative Learning Activities, Lesson Implementation, Instructional Materials, and Student Responses.
    - Customizable (users choose from among ~80 items, recommend ≤ 20 items for an observation)
    - Full Word version also available to download
- Online Course Review Tool
    - 22 items in four major areas: Course Design, Course Implementation, Interactions, and Assessment.

The sections of the protocol are available at http://teachingprotocol.oia.arizona.edu/.

Evaluation of Teaching

The Peer Review of Teaching Protocol/Peer Review of Online Teaching Protocol can be used for evaluation of teaching; e.g., for annual reviews and promotion and tenure. Current UA Promotion and Tenure guidelines for both tenure- and career-track instructors include a review of teaching portfolios; evaluation of teaching is part of those portfolios.

Recommended guidelines for using the protocols for evaluation of teaching:

- Department faculty members agree on which Classroom Observation Tool items will be used for all teaching evaluations in that department. These items can be added to a departmental template. For video tutorials on creating and using templates: http://teachingprotocol.oia.arizona.edu/content/8.
- For review of online courses, all items on the Online Course Review Tool are scored.
- For tenure-track reviews, reviewers are tenured faculty members. For career-track reviews, reviewers hold a higher rank than the promotion candidate.
- Reviewers consciously strive to set aside any biases; e.g. those related to gender, ethnicity, and teaching style. For more information on unconscious bias, see http://diversity.arizona.edu/sites/diversity/files/hidden_unconscious_bias._a_primer.pdf. For information on how faculty gender and race impact teaching experiences, see http://www.crlt.umich.edu/publinks/CRLT_no19.pdf.
- Pre- and post-observation/review meetings are still held, to prepare for and debrief classroom observations/course site reviews. These meetings can be streamlined versions of those used for formative review of teaching.
  - Pre-observation/review meeting focuses on instructor's goals and learning outcomes for the course, what s/he asks students to do to attain the learning outcomes, and how s/he assesses students' learning.
  - Post-observation/review meeting focuses on what aspects of the course are going well and where improvements are needed, based on class observations/course reviews.
- For on-ground courses, more than one class session is observed or more than one reviewer observes different class sessions to provide a more reliable sense of the candidate's overall teaching quality. For review of online courses, multiple reviewers of the course site or reviews at different points during the semester can provide a more reliable view of the candidate.
- Reviewer(s) prepare(s) a letter addressed to the department head that summarizes the candidate's strengths and areas that need development, citing specific examples from the class observations/course site reviews.
- The instructor is also given a copy of the letter, and has an opportunity to write a response to the department head if so desired.
- The following questions can be used as a guide for preparing the summary letter:
  - What is the class that was observed (level, format, content)?
  - How many class sessions were observed/how many times was the course site reviewed and how many observers collaborated on this review?
  - What did the instructor do during the class sessions/in online learning activities to engage students in learning important content? How could the instructor have improved student engagement?
  - What did the instructor do during the class sessions/in online learning activities to assess students' understanding of important content (informally or formally)? How could the instructor have improved student assessment?

OIA personnel are available to consult with department heads and members of P & T committees in using the Peer Review of Teaching Protocol for evaluation of teaching. Please contact Ingrid Novodvorsky (novod@email.arizona.edu or 626-4187).