

PEER REVIEW TEMPLATES

For guidance on preparing to complete a peer review see our [guide on how to conduct a peer review](#).

Visit Duration

Observing an entire class generally provides the best and least disruptive experience for you, your peer, and students. If you are not able to stay for the whole class, discuss with your peer the best timing for you to join and/or leave. Observing for at least 50 minutes is recommended.

Visitor's Role

While it is tempting to participate in classroom activities, it is better to focus on observing so that you can concentrate on recording what is happening in the classroom.

Information to Share with Students

Your peer's students are likely to be curious about a visitor. Discuss ahead of time whether and how you would like to be introduced. Some instructors like to offer a brief explanation such as, "I care a lot about your learning in this course, so I sometimes invite a colleague into the classroom to help me think about my teaching. Please just engage as you always do."

Observing and Reflecting

There are many aspects of teaching you might consider for your observation. Skim the following general categories to prime your noticing skills before the observation.

General Observation Categories

- Describe the academic setting (lecture/lab, learning space, class size, student characteristics, learning environment, etc.).
- Describe how the instructor and students began and ended the class.
- Describe learning activities that took place during the class.
- Describe instructional tools and/or teaching strategies that were used by the instructor.
- Describe the classroom environment.
- What did you observe that you'd like to incorporate into your classes?

We have provided two templates for observation, one with more structure and one with less. Choose the one that best aligns with the needs of you and your peer.

Area for consideration	Event observed	Time	Observer interpretations/analysis
Example	<i>Instructor moved through slides at the pace of about 30 seconds per slide; students were taking notes very quickly</i>	12:30-12:40	<i>A slower pace or periodic check-ins may be helpful for students</i>
Content expertise: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> How conversant is the instructor with the field? Is the instructor effectively translating their expertise to students in a way that helps them learn disciplinary material? 			
Goals for learning: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Are the goals of the class session clear? Do learning activities, session structure, assessment strategies, and content align within the session? Where do the goals for this session seem to fit in the larger class objectives (consult the syllabus)? 			
Student engagement: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> How do students interact with course content? How does the instructor interact with students and how do students interact with each other? When do students seem most engaged? What specifically is happening when students seem engaged? (What is the instructor doing? What are students doing?) What are the patterns of interaction? 			
Instructional Strategies: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> What are the different instructional strategies used in this class (presentation/lecture, discussion, etc.)? 			

- Do some strategies seem to work better for the students than others? Why is this the case? What seems to make the difference here?
- Are there any seemingly unexpected moments in the class? How are they handled?
- What instructional tools were used (e.g. PowerPoint, TopHat)? Were they effective?

Classroom environment/climate:

- Do all students seem comfortable engaging?
- What is the instructor doing to create a welcoming learning environment?

Option 2

You may also find it useful to take open-form notes during the observation using a chronological tool.

You can divide your observations into descriptions and reflections. Description can include what the instructor is doing, what the students are doing, and what content is being conveyed. Your reflections are your reactions to what is happening in the class (you can write these both during and after the class).

Time	Activity Description	My Reflections

