

Proposed UO Peer Review of Teaching Framework

Peer review is a key component to the evaluation of teaching. However, some peer reviews do not provide useful feedback for a) course improvement or b) evaluation of teaching excellence, especially when there is no clear definition of teaching excellence and no clear guidelines for the reviewer. Developments in the scholarship of teaching of learning now provide the tools to produce meaningful classroom observations against evidence-based practices. Peer review of teaching should become one of the key components in the evaluation of teaching excellence, mirroring its use in all other aspects of academic work.

Current problems to be solved:

- No definition of teaching excellence is provided to reviewer.
- Most peer observations are un-structured and vary in effectiveness for a) course improvement and b) evaluation of teaching excellence.
- Many peer observations are rushed to fulfill tenure and promotion dossiers.
- Peer observers are frequently under-trained in evidence-based, effective teaching practices.
- Faculty under review do not have the opportunity to communicate their expectations, learning goals, and pedagogical decision-making to the reviewer.

Goal:

The task force proposes that excellent teaching is inclusive, engaged and research-led, and that evidence of excellence be collected from student experience surveys, faculty course reflections and peer review reports. The goal of peer review is to provide evidence and recommendations to be used for both a) continuous course improvement and b) evaluation of teaching excellence.

Proposed Framework

All units **create a policy** that outlines the specific requirements for the peer review system that includes the following:

- 1) Coordinator to track departmental peer reviews
- 2) Formal and evidence-based observation tools
- 3) Faculty self-assessment tool
- 4) Structured reviewer-instructor follow-up meeting
- 5) Template for peer review report
- 6) Trained peer reviewers

The details for each requirement of the peer review system are listed below.

1. Coordinator to track department peer reviews:

Each unit/department will develop a policy, which outlines each step in the process (aligned with this framework), as well as a **Peer Review Coordinator** who oversees the scheduling of all peer reviews for the year. The coordinator can be a faculty member, unit head, or unit manager. The peer review schedule for the year will be shared with all faculty by week 1 of Fall term so that adjustments can be made if needed/requested. Peer reviews will be scheduled based the frequency they are required for each faculty classification and rank as described below:

Pro Tem Faculty - once per year

Career Instructional Faculty - once per contract period

Assistant Professor – once per year

Associate Professor – once every other year

Full Professor – once every three years

2. Formal and evidence-based observation tool:

To ensure course observations are consistent and based on the scholarship of teaching and learning, each unit will select one course observation tool to be used for all peer reviews. If the observation tool is created by the unit/department, it requires references to the scholarship of teaching and learning in the discipline and should align with the department's vision and learning objectives. Otherwise, please select a published tool such as one of the following.

[TEP Peer Teaching Observation Guide \(customizable\)](#)

[COPUS: Classroom observation protocol for undergraduate STEM](#)

3. Faculty self-assessment tool:

The unit/department shall identify a self-assessment tool that is included in the peer review process. Self-assessment tools provide the faculty member the opportunity to reflect on their teaching practices and observe changes over time. The tool selected should provide opportunities for specific recommendations for continued improvement. If the self-assessment tool is created by the unit/department, it requires references to the scholarship of teaching and learning in the discipline and should align with the department's vision and learning objectives. Otherwise, please select a published tool such as one of the following:

[TEP Faculty Self-Assessment Guide](#)

Teaching Practices Inventory developed for [STEM](#) and [Social Sciences](#)

4. Structured reviewer-instructor follow-up meeting:

After the classroom observation and faculty self-assessment has been completed, the reviewer and faculty must meet to find out more about the faculty's inclusive, engaged and research-led teaching practices. A consistent list of questions must be outlined by the unit/department, which will form the basis of the discussion and be included in the report. Unit-developed questions require references to the scholarship of teaching and learning in the discipline and should align with the department's vision and learning objectives, or the following can be used:

- a) What specific methods do you use to ensure this course is inclusive of diverse students and scholar identities?
- b) How do you engage your students during class time? How do you engage your students outside of class time?
- c) How do you access the scholarship of teaching and learning (books, conferences, workshops, journal articles, peer observation etc.)?
- d) Name some of the research-led pedagogies that you are incorporating into the course (research-led pedagogy can include infusing your research into the course, engaging students in research, and using teaching practices described in the scholarship of teaching and learning to be most effective).

5. Template for peer review report:

By creating a template for the output of a Peer Review, the unit/department, school/college and university personnel committees can expect consistent, robust reports that provide information that is valuable for both a) continual course improvement and b) evaluation of teaching excellence. The report should include the following sub-headings:

a. Overview: Include the course name/number, time and date, and the topics under discussion that day. Include the context of the course, size of the class, type and level of students (majors/non-majors, freshmen/seniors, elective/required course).

b. Information collected: Description of the information collected from:

- i) classroom observation tool
- ii) self-assessment tool
- iii) answers to questions posed during reviewer-instructor follow-up meeting.

c. Recommendations: Based on the information collected, provide recommendations to the individual being evaluated that will continue to support student success through the use of inclusive, engaged and research-led teaching

in the context of the specific course under review. The recommendations will provide insight regarding the progress toward teaching excellence.

d. References: Provide a list of references that form the basis for the classroom observation tool, the self-assessment tool and the questions for the follow-up meeting (which will be the same for all reports from one unit/department).

6. Trained Peer Reviewers:

Each unit must identify and train a group of faculty to serve as peer reviewers. Participation should count as important unit/department level service, and typically requires 4-6 hours of service per faculty review. The unit/department could either train all faculty, or only the subset of faculty who will perform all peer reviews for the year. Faculty who will serve as reviewers will be identified at the start of each academic year. Faculty outside of the unit/department (e.g.: Teaching Academy members) may provide external peer review, provided they are trained in the unit's/department's protocol.

NOTE: Examples for all of the above can be found here:
http://tep.uoregon.edu/resources/peerreview/peer_review.html