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TEACHING OBSERVATION RUBRIC

Peer observations and the constructive feedback they provide can offer critical insights for improving our teaching. In doing so, the goal is to identify behaviors and practice that impact student learning, rather than to assess content expertise.

When carrying out an observation, it is essential that a rubric, clearly detailing criteria and expectations, is available to both the instructor (i.e., observed) and the observer. To that end, we offer the following rubric and guidance. We note, however, that the rubric and guidance should be examined and adapted to match expectations, aspirations, or culture of a given teaching unit. In doing so, we strongly recommend working with CTRL Instructional Designers to ensure that these resources retain their utility and validity as tools for evaluating teaching.

Using This Guide

The rubric comprises three sections: (i) Structure, (ii) Facilitation, and (iii) Technology. In each section, a number of criteria are presented for which the observer determines how the instructor has performed based on the following classifications: Exceeded, Met, Not Met, or Not Applicable (N/A). For each criterion, the observer must provide comments to explain their classification. After completing the observation, there are five additional questions for the observer to reflect on and respond to.

Recommendations

- Instructor and observer should meet before the observation to discuss the instructor's goals, the teaching and learning activities that will take place, how students have prepared, which sections of the rubric may or may not be applicable for that day, and what the instructor would like the observer to focus on.
- Class observations should last at least 75 minutes.
- The observer should make plans with the instructor to minimize disruptions when arriving or leaving.
- The observer should be introduced to the class to avoid being a mysterious distraction to students.
- The observer should not participate in the class.
- The observer should pay attention to criteria such as the quality of the interaction with students and the classroom environment.
- The observer should not focus on the content of the lesson plan.
- Instructor and observer should meet after the observation to discuss findings.
- Observations should occur on multiple occasions, especially if this option is part of a major faculty action.



American University CTRL
Teaching Observation
Rubric, created by Erin
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Observer name: _____

Instructor name: _____

Course: _____

Date and Time of Observation: _____

Which portion of class did you observe? (e.g., first 30 minutes? Middle?): _____

Glossary

Formative assessment: Ongoing monitoring of student understanding during learning before a final, high stakes assessment.

Student engagement: Manifestation or outward demonstration of students' involvement in the course. This could include speaking but also nonverbal behaviors such as maintaining eye contact, taking or typing notes, submitting an exit slip, etc.

I. Structure	
Criteria	Please provide comments to support your classification for each of the criterion.
Classroom interactions are respectful; discussion focuses on issues rather than individuals.	<input type="checkbox"/> Exceeded <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Met <input type="checkbox"/> Not Met <input type="checkbox"/> N/A Comments: (example) The instructor purposefully called on students so that many were represented (e.g., asking for someone who has not spoken yet to speak). The instructor also asked questions to clarify student responses so that everyone can could stay engaged.
Timeline of classroom activities is organized and intentional.	<input type="checkbox"/> Exceeded <input type="checkbox"/> Met <input type="checkbox"/> Not Met <input type="checkbox"/> N/A Comments:
Instructor uses questions, prompts, and/or group work to engage students.	<input type="checkbox"/> Exceeded <input type="checkbox"/> Met <input type="checkbox"/> Not Met <input type="checkbox"/> N/A Comments:
Students are engaged as evidenced by asking questions, responding to prompts, taking notes, etc.	<input type="checkbox"/> Exceeded <input type="checkbox"/> Met <input type="checkbox"/> Not Met <input type="checkbox"/> N/A Comments:
Students have (and utilize) opportunities to interact with each other.	<input type="checkbox"/> Exceeded <input type="checkbox"/> Met <input type="checkbox"/> Not Met <input type="checkbox"/> N/A Comments:

<p>When misunderstandings arise, the instructor welcomes and responds to them.</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Exceeded <input type="checkbox"/> Met <input type="checkbox"/> Not Met <input type="checkbox"/> N/A</p> <p>Comments:</p>
<p>The instructor uses the classroom's space to support learning (e.g., encouraging students to move around for group work, repeating student responses so all can hear).</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Exceeded <input type="checkbox"/> Met <input type="checkbox"/> Not Met <input type="checkbox"/> N/A</p> <p>Comments:</p>
<p>Instructor presents information in multiple ways (e.g., text on PowerPoint, graph, photo, table, writing on board)</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Exceeded <input type="checkbox"/> Met <input type="checkbox"/> Not Met <input type="checkbox"/> N/A</p> <p>Comments:</p>

II. Facilitation	
Criteria	Please provide comments to support your classification for each of the criterion.
Class begins and ends on time.	<input type="checkbox"/> Exceeded <input type="checkbox"/> Met <input type="checkbox"/> Not Met <input type="checkbox"/> N/A Comments:
Instructor speaks with appropriate volume, tone, and emphasis.	<input type="checkbox"/> Exceeded <input type="checkbox"/> Met <input type="checkbox"/> Not Met <input type="checkbox"/> N/A Comments:
Uses a minimum of speech fillers (e.g., um, ok, ah).	<input type="checkbox"/> Exceeded <input type="checkbox"/> Met <input type="checkbox"/> Not Met <input type="checkbox"/> N/A Comments:
Expresses enthusiasm for and engagement with the content.	<input type="checkbox"/> Exceeded <input type="checkbox"/> Met <input type="checkbox"/> Not Met <input type="checkbox"/> N/A Comments:
Does not read directly from notes.	<input type="checkbox"/> Exceeded <input type="checkbox"/> Met <input type="checkbox"/> Not Met <input type="checkbox"/> N/A Comments:
Instructor looks at different areas of the classroom while speaking.	<input type="checkbox"/> Exceeded <input type="checkbox"/> Met <input type="checkbox"/> Not Met <input type="checkbox"/> N/A Comments:

III. Technology: In some classrooms the effective use of technology is an integral component of course delivery (e.g., clicker response systems, using course Wiki pages to compile information). If applicable, this section can be used to evaluate the use of technology in the class

Criteria	Please provide comments to support your classification for each of the criterion.
Technology enhances the teaching and helps to engage students.	<input type="checkbox"/> Exceeded <input type="checkbox"/> Met <input type="checkbox"/> Not Met <input type="checkbox"/> N/A Comments:
Technology is not a distraction to learning.	<input type="checkbox"/> Exceeded <input type="checkbox"/> Met <input type="checkbox"/> Not Met <input type="checkbox"/> N/A Comments:
Faculty member is facile with the technology used in class.	<input type="checkbox"/> Exceeded <input type="checkbox"/> Met <input type="checkbox"/> Not Met <input type="checkbox"/> N/A Comments:

IV. Final Questions

Please answer these questions after the observation.

1. What does the instructor do particularly well?
2. Did you get a sense that the class was structured intentionally?
3. Was the class session was designed to involve students in the learning process (e.g., there are a variety of classroom activities)?
4. What are 2-3 key areas for the instructor to focus on for improvement?
5. Any final comments or suggestions?