

# **Office of Faculty Career Development**

## **Evaluation of Teaching Effectiveness**

### **Benchmark Report & Recommendations**

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## I. Introduction - Evaluation of Teaching Effectiveness

The following is a review of the literature and benchmark institutions in an effort to determine current practices for evaluating teaching effectiveness. This exploration resulted in a recommendation of practice that RIT departments might adopt or tailor to meet the unique needs of their discipline, with the overarching intent of providing campus-wide consistency in the teaching evaluation process so that review committees might compare like attributes across disciplines.

Evaluation of teaching is generally performed to improve performance (formative) and may take many forms. Other, more summative evaluations (end of term or end of year), are usually used for administrative purposes of promotion, retention, and salary or for providing institutional data. Multiple methods for evaluation were discovered as a result of this study, with the most prevalent (outside of student evaluations), being peer reviews of teaching, classroom observations by a third party, administrator evaluations, small group instructional diagnoses, material review of instructional artifacts, use of a teaching portfolio, and instructor self-reporting. An overview of each evaluation method with examples can be found in Table 1 in the next section of this report.

Before proceeding, it will be helpful to define what *constitutes* effective teaching before considering how to *evaluate* effective teaching. According to Seldin (2006), "The hallmarks of good teaching are reasonably consistent in most studies. They include being well-prepared for class, demonstrating comprehensive subject knowledge, motivating students, being fair and reasonable in managing the details of learning, and being sincerely interested in the subject matter and in teaching itself."

Goe et al (2008) offer another model for effective teaching. Their five-point definition focuses measurement efforts on **multiple components** of teacher effectiveness:

- Effective teachers have high expectations for all students and help students learn
- Effective teachers contribute to positive academic, attitudinal, and social outcomes for students
- Effective teachers use diverse resources to plan and structure engaging learning opportunities; monitor student progress formatively, adapting instruction as needed

- Effective teachers contribute to the development of classrooms and schools that value diversity and civic-mindedness
- Effective teachers collaborate with others to ensure student success

Finally, UCLA's *Guide to Evaluation of Instruction* offers this definition:

"Effective teaching can be defined as 'activities that promote student learning where student ratings, self reviews, and peer evaluations are all used for evaluating different aspects of teaching,' explaining that important sources of data to measure teaching effectiveness fall into three main categories: student, peer, and instructor and they should be part of any comprehensive approach to evaluating teaching effectiveness (*Guide to Evaluation of instruction*, UCLA Office of Instructional Development).

## II. Methodology

Thirty colleges were selected from RIT's Office of Human Resources list of peer institutions and from a list of institutions researched in a recent report submitted by a Teaching & Learning team (Canale, Messenger, Starenko, 2012, "Current State of Faculty Development Online"). Each school's website was reviewed to find evidence of their teaching evaluation practices (see Appendix A). The final list of institutions studied for this report follows:

- |                                     |  |
|-------------------------------------|--|
| 1. Carnegie Mellon University       | 16. New York University                        |
| 2. Case Western Reserve University  | 17. Northeastern University                    |
| 3. Central Michigan University      | 18. Penn State University                      |
| 4. Clarkson University              | 19. Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute           |
| 5. Cornell University               | 20. University of Central Florida              |
| 6. Gallaudet University             | 21. University of Maryland at College Park     |
| 7. Georgia Institute of Technology  | 22. University of Maryland, University College |
| 8. Harvard University               | 23. University of Nebraska                     |
| 9. Illinois Institute of Technology | 24. University of Rochester                    |
| 10. Ithaca College                  | 25. University of Southern Indiana             |
| 11. Johns Hopkins University        | 26. University of Wisconsin-Madison            |
| 12. Kettering University            | 27. Virginia Polytechnic Institute             |
| 13. Lehigh University               | 28. Washington State University                |
| 14. Marist College                  | 29. Worcester Polytechnic Institute            |
| 15. Miami University (Ohio)         | 30. Yale University                            |

### III. Findings

#### *Evidence of Effective Teaching Programs*

When reviewed collectively, evidence of *some* evaluation of effective teaching was found at most of the schools. However, it was evident early in the study that most institutions did not readily identify an institute-wide program of teaching evaluation. Often, the documentation showed that some practice of teaching evaluation was *required*, but the methods to evaluate were not explicitly stated, and often evidence was found for *one* department or school at the university but not campus wide. Also, much of the documentation is maintained internally requiring authentication with a campus ID, so the information we were seeking was not readily available.

#### *Administration of Effective Teaching Programs*

For those campuses that had evidence of teaching evaluation programs, many disseminate resources and materials to faculty via faculty development departments and/or centers for teaching excellence. However, most are *administered* at the department level *and* by other faculty (usually senior faculty or department chairs/direct supervisors).

Many of the schools reviewed included teaching evaluation of some sort in their personnel policy requirements. Information about teaching evaluations when required as personnel policy was often found in Faculty Handbooks, Promotion and Tenure Guidelines, Academic Affairs pages or other human resources policy documentation. In most cases, these evaluations are also administered at the department level. Typically, evaluations of teaching as part of the faculty's teaching portfolio is mandated for pre-tenure faculty at least annually, and in some instances tenured faculty were peer-reviewed at least every five years. Flexibility is typically provided at the department-level.

The most common teaching evaluations outside of student surveys include: peer evaluations (done by a colleague or senior faculty), classroom observation (third party), small group instructional diagnosis, and use of the teaching portfolio. Table 1 on the next page shows the evaluation method and a description.

**Table 1 Most Common Teaching Evaluations at Benchmark Institutions**

<i>Evaluation Method</i>	<i>Description</i>
1. <b>Peer Evaluations (colleague or senior faculty)</b>	<b>Formative</b> peer observation assists in the improvement of teaching. <b>Summative</b> peer observation involves the evaluation of teaching effectiveness used for merit, promotion, and/or tenure decisions. Typically conducted by trained faculty. Often includes classroom observation and review of instructional artifacts.
2. <b>Classroom Observations (third party)</b>	Measures observable classroom processes, interactions between teachers/students, can measure broad overarching aspects, or subject-specific, or context specific aspects of practice. Typically includes pre-meeting, post-meeting and follow ups, and is completed by trained observer.
3. <b>Small Group Instructional Diagnosis (SGID)</b>	A technique that uses guided discussion and consensus to generate clear, prioritized, and confidential <u>student</u> feedback on classroom instruction or curriculum.
4. <b>Use of Teaching Portfolios</b>	A compilation of information about a faculty's teaching often for use in consideration for tenure or promotion. It is not, in itself, an instrument for teaching evaluation, but a vehicle for presenting information which may include results of evaluations and which may itself contribute to evaluation. It can therefore be selective, emphasizing the positive--to serve as a showcase for the faculty member's achievements in teaching, not necessarily a comprehensive or balanced picture of everything.

Table adapted from Approaches to Teaching Effectiveness, the National Comprehensive Center for Teaching Quality, pp. 16-19.

The findings are consistent with the research, for example, Seldin (2006), contends that the most successful teaching evaluation programs will use multiple measures to evaluate (student, peers, administrators, alumni, etc) as well as multiple methods to evaluate faculty e.g. surveys, observations, videotaping, written evaluations and endorsements from on and off campus contributors.

### ***Formative vs. Summative Teaching Evaluations***

Our findings revealed that most of the campuses with teaching evaluation programs make a clear distinction and process for both **formative** and **summative** evaluations of teaching. In many cases, both forms of evaluation are offered and/or required as part of campus policy. For example, Ithaca College provides the following guidelines:

Part II of *Peer Evaluation of Teaching*: “Based upon 'best practices,' Senate recommends the following Guidelines for Formative and Summative Reviews: There are two distinct purposes for which peer evaluations of in-classroom performance may be used: *formative* and *summative*. In the former, the evaluations are used to improve in-class performance and effectiveness, while in the latter the evaluations are used to make administrative decisions regarding hiring, tenure, and promotion (2011, <http://www.ithaca.edu/hssenate/docs/memos/PeerEvalTeach2011>)”

For both formative and summative reviews, when peer reviewers are used, they are typically *colleagues of the same or higher rank* who are members of the department's personnel committee within their discipline. If outside staff were used, it was often for formative review (classroom observations) rather than summative, since most summative reports were included as a critical piece of APT documentation and teaching portfolios and are of a confidential nature.

#### **IV. Recommendations**

Based on the research, the team offers the following recommendations to leadership for initiating a program for evaluating effective teaching at RIT. *It should be noted that a number of fundamental and philosophical questions will need to be addressed by departments and colleges before launching any peer evaluation initiative.* The team's recommendations are listed below.

##### ***Recommendation 1: Define "effective teaching"***

The team recommends that a common definition of "effective teaching" be discussed and agreed upon among all colleges/departments to establish a baseline for evaluating effective teaching (see Section I of this document). It should be noted that there may be variations/additions to the baseline definition for different disciplines, for example, "effective" teaching to Engineering students may require different methodologies, strategies, variations than one might see in the Psychology department. Departments should be afforded flexibility around forming their baseline definition for their fields.

##### ***Recommendation 2: Design a model for teaching evaluation***

A model for RIT could be designed around notable practices found in the research and from the benchmark campuses studied. The campuses selected with the most promising models are described in Table 2 on the following page; however, this list does not represent all findings from the study (see Appendix A).

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**Table 2 Models for Teaching Evaluation Programs**

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<b>Cornell University</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Program consists of three components, peer review, classroom observations, and the teaching portfolio.</li><li>• Published guidelines, several good forms (peer review for observer/instructor) <a href="http://www.cte.cornell.edu/documenting-teaching/peer-review-of-teaching/index.html">http://www.cte.cornell.edu/documenting-teaching/peer-review-of-teaching/index.html</a></li></ul>
<b>Ithaca College</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Approved by Faculty Senate as department policy</li><li>• Includes formative and summative evaluation</li><li>• <a href="http://www.ithaca.edu/hssenat/docs/memos/PeerEvalTeach2011/">http://www.ithaca.edu/hssenat/docs/memos/PeerEvalTeach2011/</a></li></ul>
<b>New York University</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Administered through the NYU Stern Teaching Effectiveness Program (STEP)</li><li>• Originated as a result of faculty desire for a school-wide program to improve teaching</li><li>• Consists of three components, peer review, classroom observations, and the teaching portfolio.</li><li>• <a href="http://www.stern.nyu.edu/portal-partners/center-innovation-teaching-learning/citl-services/stern-teaching-effectiveness-program/index.htm">http://www.stern.nyu.edu/portal-partners/center-innovation-teaching-learning/citl-services/stern-teaching-effectiveness-program/index.htm</a></li></ul>
<b>University of Central Florida</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Annual evaluations due on teaching, research, and service (prior to tenure)</li><li>• Faculty Center for Teaching &amp; Learning will conduct observations on request as part of professional development</li><li>• List of criteria to consider for peer observation <a href="http://www.fctl.ucf.edu/teachingandlearningresources/classroommanagement/classobservations/contents/criteria_for_peer_observation.pdf">http://www.fctl.ucf.edu/teachingandlearningresources/classroommanagement/classobservations/contents/criteria_for_peer_observation.pdf</a></li></ul>
<b>University of Minnesota</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Standards and processes for peer review and student evaluation of teaching <a href="http://policy.umn.edu/Policies/Education/Education/TEACHINGEVALUATION.html">http://policy.umn.edu/Policies/Education/Education/TEACHINGEVALUATION.html</a></li><li>• Guidelines, rationale and purpose of peer observation <a href="http://www1.umn.edu/ohr/teachlearn/resources/peer/guidelines/index.html">http://www1.umn.edu/ohr/teachlearn/resources/peer/guidelines/index.html</a></li><li>• Classroom observation instruments <a href="http://www1.umn.edu/ohr/teachlearn/resources/peer/instruments/index.html">http://www1.umn.edu/ohr/teachlearn/resources/peer/instruments/index.html</a></li></ul>
<b>University of Wisconsin-Madison</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Requires the availability of credible evidence obtained by peer review to document excellence in teaching</li><li>• Report of working group on peer review of teaching techniques, objectives, and outcomes <a href="https://tle.wisc.edu/teaching-academy/peer/index">https://tle.wisc.edu/teaching-academy/peer/index</a></li><li>• Guidelines for designing a peer review program <a href="https://tle.wisc.edu/teaching-academy/how-do-i-design-peer-review-program&amp;nbsp;">https://tle.wisc.edu/teaching-academy/how-do-i-design-peer-review-program&amp;nbsp;</a></li></ul>

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\*See appendix A for findings from all benchmark institutions.

### ***Recommendation 3: Dissemination of a teaching evaluation program at RIT***

Based on the research conducted, best practices, and the models studied, it is recommended that a campus-wide teaching evaluation program be designed, disseminated and centralized within a division of Academic Affairs, outside of -- but in collaboration with -- the Colleges.

This model might include, but is not limited to the following:

- Design of a *recommended* standardized protocol and process for *both* formative and summative evaluations, that could be modified to meet department needs and that includes:
  - best practices for frequency of evaluations, timing, rank, reporting, etc.
  - rubrics, ranking scales, checklists, and worksheets designed for RIT faculty based on research and findings (examples can be found in Appendix A).
- Implementation of the four evaluation methods on Table 1 of this document.
- Design of standard baseline attributes, frequency, and rubrics for each of the evaluation methods suggested on Table 1 of this document.
- Dissemination of all related materials and resources in one centralized location, available fully online.
- Coordination of logistics for third-party classroom observations (including video recordings), SGIDs, and training for peer reviewers

### ***Recommendation 4 - Administration of teaching evaluation program***

Consistent with best practices learned from this study, the **administration** of teaching evaluation programs should be handled at the department level, because outcomes might reveal confidential information related to appointment, promotion, and tenure (particularly for summative evaluations).

At a minimum, departments should develop their individualized protocols for annual evaluation of teaching by peers for all pre-tenure faculty. Also specific to each college or department, details on which faculty ranks will be included in evaluation by peers needs careful consideration. Department policy should be developed that defines the process for tenure track, lecturers, visiting, tenured, and adjunct faculty. Likewise, decisions related to frequency of evaluation, whether advance notice of observation is given, what is being evaluated, and how the results will be recorded are mandatory before beginning any evaluating.

Departments will also be able to identify peer reviewers (e.g., faculty at senior rank and having knowledge of the discipline would serve as reviewers as part of their service obligation to the university).

### ***Recommendation 5 - Teaching Portfolios***

It is recommended that further investigation of a model for a standardized teaching portfolio/e-portfolio as a tool for evaluation of teaching that could be adopted or modeled at RIT should be initiated. The teaching portfolio could follow general protocol and procedures, yet allow for flexibility across disciplines. See Vanderbilt University's comprehensive website on Teaching Portfolios that includes guidelines and examples of both paper and online portfolios: <http://cft.vanderbilt.edu/teaching-guides/reflecting/teaching-portfolios/>

### ***Recommendation 6 - Training for reviewers***

It is recommended that both peer evaluators (faculty from the department) and classroom observers (third parties) have training and support on how to review a colleague or faculty member's teaching. As revealed in the research and found in the campuses researched, it is best practice for assessment of teaching that peer evaluations, particularly for summative purposes, be done by *faculty peers within their discipline*, and not by outside observers. Further, critical to the success of any peer review is the use of multiple observations by multiple observers, the training of observers, and the use of a valid observation instrument (Hoyt and Pallett: IDEA Paper #36). Classroom observers from outside the department (consultants, for example), should be trained in the process.

It should be noted that a number of RIT faculty and administrators (31) were trained in classroom and peer evaluation when they attended workshops presented by David Dees and Albert Ingram in 2008. This group of faculty might be used as mentors for utilizing a proven model for peer evaluation by observation (see Appendix B). Other models may emerge once the various colleges at RIT examine and propose their plans for peer evaluation but faculty already trained in the Dees/Ingram model could be also utilized as foundation builders.

Additionally, the College of Applied Science and Technology and the Provost will host R. Kirby Barrick for faculty and administrator sessions on effective teaching and peer evaluation in January 2013. Dr. Barrick's visit will include an intensive workshop for selected faculty on performing peer evaluation.

### ***Recommendation 7: Evaluation of online instruction***

With the push for more online courses and programs, online evaluation will need to be considered especially considering these courses will be a part of faculty workload. Since this information was not readily apparent on the college websites researched, it needs further investigation as to the research and best practices.

## **V. Summary**

Given the charge to RIT departments to develop plans for teaching evaluations of classroom teaching in their 2012-13 Plans of Work, the preceding recommendations are offered for consideration by deans and department heads.

According to Seldin (2006), there are important considerations before initiating or redesigning a faculty evaluation program such as:

- Why are we thinking about designing/ redesigning faculty evaluation?
- What commitment is behind this effort?
- What can we realistically expect to accomplish within a given timeframe?
- Do we have resources?
- Why is it important to redesign the evaluation system we now have?

In addition, questions related to final design of the teaching evaluation model for RIT will be based on several questions to be answered by individual colleges. For example, will peer observations be for formative purposes, evaluating faculty to improve performance; or summative, a format traditionally used by administrators in decision making related to promotion, salaries, and tenure. Who will conduct the observations? Will training be required?

The Education Advisory Board cautions that any attempt to establish a set of criteria or model for peer evaluation of classroom teaching should include faculty in the development process. New evaluation methods should be vetted by departmental committees and approved by faculty before attempting to adopt any new form of peer evaluation.

## References

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## Appendix A: Benchmark Schools – Evaluation of Teaching Effectiveness

### 1. Carnegie Mellon University

- Administered through the Eberly Center for Teaching Excellence.
- See Assessing Teaching site: <http://www.cmu.edu/teaching/assessment/assessteaching/index.html>
- Classroom observation done by colleagues (faculty) in the Eberly Center for Teaching Excellence.
- Classroom observations *recommended* as part of faculty teaching portfolio.
- Instructor meets with Eberly consultant (colleague) prior to and post classroom observation

### 2. Case Western Reserve University

- "The quality of teaching by a member of the faculty will be evaluated in the third-year review and in the tenure review on the basis of several instruments, including four that are required: a portfolio, student evaluations, classroom visits, and letters from former students."
- "The Executive Committee has recommended that members of the department make *occasional visits* to classes taught by untenured tenure-track faculty. The evaluation component should be carried out *by senior members only*. The implementation properly will vary from department to department.
- "... it was suggested that each untenured tenure-track faculty member, in consultation with senior faculty, choose one or more tenured faculty mentors (subject to change from time to time). The untenured faculty member and mentor would visit each other's classes at least once before the third-year review and once before the tenure review, and then discuss and review issues relevant to their teaching. It is expected that such senior faculty shall comment on these experiences for the annual, third-year, and tenure reviews."

### 3. Central Michigan University

- CMU's College of Health Professions, [Criteria and/or Standards for Reappointment, Promotion, Tenure, Professor, Supplement, and Performance Review for Tenured Faculty](#).
  - "Peer assessment of teaching refers to formal evaluation of specific aspects of a faculty member's teaching. It is to be performed by a person with credible knowledge and experience as an educator, as well as sufficient knowledge of the content area upon which the evaluation is to take place. Peer assessment is to be pre-arranged, including the time and content areas to be assessed, as well as the criteria by which the faculty member is to be judged and recommendations made.

### 4. Clarkson University

- CU's Faculty Definitions and Policies:  
"Each tenurable faculty member should excel in teaching. The evaluation of teaching may include such considerations as: the faculty member's mastery of the literature in the relevant discipline, organization of course materials, development of innovative teaching techniques, presentation of new laboratory experiments, academic advising, evaluation by students and alumni, *and assessment by professional colleagues*."

- "Another important evaluative measure is the assessment of teaching by a faculty member's colleagues. Classroom visits should be carried out on a regular basis for all faculty. Such visits are mandatory for untenured faculty. Arrangements for classroom visits will be coordinated by the chair, dean, or a delegated individual. Preferably tenured faculty members will be appointed as visitors in consultation with the faculty member. Visitors shall submit a written report to the chair, dean, or person responsible for conducting the annual evaluations. Before a written report of a classroom visit is included in a faculty member's personnel file, the faculty member should initial the report as evidence of having read it. If the faculty member refuses to initial the report of a classroom visit, the person conducting the annual evaluation should note that fact at the bottom of the report before placing it in the personnel file."

## 5. Cornell University

- Administered through their Center for Teaching Excellence (CTE). Peer review of teaching, classroom observations, and teaching portfolios are integrated:
- "Peer review of teaching is instrumental in maintaining the quality of teaching and learning in a department. It provides faculty members with an opportunity to receive and discuss feedback on their teaching. If conducted effectively, peer reviewing: Draws upon the disciplinary expertise of colleagues and Contributes to a collegial academic culture."
- Designed with pre-observation meeting, classroom observation, post-observation meeting, and written summary.
- Offered as guidelines, "Considering that academic fields may have unique teaching styles and/or requirements, departments can use the guidelines below to develop a peer review process that best fits their specific needs."
- **Good model for guidelines and forms:** <http://www.cte.cornell.edu/documenting-teaching/peer-review-of-teaching/index.html>

## 6. Gallaudet University

Only mention was as part of policy for faculty merit increases "Observes other faculty members' classes as requested, and gives relevant feedback, informally or as part of the peer review process." (Dept. of Communication)

## 7. Georgia Institute of Technology

Minimal information on site; listed as criteria for APT document evaluation, but not clear how it is done:

- *Demonstrated* ability to teach basic courses effectively at the undergraduate and at the graduate level (when appropriate) where such courses are offered in the disciplines.
- *Demonstrated* ability to communicate effectively in the classroom environment.

## 8. Harvard University

Harvard's JFK School of Government, SLATE (Strengthening Learning and Teaching Excellence). On this site, they refer faculty to UT and UM for info on peer reviews:

<http://www.hks.harvard.edu/degrees/teaching-courses/teaching/slate/assessing-your-course>

- The Center for Teaching Effectiveness at the University of Texas at Austin has developed a site on teaching portfolios, peer evaluation, and observation: <http://ctl.utexas.edu/teaching-resources/advance-your-career/prepare-for-peer-observation/>
- The Center for Teaching and Learning at the University of Minnesota provides a [website that offers peer review tools](http://www1.umn.edu/ohr/teachlearn/resources/peer/index.html): <http://www1.umn.edu/ohr/teachlearn/resources/peer/index.html>
- SLATE recommends looking at the open-ended observation form and worksheet that are both found in the Classroom Observation Instruments section of the site.

## 9. Illinois Institute of Technology

Included as part of APT document: "Each academic unit shall adopt a specific and standardized procedure to be used for the evaluation of the teaching of all probationary faculty. The procedure chosen must be systematic and documentable. It *may* include written student evaluations and peer visits to classes that are followed by written reports. The teaching of every probationary faculty member shall be evaluated each academic year and the faculty member shall be provided with appropriate feedback concerning strengths and weaknesses. A written report on each candidate's teaching ability, based on this evaluation, will accompany the recommendations from the academic unit as to promotion.

## 10. Ithaca College

- Mandatory department policy, approved by Faculty Senate: <http://www.ithaca.edu/hssenate/docs/memos/PeerEvalTeach2011/2PeerEvalTeach2011.pdf>: [Ithaca, 2PeerEvalTeach2011.pdf](http://www.ithaca.edu/hssenate/docs/memos/PeerEvalTeach2011/2PeerEvalTeach2011.pdf)  
Separates formative/summative (good model) and endorsed by Senate. Peer reviews (classroom observations) done by faculty colleagues.

## 11. Johns Hopkins University

JHU's School of Medicine Annual Report 2010-2011, Institute for Excellence in Education, recommended " ... the IEE reviewed various instruments to provide formative peer feedback while coupling it to a system of coaching by experienced teachers. Studies suggest that faculty development activities focusing on teaching effectiveness in medical education are highly valued by participants....During our first year, great strides have been made toward our goal of providing formative peer feedback and coaching to faculty. We have developed, tested and approved our instruments for evaluation of lectures, and are nearly complete with the instruments for small group facilitation. We have a plan to roll out this process in AY 2011--12 for both self-review and formative feedback of lectures and small-group facilitation, coupled with a coaching/feedback session. We have also set our goals for increasing such feedback in subsequent years while building stronger links to existing faculty development programs..."

## 12. Kettering University

Peer observation was mentioned in their 2001 grand opening of Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning as a service, "... a peer observation program to provide a forum for faculty to share classroom techniques and to assist each other in tailoring their instruction," but unable to find anything else.

## 13. Lehigh University

Administered through their Faculty Development department:

<http://www.lehigh.edu/~infkli/resources.html>

"Dr. Gregory Reihman, Director of Faculty Development, also provides confidential, voluntary consultation to faculty about their teaching, which may include classroom observation visits, videotaping of class sessions, and discussions about what these observations show. Dr. Reihman is also available for informal mid-semester evaluations in classes, using standard questions or specific questions provided by the teacher of the class."

## 14. Marist College

Administered by their Center for Teaching Excellence:

"**Teaching Mentoring Program:** One way to develop teaching skills is to observe others, or to be observed by others, in the classroom. A list of campus-wide Teaching Mentors has been created, and they are available to all campus faculty - upon individual request - for the purpose of developing or sharing pedagogical techniques. The Faculty Mentors are ([8 faculty listed](#)) Any faculty member on campus can contact any one of the people on this list for pedagogical mentoring. The results of any observations/mentoring will be purely developmental in nature, and no formal written record will exist."

## 15. Miami University (Ohio)

- Offered through CETL. A workshop:  
[http://events.muohio.edu/event.php?event\\_id=228545&sid=11&cid=362&view=day&day=20120125&dayofweek](http://events.muohio.edu/event.php?event_id=228545&sid=11&cid=362&view=day&day=20120125&dayofweek) - CETL
- Unique in that it is disseminated through their Honors Program,  
<http://www.cas.muohio.edu/honors/faculty/support.html>

"The University Honors Program is committed to enriching the work of faculty and staff and helping them to continue to grow as educators. We offer a various forms of support:

- Peer Review of Teaching: To assist faculty and staff in their professional development, the honors administration will conduct informal observations of the classroom or co-curricular program and offer feedback upon request. We will also conduct more formal peer reviews which entail setting goals for improvement, observing three or more sessions, discussing outcomes, and preparing a written document offering feedback."

## 16. New York University

The Stern Teaching Effectiveness Program (STEP) started several years ago, when full-time faculty decided they wanted a school-wide program in which all full-time faculty members could work on improving their teaching. After a two-year pilot program to assess STEP, faculty voted overwhelmingly to make it a mandatory program, in which each of the full-time faculty members would have at least one confidential class observation every four semesters they teach.

- Classroom Observation: <http://www.stern.nyu.edu/portal-partners/center-innovation-teaching-learning/citl-services/stern-teaching-effectiveness-program/observation-feedback/index.htm>
- Peer Review: <http://www.stern.nyu.edu/portal-partners/center-innovation-teaching-learning/citl-services/stern-teaching-effectiveness-program/peer-review/>

## 17. Northeastern University

“... new program that the G.E. Master Teacher Team has just started which can provide instructors of freshman courses with comprehensive, confidential feedback on their teaching during the quarter. It's called Teaching Peer Review, and it's administered for us out of the University's [Center for Effective University Teaching \(CEUT\)](#). The confidential results of the assessment are known only to you and your peer reviewer, a fellow faculty member. The CEUT collects the final results of the peer review assessments, and may use aggregate results without names for research purposes. Currently, the peer review team consists of instructors on the G.E. Master Teacher Team. They have received extensive training on the process and have practiced the technique by peer reviewing each other.”

[http://www.jonashalk.neu.edu/search\\_archives/display.php?id=63](http://www.jonashalk.neu.edu/search_archives/display.php?id=63)

## 18. Penn State University

- Online Peer Review [https://www.e-education.psu.edu/files/sites/file/PeerReview\\_OnlineCourses\\_PSU\\_Guide\\_Form\\_28Sept2010.pdf](https://www.e-education.psu.edu/files/sites/file/PeerReview_OnlineCourses_PSU_Guide_Form_28Sept2010.pdf)
- Their website: <https://www.e-education.psu.edu/facdev/peerreview>
- For provisional faculty (not yet tenured), it is recommended that peer reviews should occur at least once per year and in a variety of courses. Faculty being reviewed for promotion, it is better to have a series of peer reviews over time rather than several in the fall immediately preceding the review.
- For Promotion & Tenure, Teaching Awards, OI, Hybrid, Adjuncts as deemed by Director of Academic Affairs
- [http://www.nk.psu.edu/Documents/Academics/Peer\\_Review\\_Guidelines.pdf](http://www.nk.psu.edu/Documents/Academics/Peer_Review_Guidelines.pdf)
- Required Components of a Peer Review
- Each peer review will consist of four components:
  1. Pre-class visit;
  2. Classroom visit;
  3. Second consultation for follow-up;
  4. Completion of written review (possibly simultaneous with #2).

## 19. Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute

### *Peer Consulting: Exploring Teaching*

#### *What is Peer Consulting?*

- An exploration of teaching done in a collaborative and collegial manner
- An opportunity for faculty to gather information from an independent, nonjudgmental source
- A confidential and voluntary support service
- A method of obtaining feedback and using it in a positive and useful way
- A chance to meet colleagues who, like you, value good teaching

**Peer consultants are experienced teachers** who are supportive, nonjudgmental colleagues drawn from across the Institute, not just from your department, who

- Work under the umbrella of the Office of Institutional Research and Assessment
- Engage in a multi-part process of assessment of teaching for the development of the individual teacher
- May engage in multiple methods of information gathering, such as reviewing teaching materials, making classroom observations, analyzing student evaluations and conducting student focus groups or GIFT (Group Instructional Feedback Technique).
- Employ methods determined by the client (the faculty member who invites the consultant)
- May write a confidential summary memo at the end of the consultation addressed to the client only

#### *Teaching Squares*

The Teaching Squares Program is designed to support classroom practice by building community through a non-evaluative process of classroom observation and shared reflection.

#### *Formation*

Teaching Squares are comprised of groups of four faculty, ideally from different disciplines, who:

- Observe at least one class taught by each Square partner (A total of three observations per partner per semester)
- Reflect on the classroom observation experience.
- Share reflections with Square partners.
- Share Square observations with project participants as a whole.
- Your Teaching Square experience will offer you the opportunity to improve your own teaching by observing your Square partners in an actual classroom situation.

#### **Group Instructional Feedback Technique**

The Group Instructional Feedback Technique (GIFT) is a process that allows faculty to gather information on student learning in their classrooms, usually after the course has had some time to get moving and find its rhythm, but as many weeks as possible before the end of the term.

#### *The GIFT Process*

- Faculty meet with a Peer Consultant to determine questions to be asked.
- Classroom visit (30-60 minutes)
- During the classroom visit, the Peer Consultant explains the purpose of the visit, organizes small groups to address the questions, and gathers feedback.
- Faculty then have a brief follow-up visit with the Peer Consultant to discuss classroom findings and receive a personal letter which is a synopsis of student responses.

#### *Benefits of GIFT:*

- Changes can be made in a course before the term is over.
- Opens and strengthens communication between you and your students

- Clears up possible misconceptions about the course
- Helps explain methods and reasoning used in your course
- Builds faculty support relationships
- Requires students to share responsibility for outcome of course
- Tends to increase student motivation in course as students see your interest in instruction.

\* GIFTs are *generally* confidential. An exception is made if information surfaces that reflects emotional, psychological or physical danger or threat of danger to students or faculty. Peer Consultants reserve the right to breach confidence should the situation warrant it.

## 20. University of Central Florida

“Faculty Center for Teaching & Learning will conduct observations on request as part of professional development. Please see a variety of observation instruments, as well as other information that might assist in this developmental activity, at the following websites:

- *Preparing for Peer Observation - A Guidebook* from the University of Texas: <http://www.utexas.edu/academic/diia/assessment/iar/teaching/plan/method/observ.php>
- University of Minnesota: <http://www1.umn.edu/ohr/teachlearn/resources/peer/index.html>
- Chabot College: <http://www.chabotcollege.edu/academics/Observation/ObservationofInstructionForm2004.doc>
- [http://www.ctcd.edu/pdf/Form\\_FE4\\_082504.pdf](http://www.ctcd.edu/pdf/Form_FE4_082504.pdf)
- [http://www.fctl.ucf.edu/tresources/observation/criteria\\_for\\_observation.pdf](http://www.fctl.ucf.edu/tresources/observation/criteria_for_observation.pdf)
- Annual evaluation due on teaching, research, service (prior to tenure and then optional for tenured and once every 7 years thereafter) - but no observation specifically mentioned. Use open-ended format.
- Non-unit faculty members in full-time, benefits-accruing positions shall be evaluated by their supervisor at least annually on their overall performance in fulfilling their assigned responsibilities. An evaluator may evaluate non-unit faculty members using internal evaluative procedures or direct observation.

## 21. University of Maryland at College Park

- Administered via Center for Teaching Excellence
- Assistance to departments and colleges in organizing and implementing faculty teaching workshops, TA training activities, and evaluation/support strategies related to improving teaching;
- [Consultation](#) with individuals on particular areas of concern in teaching and learning, research into teaching practice, and implementation of innovative teaching-learning strategies;

### WORKING WITH A TEACHING CONSULTANT OFFERS AN OPPORTUNITY TO EXPLORE:

- Alternative methods for teaching and classroom management
- Peer observation and feedback
- Student evaluation data
- Alternative classroom assessment methods, such as mid-semester evaluations and small group interviews
- Video feedback and analysis of your class
- Development or review of instructional materials, such as syllabi, exams, and assignments
- Course design
- Your teaching portfolio

- Teaching with new technology

Policy Book: no mention on format/form

#### UMCP Policy on Periodic Evaluation of Faculty Performance

(Approved by President William E. Kirwan, September 13, 1995, revised June 16, 1998)

##### I. POLICY

With the intent of facilitating continued professional development of the faculty, faculty members shall undergo formal periodic review of their professional activities. For the purposes of this Policy, the term "faculty" shall be defined as tenured faculty, and instructors and lecturers with job security. The primary purpose of this periodic faculty review is to:

1. recognize long-term meritorious performance;
2. improve quality of faculty efforts in teaching, scholarship, and service;
3. increase opportunities for professional development; and
4. uncover impediments to faculty productivity.

Each academic unit shall develop a plan for periodic review of faculty as part of its Plan of Organization. This review process should be consistent with traditional principles of peer review, and should provide for the comprehensive review of each faculty member no less frequently than every 5 years. Two consecutive periodic reviews that indicate that a faculty member is materially deficient in meeting expectations shall occasion an immediate comprehensive review. Separate reviews mandated for consideration for promotion in rank or for review of faculty administrators may substitute for this faculty review. In those cases, those review policies shall take precedence. Review processes mandated for the distribution of merit pay and/or for contract renewal may be used as part of the comprehensive review of the faculty member. The breadth and depth of the review process should be appropriate to the frequency of the review.

The principal instrument of the periodic review of faculty shall be a written report generated by the faculty member under review that addresses for the period of review:

1. teaching, advising, and other educational activities;
2. research, scholarly or creative activities; and
3. documented service activities to the University, state, nation, professional community, or other organization.

The report may include an annotated synopsis of peer or public review processes which the faculty member has undergone since the previous periodic review.

## **22. University of Maryland, University College**

1. Administrators charged with supervising and reviewing faculty performance must also visit classrooms (on-site or online) and must take into account such factors as grade distribution and appropriate academic rigor. By assessing teaching practice, UMUC academic administrators can assist faculty in improving their work in the classroom. Regular class visits are intended to support and develop faculty, as well as to assess class readiness and/or to evaluate faculty performance. All faculty members who are

teaching their first UMUC courses (on-site or online) are visited at least once that session, for mentoring and evaluative purposes. The criteria for measuring faculty performance and observations made during such visits are made available to faculty members in a timely manner. For further information about class visits, faculty members should consult UMUC Policy 180.30 Class Visitation at <http://www.umuc.edu/policy/faculty/fac18500.shtml>.

2. The promotion application shall include a current curriculum vitae, a completed Promotion Application Form, a copy of recent teaching and peer evaluations, and relevant written recommendations (no format specified) <http://www.umuc.edu/policies/facultypolicies/fac18100.cfm>

- Barbara Millis at UMaryland UC writes on *Conducting Effective Peer Classroom Observations*
- <http://digitalcommons.unl.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1249&context=podimproveacad>
- Systematic peer observation program that has been in place at The University of Maryland University College since the mid-1980's

### **23. University of Nebraska-Lincoln**

<http://www.unl.edu/svcaa/teaching@unl/opportunities.shtml>

**Peer Review of Teaching** - The Peer Review of Teaching Project (P RTP) is a UNL campus program that supports teams of faculty in making visible the serious intellectual work of their teaching. Begun in 1994, the project uses the same process one would use to explore a research question by having faculty inquire, analyze, and document their teaching practices and the resulting student learning and then make these results accessible for use, review, and assessment by one's peers. In 2005, the project was awarded a *TIAA-CREF Theodore M. Hesburgh Award Certificate of Excellence* in recognition of it being an exceptional faculty development program designed to enhance undergraduate student achievement.

While each school has a different model for Peer Review of Teaching, let us highlight the approach we use at the University of Nebraska- Lincoln (UNL). At UNL, peer review teams consisting of 2-5 faculty members from a department or program participate in a year-long (August to May) fellowship where they write a benchmark portfolio which represents a snapshot of students' learning within a particular course. The portfolio enables faculty to generate questions that they would like to investigate about their teaching. They write three interactions that reflect on their course syllabi and their goals for students, consider the particulars of how teaching methods are helping students meet the course goals, and document and analyze student learning. Throughout the year, fellows meet with other project participants to share and discuss issues emerging from one another's investigations and from assigned readings on teaching-related issues. At the end of the year, fellows link the three interactions together, integrating examples and analysis of student work into a course portfolio that represents their teaching and their students' learning. Completed portfolios are posted on this website for peer sharing. Fellows also participate in a two-day retreat where they reflect upon their fellowship experience and discuss their changed attitudes towards teaching and measuring student learning.

Once faculty complete UNL's fellowship year, they can continue investigating issues in their teaching through an advanced program where they work in interdisciplinary teams over the course of a single semester. Drawing upon Randy Bass's notion of seeing in one's teaching "a set of problems worth pursuing as an ongoing intellectual focus," advanced team participants identify an issue they want to systematically investigate through writing an inquiry portfolio. The advanced program provides faculty with opportunities to document improvements in their teaching over time and to assess the long-term impact of teaching changes, the success of teaching approaches, and the accomplishment of student

learning. As faculty continue in the project, they are encouraged to take on campus leadership and mentor positions for supporting campus excellence in teaching and student learning.

- <http://www.courseportfolio.org/peer/UserFiles/File/ExternalReviewGuidelines.pdf> optional guideline for structured review of teaching portfolio
- [http://www.unl.edu/gradstudies/current/teaching/Classroom\\_Observation\\_Form.pdf](http://www.unl.edu/gradstudies/current/teaching/Classroom_Observation_Form.pdf) classroom observation checklist (found in TA category)
- Tenure Guide [tenure\\_guideUNLinc.pdf](#)

## 24. University of Rochester

“The first threshold that must be crossed on the path to tenure is excellence in teaching. Each school seeks its own approach to the difficult task of evaluating teaching, with the one proviso that the evaluation be formal rather than merely anecdotal. It is very much in the interests of the untenured professor to assure that **some form of documented demonstration of teaching excellence** becomes part of the record.”

- **What is a classroom assessment?**
  - A classroom assessment entails inviting a CETL staff member or a colleague from your department or elsewhere in the college to sit in on your lectures to provide you with constructive feedback about your teaching. Its aim is not to replace student evaluations, but rather to provide an alternative perspective on your teaching. <http://www.rochester.edu/college/cetl/faculty/classroom-assessment.html>
- **Evaluating a Course**
  - A range of techniques can provide feedback about your teaching, including quick on-the-spot techniques, like a one-minute paper, to those that take a little more time, like a focus group or a classroom observation. The staff in CETL is available to help you choose and carry out the evaluation methods that are the best fit for your course.

## 25. University of Southern Indiana, Evansville, IN

### ***FACT Program - Formative Assessment of Classroom Teaching***

- **Goal:** Assist faculty members with their own reflective teaching by providing anonymous mid-semester feedback from their students.
- **Consultants:** Trained by having a FACT, observing a FACT, and conducting a FACT under observation. Consultants meet at the beginning and end of each academic year.
- **Timing:** FACTs are conducted mid-semester, after students have received at least one grade but with enough of the semester left for potential changes.
- **Process:** After a FACT is requested, CAC assigns a trained consultant from a different college to visit one of the faculty member’s classes, usually during the last 20 minutes.
- The faculty member leaves; the consultant asks the students to work in groups of 6-8 to consider how well they are learning in the class. The consultant and the students discuss the responses and help one another better understand the learning process

As evidence of accomplishment in teaching, faculty members should present such items as pedagogical materials including course syllabi and lecture outlines; summaries of anonymous student evaluations taken in class; letters of citation from colleagues or supervisors who visited

their classes, observed their teaching in other ways, or taught the same students in subsequent courses; and the record of success of former students in graduate and professional colleges/universities and in subject-related careers.

<http://www.usi.edu/hr/pdfs/handbook%201.12.pdf>

## 26. University of Wisconsin-Madison

For promotion: A meaningful evaluation of the candidate's teaching requires the availability of credible evidence obtained by peer review and through student evaluations. In order to document significant accomplishment or excellence in teaching, the department is required to provide evaluation based on peer review of the candidate's teaching activities covering the probationary period.

The exact format of the peer-review process is at the discretion of the department. However some component of peer-review, such as classroom observation, is expected. Some additional information regarding peer review of teaching techniques, objectives, and outcomes has been put together by a UW-Madison Peer Review of Teaching working group, and is available on the web at <https://tle.wisc.edu/teaching-academy/how-do-i-design-peer-review-program&nbsp;>

Timing: "The peer review should begin in the first year and the assistant professor's teaching should be reviewed at least annually during the probationary period."

Defintion of and Great guidelines for designing peer review program <https://tle.wisc.edu/teaching-academy/how-do-i-design-peer-review-program&nbsp;>;

### Summary

There are probably as many kinds of peer review of teaching programs possible as there are departments at UW-Madison (or maybe more). A few select [example](#) programs are available for your review. The emphasis of this discussion of developing a peer review of teaching program is to avoid prescribing a perfect or model program which is unlikely to suit anybody, but rather to suggest a method by which departments could create their own program. This sounds like a lot more work than adopting someone else's tried and tested model program, but it's not. Most departments I know, would spend at least as much time arguing over which model to adopt and how to modify the one they chose as they would spend creating a program which is tailored to suit their specific department's needs. Spending that time "up front" seems slow and inefficient; it is likely to pay huge dividends later when the group doesn't need to debate small issues which arise, because they've already had extensive discussions about objectives and means, and have come to consensus on them. There will still be disagreements and discussions, but they are likely to be about the substance of the issues, rather than the range of preconceptions faculty bring to peer review. In the current vernacular, faculty are likely to all be "on the same page" if they have had discussions of objectives and means at the beginning.

Our group supports the idea that to overcome resistance to change, people involved in the change need to be involved in the development of the process from the beginning, and need to have a real voice in what will happen. "Change" in this case may be changing how some of the information regarding teaching and learning is gathered, or "change" may expand to changing how teachers and students perceive their roles in a learning environment.

- Sample: <https://tle.wisc.edu/teaching-academy/peer/psychology>
- Peer review of teaching site; <https://tle.wisc.edu/teaching-academy/peer-review-teaching>

## 27. Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University

**Classroom Observation** - Classroom observations, performed by CIDER staff, are available for faculty members interested in obtaining feedback regarding their classroom management skills, instructional behaviors, students' responses to instruction or any other teaching or learning behavior.

## 28. Washington State University

“Units will conduct peer evaluation of teaching according to policies developed in the units. There will be at least two classroom visits by unit faculty in the year of the third year review and the year before consideration for tenure and promotion. Units may opt for annual peer review of teaching. A short description of the observations will be provided to the chair, given to the faculty member observed, and included in the materials presented for review. The College strongly suggests that the faculty member\*s mentoring committee observe instruction during the first year of appointment, so as to assist in rapid progress in instructional proficiency.”

<http://sciences.wsu.edu/facultystaff/portfoliopolicy.html>

## 29. Worcester Polytechnic Institute

Criteria for tenure: High quality teaching can be evidenced in many ways, including (but not limited to): course evaluations; faculty peer evaluations; evaluations by alumni;

[http://www.wpi.edu/Images/CMS/FacultyGov/Faculty\\_Handbook\\_5-8-12.pdf](http://www.wpi.edu/Images/CMS/FacultyGov/Faculty_Handbook_5-8-12.pdf)

## 30. Yale University

“Colleagues including the department chair, DUS, DGS, faculty mentors, and others play an invaluable role in providing guidance on teaching and classroom management. New non-tenured faculty are encouraged to seek advice about teaching, to consider visiting colleagues’ classrooms, and to invite colleagues to visit their own classes. This informal interchange of strategies and ideas strengthens new faculty members' skills in the classroom, while also enriching and providing new perspective to the department as a whole.

- Teaching evaluations provide concrete feedback that can be particularly instructive during the early years of a faculty member's career. New faculty meet each term with the department chair to review teaching evaluations.
- Yale's Graduate Teaching Center offers support both structured and informal, including workshops, online teaching modules tailored to individual skills and techniques, and one-on-one consultations by appointment. Doctoral candidates and faculty members alike find the center to be a primary resource for developing concrete skills and new strategies for the classroom. [The Teaching Center's website](#) offers more information and details on how to schedule individual appointments.
- Graduate Teaching Center provides classroom observation for faculty as well:
  - The Center also provides classroom visitations that enable one to identify both effective teaching practices that can be cultivated and ineffective habits that can be corrected. There is typically a pre-briefing during which the teacher provides the consultant background information about the class and shares any concerns about classroom dynamics. This

- meeting provides a context and focus for the classroom observation and is an invaluable first step in establishing trust between the teacher and consultant. During the classroom observation, the consultant takes notes on what happens in the classroom, how the teacher presents material and how the students respond both to the teacher and one another. At the teacher's request, the consultant will videotape the lecture or discussion and provide the teacher (and only the teacher) with the video file for private review. The analysis concludes with a post-observation dialogue (as opposed to a one-way evaluation) in which the teacher and discuss style and technique specific to the class observed.
- All consultations with the Center are strictly confidential. However, participants may wish to inform their departments or potential employers of the efforts they have undertaken to improve their teaching. Increasingly, academic hiring committees seek evidence of effective teaching. Video records, results of consultations, and an ability to theorize one's teaching style and philosophy are fast becoming standard discourse during the hiring process.
  - Teaching Center also trains in observation method:
    - We developed this program for participants in our Certificate in College Teaching Preparation program. Reflective observation of others' teaching and being observed while teaching have many benefits. This practice can expand the repertoire of the observer and provide him/her practice in taking a critical perspective on teaching and articulating observations of teaching practices and their effects on student learning. This process helps teachers in their ability to understand themselves as teachers and to make productive changes to the way they present material, lead discussion, and interact with students.
    - We offer observation training sessions several times a year. Participants in these sessions will be instructed in the consultation process (i.e., framing, observation and reflection), as well as techniques for effective observation and for writing an observation report.
  - Teaching evaluations provide concrete feedback that can be particularly instructive during the early years of a faculty member's career. New faculty meet each term with the department chair to review teaching evaluations.