

Department of Physics and Astronomy Peer Review of Teaching

The purpose of peer teaching evaluation is to assess teaching effectiveness and to identify strategies for improvement of the teaching/learning process. Peer evaluation provides a unique opportunity to engage in reflection on teaching practice, a benefit to both the individual under review and to the faculty colleagues conducting the review. Students should be aware that all faculty will be observed in their classrooms and that observation does not indicate the faculty's status or past performance in the classroom. They should also understand that our goal is to reflect on teaching practice and look for ways to improve teaching levels in the department to benefit them. It is especially important that persons currently participating in the process inform their students that observation will occur.

Procedures and Practices

Physics and Astronomy

Approved 11/30/2021

1. The department will follow the requirements in the peer review section of the current version of the Faculty Handbook and implement the minimum frequencies of peer evaluations. However, the chairperson has the option to institute more frequent observations of instructors with an end of year faculty performance teaching evaluation of "does not meet expectations." The instructor being observed has the option to select the date for the observation, but it must work for the observers and allow time for the entire process to be completed by the end of the semester.
2. Lectures should be observed in the classroom for normal and hybrid courses. Online-only courses should be observed online live (not a recording) unless almost all lectures are asynchronous. In that case, a recorded lecture should be chosen at random by the observer(s) for review; and if possible, a student question and answer session should be observed. Lab instructors that don't lecture during part of the lab should have their grading reviewed and/or a student-faculty interaction session should be observed.
3. Prior to the observation, the department chairperson shall select a tenured physics and astronomy faculty member to observe, and inform the instructor being observed who it is. The faculty member being observed has the option to choose an additional observer from members of the physics and astronomy full-time faculty (tenured or non-tenured).
4. At least one week prior to classroom observation, the instructor being observed will provide the observer(s) access to the class AsuLearn page, access to the course syllabus, a completed Peer Review Prior Observation Form (see below), and optionally any other materials that clarify the nature, goals, or methods of the course.
5. Prior to classroom observation the instructor has the option to request a "pre-observation conference" with the observer(s) to discuss the nature, goals, and methods of the course, the logistics of the observation, and key points of focus which the observation should address.

6. Typically, one classroom lecture visit should be scheduled, although the instructor and observers can agree to schedule more if they all deem doing so is appropriate.
7. The observer(s) should keep a thorough and accurate record of each observation to facilitate completion of the Peer Classroom Evaluation Form (see below).
8. After all scheduled classroom observations have been made, each observer will write an evaluation of his/her observations following the basic guidelines on the Peer Classroom Evaluation Form. Attention should be placed on providing thoughtful, well-explained and supported comments. Sufficient explanation and description should be provided to establish a meaningful context for interpretation of the comments.
9. The observer(s) will provide the department chairperson and instructor being observed with a copy of their completed Peer Classroom Evaluation Form within one week after the last observation.
10. Within five working days after receipt of the Peer Classroom Evaluation Form(s), the instructor who was observed will be allowed to submit to the chairperson a statement to be attached to the Peer Classroom Evaluation Form(s) which she/he feels necessary to ensure fair and accurate interpretation of the reports/comments/evaluations of the classroom observations.
11. Within two weeks after the last observation, the observer(s) will hold a "post-observation conference" with the instructor being observed to discuss the comments/evaluations made on the Peer Classroom Evaluation Form(s). Particular attention should also be given to identifying/discussing observed teaching strengths, and identifying areas for further improvement and specific strategies to generate improvement.

Peer Review Prior Observation Form
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Questions to be answered by the instructor being observed:

INSTRUCTOR NAME: _____

1. Date, time, class and classroom:

2. General characterization of this class:

3. Briefly, what will be covered and/or happening in the class to be observed?

4. What will you be doing in class? What teaching methods will you use?

Classroom Observation/Peer Evaluation Form

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Faculty Being Reviewed:	Observation Date:
Course Number and Name:	

Based on your observation, in the space provided below, please note evidence relevant to the seven items listed below - include specific examples. Please note that the parenthetical examples are provided for illustrative purposes, only, to assist you in your observation. They are not intended to provide an exhaustive "checklist" of relevant behaviors.

1. General Description: Please describe the class session that you observed including:

(a) class format (lecture/discussion, group process, etc.)

(b) subject matter being covered.

(c) number of students present.

(d) length of observation.

8. The instructor was concerned that students learn and understand the material covered, (e.g., offered to help students with problems, asked students if they understood difficult concepts, and took time to clarify when students exhibited signs of confusion or uncertainty).

9. Additional comments

Observer: _____

Date: _____