Peer Observation Training

Required for GTL2 Prior to Fall 2018

Does not count toward the GTL Program for participants beginning Fall 2018

The University of Alberta acknowledges that we are located on Treaty 6 territory, & respects the history, languages, & cultures of the First Nations, Métis, Inuit, & all First Peoples of Canada, whose presence continues to enrich our institution.
PEER OBSERVATION TRAINING
Level 2 (Required for Pre-2018 Program)

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GTL Program Levels 1, 2, 3 may be taken simultaneously but level 1 must be completed in order to complete level 2 and level 3 is a prerequisite for level 4.
Feedback and Reflection Requirements

• Complete Peer Observation Training Session prior to competing peer review
• Receive feedback from two peers
• Give feedback to two peers
• Mentor feedback
• Feedback should be verbal and written
Who Can Be Observers?

• Peer Observers
  • Must have completed Peer Observation Training

• Mentor Observer
  • Faculty/staff member
  • 5 years or more teaching experience
  • Postdocs cannot be observers
Observation Logistics

• All peer and mentor observations can happen in a single class session or over multiple sessions
Peer feedback allows participants to assist one another with teaching development while reflecting on their own teaching.

*We do not learn from experience. . . we learn from reflecting on experience.* ~ John Dewey
Watch the teaching video carefully

- As you watch the video, use the peer feedback form to make notes about:
  - 3 things the instructor did well
  - 3 things the instructor could improve
- Turn to a partner (introduce yourself) and share your thoughts
- Be prepared to share your ideas
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PRE-MEETING | INSTRUCTOR

• Think about what you want to learn about your teaching
  • Is there something you want your observer to focus on?
• Bring materials for your observer (slides, handouts, etc)
• Let observer know if special equipment is needed
PRE-MEETING | INSTRUCTOR

- Share information about the course and your teaching background
  - Course title, level, required/elective, number of students
  - How much experience do you have with teaching
  - What is your relationship with the students
PRE-MEETING | OBSERVER

- Come with an open mind
- Don’t offer advice/feedback in advance of observation
- Where should you sit? Move
- Is there special equipment you need
- Ask instructor to introduce you to the class
- Ensure you get background information on the instructor and course
GENERAL NOTES

• **Instructor**
  • Introduce the observer to the class
• **Observer**—stay for the entire session (50/80 minutes)
  • Longer classes—stay 1 hour
• Step up post-meeting at the pre-meeting
PEER OBSERVATION CONSENT FORM

Available at: https://www.ualberta.ca/graduate-studies/professional-development/graduate-teaching-and-learning-program/gtl-level2/forms-and-resources
A GUIDE FOR YOUR PEER OBSERVATION

Things to consider when observing/being observed

Peer Teaching Observation Form

Name of Instructor: ____________________________________________

Course and Section: ___________________________ Date of Observation: ___________________________

Name of Observer: ____________________________________________

Signature of Observer: ________________________________________

Classroom Environment:
- Describe the classroom environment (set up, lighting, technology)
- What type of class is this (lab, lecture, seminar, other)?
- Is this course required?
- What size of class (less than 20, 20-50, 50-100, >100)?
- Are the equipment/materials adequate and appropriately employed?

Available at: https://www.ualberta.ca/graduate-studies/professional-development/graduate-teaching-and-learning-program/gtl-level2/forms-and-resources
Orchestrate your success
  • Come early
  • Have a plan B
  • Be prepared

You will be nervous—this is normal!

Introduce your observer and then forget about him/her

You can ask your students to help you
• Support success  
  • Arrive early  
  • Find a suitable place to sit  
  • Make your observations discreetly  
  • Don’t engage with the class  
• Don’t provide peer feedback as you leave  
• Thank the person for allowing you to observe
# Peer Feedback Guidelines

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GIVING FEEDBACK</th>
<th>RECEIVING FEEDBACK</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Focus on behaviours, not the individual</td>
<td>Be sincerely open to all comments</td>
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<tr>
<td>Be specific</td>
<td>Avoid being defensive</td>
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<tr>
<td>Be positive, constructive, and honest</td>
<td>Specify the feedback you are looking for</td>
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<tr>
<td>Check your “ego” at the door</td>
<td>Confirm your understanding of feedback</td>
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<tr>
<td>Avoid prescriptive language</td>
<td>Share your reaction to the feedback</td>
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<tr>
<td>Practice self reflection</td>
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<tr>
<td>Be timely</td>
<td>Develop an action plan</td>
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<tr>
<td>Practice active listening</td>
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</tbody>
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Peer Feedback Guidelines

- Be constructive, but kind
- Practice professional behaviours
- Be respectful
- Identify themes (strengths and areas for growth)
POST MEETING | INSTRUCTOR

• Reflect on how the session sent
  • What worked well, what didn’t go well, what would you do differently
• Be open to feedback
• Remember the purpose of this exercise is to provide better teaching for your students
• Reflect on feedback and consider an action plan for the next time you teach
POST-MEETING
QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER AS THE OBSERVER

- What do you think went well for the instructor?
- What could the instructor do to improve their teaching?
- Is there anything would you like to know about the session before giving feedback?
- What did you find challenging as an observer?
- Did you observe any challenges to learning?
• Share your comments as a learner and not as an expert!
• Bring a draft of your observation
• Come with an open mind and be kind
• Ask how the instructor felt the teaching went
• Share your observations – use objective evidence where possible
  • Eg. I felt that your students were really engaged in your class VS. In the first five minutes of class, 7 students responded to your questions.
WRITTEN FEEDBACK TEMPLATE

Template for Feedback from Peer and Mentor Teaching Observations

Name of Instructor: __________________________

Course and Section: __________________________ Date of Observation: __________________________

1. **Provide some background of the course, type of teaching activity, and venue of instruction.**
   Who is taking the course, is the course required, was this the first day of class, was this the instructor’s first time teaching, what was the venue like, is this a lecture, was there enough equipment, and so forth. This will help put into perspective challenges the instructor may face and highlight creative instruction.

2. **What are three things the instructor is doing to enhance learning?**
   Comments can relate to content, presentation style, methods of engaging students, and so forth.

3. **What are three things the instructor may consider doing to enhance learning?**
   Comments can relate to content, presentation style, methods of engaging students, and so forth.

4. **Comments.**

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FINDING PEER OBSERVERS

- GTL Peer Observation Opportunities Google Doc
  - Used to establish peer teaching observation times and opportunities
- Sign up to watch 2 people teach (No more)
- Indicate your own teaching sessions
QUESTIONS