

JCU Peer Observations The Classroom Observation Process

Rationale for the Observations:

1. Faculty may wish to be observed in a low-stakes environment. These observations are meant to be kept entirely separate from the tenure and promotion process established by their departments. In addition, observers may wish to learn new approaches by observing their colleagues.
2. Faculty might wish to solicit a letter or report from their observer for their tenure file, but the standard expectation is that these reports and conversations are to remain confidential between the observer and observed. The hope is that the observed can receive frank feedback about what is and what is not working in their classroom.
3. The below form is a set of suggested guidelines, but the observer and observed are free to devise their own set of questions. The form is devised so that people from a different discipline can provide feedback on how well the instructor is meeting their own established goals.

Scheduling the Observations

1. Faculty who are interested in having a class session observed may consult the list of observers maintained by the Center for Teaching and Learning [<http://sites.jcu.edu/ctl/>] or contact the Director of the CTL.
2. Once you have identified a potential observer, please contact Pat Hoffman (phoffman@jcu.edu), administrative assistant to the CTL. She will contact the potential observer and see if they are available. Some observers might be requested more often than others, so we want to be respectful of their workload.
3. Once both parties have agreed to an observation, they should handle the rest of the process themselves.

The Observation Report

- The Observation Report can be formatted in a variety of ways but should address the questions on the Classroom Observation Form (or those agreed upon by the observer and observed).
- The observer should provide a copy of the report to the faculty member observed as soon as possible (ideally within 2 weeks after the class session).
- We encourage (but do not require) a post-observation meeting, where the two faculty discuss the results.

Classroom Observation Form*

I. **Pre-Observation Conference** (questions to be answered by the Instructor)

1. What are your student learning goals for this course? for this class session?
2. How will the methods, materials, activities you have chosen for this class session help the students accomplish these learning goals?
3. How will you know that the students have met your learning goals?

II. **Classroom Environment** (questions to be answered by the Observer)

1. Does the classroom environment promote fairness, equality, and inclusion?
2. Is rapport evident between faculty and students?
3. Is the learning environment appropriately challenging?

III. **Teaching** (questions to be answered by the Observer)

1. Are the learning goals communicated to the students?
2. Does the instructor demonstrate command of the subject?
3. Does the instructor show enthusiasm for the subject?
4. Is the content communicated in a clear and organized way?
5. Do the students appear to be engaged with the lesson?
6. Are the students challenged to extend their thinking?
7. Does the instructor check for student understanding and adapt instruction accordingly?
8. Does the instructor use class time effectively?

IV. **Post-Observation Reflection** (questions to be answered by the Instructor)

1. Were your learning goals accomplished?
2. What pleased you about today's lesson?
3. What, if anything, would you change?