

Peer Review of Teaching Effectiveness Implementation Plan

Approved 11/21/03

In September 1993, the UNC General Administration issued Memorandum #338 directing each of the UNC campuses to follow certain procedures in evaluating teaching. Among other things, the memorandum stated that peer review must be included in teaching evaluation and that direct observation of classroom teaching of non-tenured faculty must be included in peer review.

Peer review has two separate functions: formative (to improve teaching) and summative (to provide data to be used in personnel decisions or teaching award nominations). The idea behind the formative evaluations is that the constructive feedback they provide to faculty members in their first few years will increase the chances of their meeting or exceeding departmental standards for teaching when they are formally reviewed for contract renewal, promotion, and tenure. A continual improvement in the quality of the departmental teaching program should result.

TECS Department Peer Review Protocol

For faculty members being considered for renewal, promotion, tenure or a teaching award or being subjected to mandated post-tenure review, the rating forms and summative procedure outlined below will be followed. The reviewers should be faculty members who are acknowledged to be excellent teachers. The results should be included in a teaching portfolio along with a statement of the faculty member's teaching philosophy and a summary of student ratings for the preceding three years. The portfolio should also include any other materials related to teaching that the faculty member wishes to submit. Such materials might include descriptions of courses developed or redesigned, innovative instructional methods tested, publications and course materials (including courseware) written, information about mentoring provided to colleagues and graduate students, and supporting statements from graduating seniors and alumni.

The department head will appoint a committee of four with two members from each discipline and at least one full professor. The committee members will serve with two-year terms, but each year two new members will be assigned. The committee charge is to coordinate the review process and serve as reviewers.

The committee will assign a team of two faculty members (raters) to review each faculty (instructor) on the list at the beginning of the semester in which the peer evaluation is to be carried out. One rater will be a committee member from the instructor's discipline. Care will be taken to ensure that faculty rank does not constitute a possible conflict of interest, especially for non-tenured faculty.

Research-based peer review procedures that provide valid and reliable measures of teaching quality have been developed by professional educators.^{1,2} The TECS Department adapted and implemented one of these procedures, beginning by developing checklist rating forms (rubrics) for classroom observation and for evaluation of course materials, with the checklist items being selected from lists of well-established characteristics of effective teaching.² The Peer Teacher Evaluation Checklists are shown in Tables 1 and 2.

The following procedure is followed:

1. The two raters meet with the instructor to 1) arrange two dates on which classes will be observed, 2) discuss the instructor's teaching methods and how these methods are employed to achieve the course learning objectives, 3) request course materials from the most recent offering of the course by the instructor being reviewed, and 4) review the Class Observation Checklist (Table 1) and the Course Material Checklist (Table 2).
2. The raters observe the class at the designated times and independently fill out the Class Observation Checklist (Table 1). Immediately after each visit, they meet to reconcile their ratings of each of the items on the form and enter the reconciled ratings on a consensus form. Summary comments are recorded.
3. The raters review the course materials and complete the Course Material Checklist (Table 2). The raters compile a summary of the two class observations and record the reconciled ratings and comments on the Class Observation Checklist (Table 1). They then meet with the instructor to review the summary evaluation.
4. The review committee member drafts a letter that summarizes and discusses the instructor's strengths and areas for improvement. The letter (which does not include numerical ratings) and the summary checklists are reviewed by both raters for accuracy and are then sent to the department head with a copy to the instructor, who is invited to submit a dissenting report if he/she disagrees with any of the findings.
5. All reviewed instructors are invited to meet with the raters to discuss the evaluations and formulate measures they might take to improve their teaching.

Each rater spends about seven hours on this process: two meeting with the faculty member, two observing classes, and three reviewing course materials, reconciling forms, and preparing or proofreading a report. This is roughly the amount of time spent in a semester on a college or university committee that meets once a month for two hours.

¹N. Van Note Chism, *Peer Review of Teaching*, Bolton, MA, Anker Publishing, 1999.

²M. Weimer, J.L. Parrett, and M. Kerns, *How am I Teaching?* Madison, WI, Magna Publications, 1988.

Table 1
Class Observation Checklist

Course: _____ **Instructor:** _____ **Date:** _____

“X” your responses to each of the 12 questions and then add comments below the table.

	Extremely	Very well	Adequately	Inadequately	Not at all	Footnote #
The instructor						
1 – was well prepared for class						
2 – was knowledgeable about the subject matter						
3 – stated learning objectives and student expectations						
4 – was enthusiastic about the subject matter						
5 – spoke clearly, audibly, and confidently						
6 – used a variety of relevant illustrations/examples						
7 – made effective use of the board and/or visual aids						
8 – asked stimulating and challenging questions						
9 – encouraged and achieved active student involvement						
10 – connected with student’s prerequisite knowledge						
11 – ended lesson with connection to future learning objectives						
12 – treated students impartially and with respect						

Overall rating: _____

Strong points of the Teacher (Continue on back if necessary)

Opportunities for Improving Teaching (Continue on back if necessary)

Numbered Footnotes (Continue on back if necessary)

Rater(s) _____

Table 2
Course Material Checklist

Course: _____ **Instructor:** _____ **Date:** _____

“X” your responses to each of the 10 questions and then add comments below the table.

If Question is not applicable for the course, draw a line through the question.

	Extremely	Very well	Adequately	Inadequately	Not at all	Footnote #
1 – Instructor followed the course syllabus						
2 – Instructor clearly presented course policies and rules						
3 – Instructor clearly presented learning objectives						
4 – Instructor was accessible to students (office hours, --)						
5 – Lecture notes are well organized and clearly written						
6 – Instructor incorporated relevant and timely examples in course materials						
7 – Assignments are consistent with objectives and appropriately challenging						
8 – Supplementary handouts and web pages are well organized and clearly written						
9 - Tests are clearly written and consistent with learning objectives and appropriately challenging						
10 - Student products demonstrate satisfaction of learning objectives						

Overall rating: _____

What are the strengths of the course materials? (Continue on back if necessary)

Opportunities for Improvement (Continue on back if necessary)

Numbered Footnotes (Continue on back if necessary)

Rater(s) _____