**Framework for Peer Observation of Teaching**

Process Guidelines and Instructions

**Recommendations/Timing for Observations:**

*A new course is being taught, an instructor is teaching a course for the first time, course structure/content has been largely redesigned or upon instructor request.*

1. **Planning for Instruction**

*Instructor and Peer Observer*: Consider the following guiding questions related to *Planning for Instruction* (could be submitted in writing or discussed at a pre-observation meeting, or both).

* + - How does your course ICON site and course syllabus support instruction?
    - What do you want students to be able to do, to think about, to know, to use as a result of this class session/lab/seminar?
    - What instructional strategies will you be using in this class session/lab/seminar to facilitate students’ understanding of the content associated with the class session/lab/seminar?
    - How will you know whether students understand the content?

1. **Observation of Instruction**

*Peer Observer*: In order to provide formative feedback to the instructor, give thought to the following questions while conducting the Class Session/Lab/Seminar *Observation of Instruction*.

* **Learning Environment**

In what way is the instructor creating a teaching/learning environment that supports individual and collaborative learning, and that encourages positive social interaction, active engagement in learning, and self-motivation?

* **Instructional Strategies**

What instructional strategies are being used to encourage students to develop deep understanding of content and its connections, and to build skills to apply knowledge in meaningful ways?

* **Application of Content**

How is the instructor demonstrating an understanding of how to engage learners in applying content to their life experiences, preparation in their field of study, and “need to know”; creating learning experiences that make aspects of the discipline accessible and meaningful for learners?

* **Assessment**

What methods of assessment does the instructor have in place to appropriately support, verify, and document learning, including guiding the instructor’s real-time decision making while the Class Session/Lab/Seminar is in progress?

1. **Post-Observation Reflection and Discussion**

*Instructor and Peer Observer*: Consider the following guiding questions related to *Post-Observation Reflection* (could be submitted in writing or discussed at a post-observation meeting, or both).

* + What modifications did you make to your plans for instruction over the course of the class session/lab/seminar?
  + Are there things you will change in your future instruction *of this group of students* based on what you learned about your students during the teaching of this class session/lab/seminar?
    - Why do you think these changes would improve student learning?
  + What would you change if you were to re-teach this lesson to *a new group of students* in a future semester?
    - Why do you think these changes would improve student learning?

**Peer Observation of Teaching**

 Name of Instructor being observed:

Name of Peer Observer:

Date:

Context for observation (e.g., course title, number, type):

**I. Planning for Instruction**

(Instructor) In the space below provide written responses, if any, to the guiding questions related to this pre-evaluation step of the peer observation process.

**II. Observation of Instruction**

(Peer Observer) Provide formative feedback to the instructor using the instructional areas noted below as a framework. The attached “Peer Observation Supplement” provides observation points for each area that may be used to guide this observation of instruction.

Learning Environment:

Instructional Strategies:

Application of Content:

Assessment:

**III. Post-Observation Reflection**

(Instructor) Provide written responses, if any, to the guiding questions related to this post-observation step of the peer observation process.

**Peer Observation Supplement**: As you prepare for the classroom observation of a colleague, please consider the following as *possible* observations that might be included in your assessment of each area listed below. Not all points may be relevant to every observation.

**Suggested areas for consideration when appropriate to course**

**Learning Environment**

* The objectives of the class are clearly stated
* Provides a logical organization for the lesson
* The instructor was well prepared for class
* Shows enthusiasm about the content being taught
* Gains student attention about the topic
* Describes the session topic in terms of students' previous knowledge
* Provides an outline for the class session
* Gives students adequate opportunities to ask questions
* Receives student questions politely and when possible enthusiastically
* The instructor stimulates independent thinking
* The instructor helps students to learn from each other
* The instructor affirms student effort

**Instructional Strategies**

* Maintains students' attention throughout the lesson
* Promotes an appreciation of diverse thoughts and perspectives
* The instructor stimulates interest in the course subject(s)
* Covers an appropriate amount of material for the time allotted
* The class remains focused on its objectives
* Asks questions appropriate for the level of the learner
* The instructor responds to questions with clarity
* The instructor’s choice of teaching techniques is appropriate for the goals
* The instructor explains the subject matter clearly
* Repeats and emphasizes major points
* Speaks loudly and clearly
* Speaks at an appropriate pace
* Varies voice pitch and tone
* Visuals are clear and easily seen
* Visuals represent a manageable amount of Information.
* Asks questions of varying difficulty
* Waits at least 5 seconds after asking for a response before resuming
* Asks questions that require more than a one- or two-word response
* Periodically summarizes points

**Application of Content**

* Uses appropriate examples
* Points out practical or “real world” applications
* Provides opportunity for students to practice using the content
* Actively involves learners
* Provides a “link” to how this lesson relates to subsequent ones

**Assessment**

* Asks probing questions if a student’s answer was incomplete or superficial
* Encourages students to answer difficult questions by providing cues or rephrasing
* Uses a variety of strategies to determine student understanding of content