

**CONDUCTING PRE- AND POST-OBSERVATION MEETINGS
AS PART OF A PEER TEACHING REVIEW**

**ASIAN LANGUAGES & LITERATURE
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As a part of the Department of Asian Languages & Literature's Peer Teaching Review process, instructors to be observed may request pre- and/or post-observation meetings. If requested, the observer and instructor arrange these meetings at their mutual convenience. The purpose of these meetings is to enhance the benefit of peer teaching reviews for the instructor being observed and for the observer by promoting discussion about teaching practices and goals.

Pre-observation meeting

The main purpose of a pre-observation meeting is for the two faculty members to meet so that the instructor who is being reviewed can provide relevant contextual information prior to the class observation. This both minimizes the potential for misunderstandings and maximizes the potential for the review to be useful to both parties. These meetings are most effective if the instructor provides information and does most of the talking, with opportunities also for the observer to share his or her views and to ask questions. For example, it can be helpful for the instructor to share the following sorts of information:

- background and purpose of the course, and the instructor's teaching goals
- the instructor's concerns or challenges, as well as innovations and approaches related to the particular course and in general
- anything that the instructor would like the observer particularly to look for or consider during the actual observation
- the lesson plan for the class to be observed. (This might equally well be provided later via email.)

Effective meetings provide a context for back-and-forth discussion, with the observer asking questions and learning about the course, the instructor, and pedagogical context. These meetings also provide a context to talk about teaching in general and to share teaching ideas.

Post-observation meeting

Like the pre-observation meeting, post-observation meetings are most effective if the instructor provides information and does most of the talking, at least initially. This allows the observer to understand how the instructor views the class that was taught, what went well, what challenges might have emerged, etc. This background is critical in providing context for the observer to understand the instructor's point of view and the instructor's own understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the particular class. Knowing how the instructor views what happened in the class is beneficial to the observer, and helpful in writing up the report.

It can be effective for the observer to ask the instructor to talk about what happened in the class and about student participation and learning, and for the instructor to talk about his or her own reflections on these same things. Hearing the instructor's own point of view first provides a solid context for a constructive conversation about all aspects of the class and teaching practices. It is also helpful for the instructor to ask the observer questions or concerns about the class and to solicit ideas related to teaching the class. The observer should feel free to share his or her own reflections on the class. The post-observation meeting can also provide a context for talking about the past year's student evaluations.

Information gleaned at a post-observation meeting can be very helpful in writing up the final report, as the report can now include information about the instructor's own goals and efforts related to the class and the instructor's awareness of and efforts toward improving teaching effectiveness. It is often productive to share the final report with the instructor prior to submitting it, in order to facilitate correction of any errors in the report.

Additional information on conducting peer teaching reviews

Further information on conducting classroom observations for formative (teacher development) or summative (teacher evaluation) purposes are available at a variety of university websites, including the following:

University of Minnesota

<http://www1.umn.edu/ohr/teachlearn/resources/peer/guidelines/>

University of Texas

<http://academics.utep.edu/LinkClick.aspx?link=UTEP+Peer+Observation+Booklet.pdf&tabid=58396&mid=129801>

University of North Carolina

<http://cfe.unc.edu/pdfs/FYC15.pdf>

University of Reading (see p. 7-8 on peer observations)

<http://www.reading.ac.uk/web/FILES/qualitysupport/peerreview.pdf>