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Description automatically generated**Peer Observation of Teaching**

Pre-Observation Questions Template

Teaching is complex and cannot be narrowly defined with a list of criteria. It encompasses activities that range from incorporating active learning, to acknowledging the diversity of student experiences within your classroom and intentionally supporting them, to creating clear slides and more. In addition, within the broad activities that comprise “teaching”, instructors have varied approaches to design, delivery, assessment, and other aspects of teaching, including how they pursue their own professional growth as teachers.

Some examples of ways instructors have focused the observation process is by asking for feedback on (one of):

* incorporation of active learning in course design
* use, and facilitation of, discussion
* classroom assessment techniques for formative assessment
* integration of materials and discussion topics that highlight institutional relationships and ongoing initiatives with local Indigenous communities
* implementation of inclusive teaching practices, such as strategies that foster students' sense of belonging, creating a supportive and respectful classroom climate, or following principles of Universal Design for Learning
* ways of engaging respectfully in dialogue across difficult and contentious topics

**How to use this document:**

This resource is meant to help guide the peer observation process. We invite you, the person being observed, to select a focus for your peer observation of teaching and to modify the questions below as relevant.

**Sharing your responses**: Your responses to the questions below can be sent ahead to your observer and then discussed at the pre-observation meeting.

**Limitations**: Though, ideally, peer observation of teaching extends beyond the classroom observation of teaching, we recognize that the questions below focus on the observation of a single in-person class. We encourage you to integrate these questions into a broader discussion of teaching, including conversations about approaches to teaching and professional growth as educators. You may wish to share and discuss what sources have you drawn from to inform your practice and grow as an instructor (eg., mentors, literature, teaching and learning communities, own research, other)?

We also encourage you to consider a reciprocal peer observation where instructors observe each other’s teaching and share what they learned and reflect together.

**Questions to Consider for Discussion During the Pre-Observation Meeting:**

1. What do you hope to get out of the peer observation process? What motivated you to request a peer observation of teaching?
2. For the class being observed, describe your plan for the class as well as the goals for student learning.
   * How do these goals, objectives or learning outcomes fit into the overall course?
   * How do you communicate the goals for learning to your students (for the class and course)?
   * As you designed this class, how did you take into consideration your students’ different knowledge levels and backgrounds?
   * How will you know what your students have learned?
3. What strategies will you employ to make the session relevant, accessible, and engaging to all students?
   * How do you take into consideration the dynamics among students and between you and your students as you plan your session?
   * What strategies do you use to promote students’ sense of belonging and inclusion? (e.g., encourage students’ participation and validate their contributions, provide multiple and diverse examples, use inclusive language)
4. Is there anything else you would like to discuss with your observer? (e.g., disciplinary or departmental context that you feel is important for observer to know, what makes you feel anxious or excited about the peer observation process, is there anything you don’t want feedback on, beliefs about teaching and learning?)