



## **Peer Observation - Observation Guidelines - Anecdotal**

The purpose of the Observation Guidelines is to provide the Peer Observer with suggestions and ideas on what to observe for and provide feedback on. There are seven Dimensions of Teaching that are included in the guidelines. It is recommended that the Peer Observer become familiar with each of the dimensions before beginning the observation. The guidelines are not all inclusive and are not intended to direct the observation. The Peer Observer should comment on only those behaviors and events that occur during the observation period. These guidelines correspond with the Anecdotal Observation Recording Form.

### **Dimension 1: Use of good lesson design**

Indicative teaching strategies for demonstrating this dimension may include:

- Appears to be organized (use of lesson plan, uses time effectively, students are aware of expectations)
- Begins lesson with a suitable bridge which captures student attention
- Determines students prior knowledge and understanding
- Lesson objectives are made clear to the students (written, verbal, other)
- Students are made aware of the learning outcomes throughout the lesson
- Provides a structural overview of the lesson
- Ensures a synthesis of the key learning outcomes towards the end of the lesson
- Ensures that students are aware of the link between key learning outcomes and assessments, as appropriate
- The lesson from start to the end flows and is connected
- Evidence of sufficient preparation for the class and learning activities

### **Dimension 2: Teaching reflects student diversity**

Indicative teaching strategies for demonstrating this dimension may include:

- Demonstrates an appreciation for the different levels of knowledge and understanding within the student group
- Addresses the different learning needs and styles of the learners in the group
- Focuses on building confidence, enthusiasm and intrinsic motivation
- Designs activities where students of differing abilities participate, engage and learn from the experience
- Treats all students as equal learners in the learning environment
- Encourages quieter students to participate
- Demonstrates respect for different points of view

### **Dimension 3: Students are actively engaged in learning**

Indicative teaching strategies for demonstrating this dimension may include:

- Fosters a supportive, non-threatening teaching/learning environment
- Encourages students to express views, ask and answer questions and allow time for this to occur
- Uses questioning skills which encourage student engagement
- Provides immediate and constructive feedback where appropriate
- Demonstrates enthusiasm for teaching and student learning
- Uses active teaching methods such as discussion, group work, reflective exercises, brainstorming....
- Provides clear explanations and directions for learning activities
- Provides sufficient time for learning activities to occur

#### Dimension 4: **The focus of the lesson is on student learning**

Indicative teaching strategies for demonstrating this dimension may include:

- Helps students bridge the gap between current conceptual understanding and the next “level”
- Challenges students intellectually by extending them with question/answer/discussion components where students’ conclusions must be explained and justified (“what do you think is going on”, “why” and “what if” types of questioning)
- Encourages students to “construct” their own understanding
- Encourages critical thinking with deep (intrinsic) rather than surface (extrinsic) approaches to learning
- Seeks feedback progressively during the lesson through constant observation of interest level and engagement and by using specific questions to test understanding
- Uses and builds on student contributions and preparation
- Focuses on building confidence, enthusiasm and intrinsic motivation
- Fosters students’ responsibility for their own learning
- Modifies and adjusts the session to accommodate feedback from learners

#### Dimension 5: **Effective use of educational resources, teaching techniques and methods**

Indicative teaching strategies for demonstrating this dimension may include:

- Uses technology effectively (PowerPoint, Smart Board, Online components, other)
- Uses technology with educational strategies and techniques that support student learning (clear purpose)
- Demonstrates a balance between IT and other strategies
- Supplies the students with resources that support student learning (references, handouts)
- Makes connections with textbook and other materials
- Uses a variety of methods and activities, both with and without technology
- Provides useful demonstrations, examples, scenarios and activities
- Has clear writing and diagrams when using whiteboard

#### Dimension 6: **Teaching Style and Approach**

Indicative teaching strategies for demonstrating this dimension may include:

- Demonstrates an effective presentation style that engages students
- Has a rapport with learners
- Makes eye contact with students and uses their names
- Establishes and maintains control over learning environment
- Demonstrates “presence” and credibility with students
- Students appear to respond positively to the instructor
- Provides explanations that are clear and understood by the learners
- Clearly demonstrates a thorough command of the subject matter
- Has enthusiasm and interest in subject and the learners
- Uses humor respectfully and in a manner connected to the lesson
- Uses learning space well (can be heard and seen by everyone in the room)

#### Dimension 7: **Instructor identified**

Ask the Instructor being observed to indicate other areas in which they are interested in receiving feedback.

Adapted from:

- Australian Learning and Teaching Council. **Peer Review of Teaching for Promotion Applications: Peer Observation of Classroom Teaching Information.**
- College of Education Temple University (2000). **Handbook for Peer Review.** Temple University.
- Borders College (2007). **Guide to Peer Evaluation.**