

Peer Review of Teaching III: Peer Review Rubrics, Methods, and Worksheets

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Tools for Peer Review

Just as there are many ways for professors to teach, there are also many ways for reviewers to take notes on observations and review teaching. What's more, these observations can occur in live, synchronous classes, but they could also occur in remote classes or asynchronous classes as well. In a big picture way, there are many topics potentially worth examining when engaging in the peer review of a faculty member, including:

- Content knowledge
- Use of instructional materials
- Class organization and clarity
- Presentation form and substance
- Teacher-student interactions
- Participation, climate, and environment
- Engagement and active learning
- Learning goals and expectations
- Assessment practices and feedback to students
- Support of effective learning practices (e.g., building on students' prior knowledge, reasoning, critical thinking)

Worksheets for Peer Review

Worksheets or note-taking sheets can be helpful in structuring what will occur in the peer review process. Worksheets have the added benefit of allowing **clear communication and expectations** about what specific topics will be a part of the observation process, which is useful for both the teacher and the peer reviewer. Many of these tools have been developed at other institutions, including those which include a significant remote or hybrid component in their curriculum. These tools have been linked within this document, rather than pasted at the end.

Before beginning the peer observation, one worksheet that can be helpful for a peer reviewer is a [checklist of topics to discuss as a pre-class observation](#). This will help the peer reviewer and the teacher get acclimated with how the class period will go. Such a worksheet works equally well when engaging in this discussion in person, or remotely.

During this discussion, it will also be useful to point out any worksheets that will be used during the class period (see the paragraphs that follow for examples).

During the observation, there are a variety of worksheets that exist. Certain courses, teachers, or peer reviewers may prefer one or the other, but ultimately, they are all designed to be a way to take down notes and information about what occurred during class (or what may occur remotely or asynchronously). If an [open-ended approach](#) is preferred, there are worksheets that allow comments on a wide range of teaching and learning behaviors. A [narrative log](#) approach allows the observer to take note of what happens in sequence in a course. Ideally, it is worthwhile to write down observations at some regular interval, as well as to note when particularly important moments occur in the class. Another approach worth considering is a [checklist sheet](#) to note if certain teaching behaviors occur.

Rubrics for Peer Review

For those of the more quantitative persuasion, rubrics can also be used either immediately after a classroom observation has occurred, or after there has been time to reflect on the observation. Two tools from Appalachian State are good models, one that is a [shorter overview](#), and one that includes [specific teaching-related behaviors](#).

Tools Designed for Remote and Hybrid Courses

Though the general principles of effective peer review apply to in-person courses as well as remote and hybrid courses, there are also tools specifically designed for observing and providing feedback in these kinds of courses as well. Some best practices for online teaching can be found in [this checklist](#) (more details about this checklist can be [found here](#)). A [guide developed at Penn State](#) includes considerations to make when observing both hybrid courses, as well as face-to-face courses. And an [additional guide developed at Grand Valley State University](#) includes peer review considerations for both online and hybrid courses.

Resources Consulted:

(Links included above are based on consults with staff or websites at other institutions)

- <https://www.colorado.edu/teaching-quality-framework/resources>
- <https://www.elon.edu/u/academics/cat/tlresources/assess-student-learning/peer-observation-of-teaching/>