

## Graduate College Teaching Certification 2020-2021 Teaching Observation Assignment Guidelines

### Purpose

The Graduate College Teaching Certification program's *Teaching Observation Assignment* is designed to help participants engage in professional learning to improve their teaching and enhance students' learning through this reflective practice.

### Scope of the assignment (adapted from [UNLV Peer Teaching Observation Project](#))

Members of the Graduate College Teaching Certification program must complete and submit the 4 components of this assignment as a single PDF to [gradrebel@unlv.edu](mailto:gradrebel@unlv.edu) by **Friday, February 12, 2021**. Please note that you do not need to be the sole instructor of a course to complete this assignment. You only need to teach one class and be observed teaching this class.

### Who should conduct the teaching observation?

- If you are a teaching assistant, we would prefer the faculty member who is the primary instructor of the course to conduct the teaching observation.
- If you are the sole instructor for a course, we would prefer your faculty adviser to conduct the teaching observation. However, if your faculty adviser is unable to participate in this assignment, you may ask another faculty member in your department, but please inform us ahead of time by email via [gradrebel@unlv.edu](mailto:gradrebel@unlv.edu).

**Please note:** A faculty member must be the one to complete the teaching observation.

### Assignment Requirements (submit the 4 items below as single PDF)

1. *Pre-observation meeting:* The first step is for you to sit down with the observer and discuss the aims of the observation. The goal is for you (the instructor) to clarify what you would like insight on and where the observer should focus their attention. The instructor will help the observer understand the context of the area of interest and background about why they would like feedback. The instructor can share any course materials that illustrate the context for the observer. Here are some questions to think about as you prepare for the meeting: How can the instructor help? What areas are you interested in learning more about when it comes to your teaching style? How can the instructor use their skills to give you a boost in the classroom?
  - **Component #1:** Please complete the *Teaching Observation Menu* handout. This must be submitted to us as part of the Teaching Observation Assignment.
  - **Component #2:** Please also submit an outline of the class you are teaching. This can include your notes or slide deck.
2. *Observation:* Next, the observer will visit your class and carefully observe your teaching style, techniques, and barriers that might hinder learning.

- **Component #3:** The observer must complete the *Summary Reflections Form*, which will be discussed at the Post-observation meeting. You will submit a copy of the form as part of your Teaching Observation assignment.
- 3. *Post-observation meeting:* After the observation, you will have a meeting to talk about the class and discuss the *Summary Reflection Form*. What were your strengths? What could you improve on?
- 4. **Component #4:** Write a 1-2 page self-reflection that combines the teaching experience and feedback from faculty.
  - The self-reflection must be 1-2 pages, 12-point font, and Times New Roman. It can be either single or double-spaced.
  - We are purposely leaving this part of the assignment open-ended since it will be unique to each of you.
  - Some items to think about include:
    - i. What did you want your students to learn the day you taught?
    - ii. What was student engagement like? Could you have done things differently to increase student engagement?
    - iii. What worked well? What appeared to work less well?
    - iv. What feedback did the observer have for you and how will you incorporate it into future lesson plans?
    - v. Did you find the Teaching Observation assignment valuable?

### Teaching Observation Benefits

Observation of your teaching might be a bit intimidating, but there are numerous benefits, including:

- Engaging in professional learning to improve your teaching
- Learning best practices from more senior colleagues
- Helping you to stay current with teaching best practices and new pedagogical tools, methods, and philosophies
- Enhancing students' learning in your courses
- Gathering evidence of your teaching style to use on the job market

### Resources

- [University of Michigan Center for Research on Learning and Teaching, Evaluation of Teaching](#)
- [Vanderbilt University Center for Teaching, Peer Review of Teaching](#)
- [University of Minnesota Academic Affairs & Provost, Peer Review of Teaching](#)
- [Carl Weiman Science Education Initiative, University of British Columbia, Classroom Observation Protocol for Undergraduate STEM](#)
- [UNLV Peer Teaching Observation Project](#)
- Bernard Schweizer's [The Dreaded Peer-Teaching Observation](#) (The Chronicle of Higher Education Advice)
- Cassada, Kate M., Julie Harris, Bobby Herting, Tara Warren, and DaMia Brown-Kidd. 2017. [Engaging the Power of Peer Observation](#). *VASCD Journal* 14: 71-83.