

## UNLV Peer Teaching Observation Project

We're pleased to include you in this special initiative designed to bring peer-review insights to improving learning and teaching experiences at UNLV. Participation is voluntary, and all notes/comments focus on formative assessment for the purposes of improvement.

We appreciate helpful guidance from all participating UNLV faculty, staff, and students who have contributed to the success of this program, and we acknowledge the following resources that have been adapted for this project:

- University of Minnesota *Peer Review of Teaching* materials [http://www.academic.umn.edu/provost/peer\\_review/](http://www.academic.umn.edu/provost/peer_review/)
- Carl Weiman Science Education Initiative, University of British Columbia, *Classroom Observation Protocol* (<http://www.cwsei.ubc.ca/resources/COPUS.htm>)
- Mary Deane Sorcinelli Guidelines for Classroom Observation (<https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/0Bx9gwh3MRThOX05fWmxhNnhXOWs>)
- University of Colorado *Physics Classroom Observation Protocol* ([www.colorado.edu/physics/phys4810/phys4810\\_fa04/protocols/abbreviated.pdf](http://www.colorado.edu/physics/phys4810/phys4810_fa04/protocols/abbreviated.pdf))
- Rossier School of Education, University of Southern California. *Faculty Peer Teaching Observation Guide*. (<https://faculty.usc.edu/files/2014/.../RossierFacultyPeerTeaching-ObservationGuide.pdf>)

We look forward to working with you!

Sincerely,

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and

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## UNLV Peer Teaching Observation Project

**Purpose:**

The UNLV Peer Teaching Observation Project is designed to promote thoughtful dialogue about classroom dynamics (onsite and online) and teaching practices with the goal of enhancing teaching and learning experiences.

**Scope of activity:**

Members of UNLV's teaching community may request a peer teaching observation online from any of our UNLV Teaching Academy Fellows. (The Fellows are nationally recognized scholars who are exceptionally effective teachers of UNLV students. They are nominated by their deans and appointed by the provost.) You may also request an observation by a student, trained to offer feedback.

Each observation consists of 3 parts, totaling approximately 3-4 hours of the faculty member's time:

- 1) pre-observation meeting with observer and completion of Teaching Observation Menu
- 2) class observation and completion of Summary Reflection Form
- 3) post-observation meeting.

**Teaching Observation Menu (page 1 of 2)**

**Instructions:** Prior to the observation, the observer and instructor meet for a conversation about the aims of the observation. The goal is for the instructor and observer to clarify a shared understanding about what the instructor wants 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.

The following **observation menu** may be helpful in identifying the focus for the upcoming observation.

**Both the instructor and the observer leave the Pre-Observation Meeting with a completed copy of this Teaching Observation Menu (pages 1 and 2).**

**Instructor's Goals****Instructor's Requested Areas for Feedback****Logistics**

- date(s) times(s) location(s) of observation
- seating location for observer
- is observer identified or anonymous?
- does the observer participate in class activities?
- is this the first observation, or a follow-up observation?

**Recommended Focus Areas:**

Observers, from your perspective:

1. Describe the class context (e.g., setting, background characteristics, composition of the class, etc.).
2. Overall Student Engagement Rating (circle one and provide comments): (low) 1 2 3 4 5 (high)  
*Engagement is defined as students contributing to and participating in the class being observed.*
3. Overall Student Preparedness Rating (circle one and provide comments): (low) 1 2 3 4 5 (high)  
*Student preparedness is defined as students coming to class ready to learn (i.e., homework and preparatory tasks are completed).*
4. Describe the teacher's instructional practices and student's learning practices observed:  
*Note: The instructor may or may not provide specific guidance here. If not, refer to the optional questions below.*
  - Consider what appeared to work well. Note at least 2-3 strengths.
  - Consider what appeared not to work well. Note at least 1 opportunity for improvement.
5. What suggestions do you have for the instructor to consider? Indicate 2-3 suggestions.

**Optional Focus Areas:**

*Instructors, please specify which (if any) of the following areas of interest you would like the student observer to pay attention to outside of the required questions listed above.*

Students' Learning Practices	Optional Ratings (circle one)
Actively took responsibility for their learning (by focusing on the instructor, asking questions, taking notes, participating in exercises, seeking feedback, etc.)	(low) 1 2 3 4 5 (high)
Maintained focus on content and activities of the class	(low) 1 2 3 4 5 (high)
During class activities, focused on the tasks and outcomes the instructor requested	(low) 1 2 3 4 5 (high)
Did not distract each other from content and activities of the class	(low) 1 2 3 4 5 (high)
Treated classroom or laboratory facilities and equipment with care, following safety instructions provided	(low) 1 2 3 4 5 (high)
Teacher's Instructional Practices	Optional Ratings (circle one)
Clearly connected the goals of the class meeting to the course goals, syllabus, and specific materials or assignments	(low) 1 2 3 4 5 (high)
Organized class meeting agenda and activities to meet those goals	(low) 1 2 3 4 5 (high)
Provided useful insights into how research is done in this discipline	(low) 1 2 3 4 5 (high)
Connected concepts from class meeting to applications relevant for students' real world experience	(low) 1 2 3 4 5 (high)
Used visual aids and other materials effectively	(low) 1 2 3 4 5 (high)
Made content, materials, equipment and activities from the class meeting accessible to all students in an equitable way	(low) 1 2 3 4 5 (high)
Was receptive and encouraging in response to student questions	(low) 1 2 3 4 5 (high)
Maintained a safe laboratory or classroom (or online) environment during the class meeting	(low) 1 2 3 4 5 (high)

## Summary Reflections Form

*Instructions: Both the observer and instructor complete this form and bring it to the post-observation meeting.*

### From the Pre-Observation Form:

Instructor's Goals

Instructor's Requested Areas for Insight

Logistics

- date(s) time(s) location(s) of observation
- seating location for observer
- was observer identified or anonymous?
- did the observer participate in class activities?
- is this the first observation, or a follow-up observation?

### Recommended Focus Areas:

Observers, from your perspective:

1. Describe the class context (e.g., setting, background characteristics, composition of the class, etc.).

Description:

2. Overall Student Engagement Rating (circle one and provide comments): (low) 1 2 3 4 5 (high)  
*Engagement is defined as students contributing to and participating in the class being observed.*

Comments in support of your rating:

3. Overall Student Preparedness Rating (circle one and provide comments): (low) 1 2 3 4 5 (high)  
*Student preparedness is defined as students coming to class ready to learn (i.e., homework and preparatory tasks are completed).*

Comments in support of your rating:

4. Describe the teacher's instructional practices and student's learning practices observed:  
*Note: The instructor may or may not provide specific guidance here. If not, refer to the optional questions below.*
  - Consider what appeared to work well. Note at least 2-3 strengths.
  - Consider what appeared not to work well. Note at least 1 opportunity for improvement.

Comments:

5. What suggestions do you have for the instructor to consider? Indicate 2-3 suggestions.

Suggestions:

### Optional Focus Areas:

For each optional practice identified on the Observation Menu, please provide the following information for each:

- Indicate the specific teacher instructional practice, or student learning practice.
- Describe your observations about that practice to support the rating.
- Identify helpful aspects of the practice that can be continued.
- Note less helpful aspects of the practice and how they might be adjusted to achieve an improved outcome.
- Offer any additional suggestions.