

Rime Peer Review Project Committee

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PEER FEEDBACK ON LECTURES & SMALL GROUP TEACHING

The purpose of this form is for the observer to organize his or her thoughts for feedback to the instructor about specific domains of teaching. The teaching behaviors listed on the left are representative behaviors for each domain. The lists are neither exhaustive, nor are all listed behaviors appropriate for every teaching session. Check boxes are provided so the observer can easily indicate the teaching behaviors they wish to comment on, and to provide a reminder about observed behaviors. Most importantly, ample space is provided for written comments. This space may be used to indicate teaching strengths and/or suggestions for improvement. In addition to using this form, the observer and instructor should meet in person soon after the session to discuss the teaching performance in detail.

An optional “Overall Rating of Effective Teaching Skills” is provided at the end of the form. For the purposes of this study, we ask that the rating scale be used. If this peer feedback form is implemented more broadly at your institution, we recommend that use of the rating be optional and left up to the instructor being observed. Some instructors may seek only formative feedback in order to improve their teaching. Others may wish to have a quantitative peer rating that may be used to demonstrate improved performance over time. Such ratings may be useful for promotion or tenure decisions, nomination for teaching honors, etc.

Please see below for an outline of the recommended guidelines for peer observation of teaching.

Pre-Observation Exchange

1. Determine the purpose. Ask your peer what he/she hopes to gain from this observation.
2. Check whether he/she is thinking of using this observation for formative or summative purposes.
3. Establish confidentiality.
4. Schedule the observation and the post-session feedback encounter.
5. Learn about the context of the session to be observed.
6. Identify teaching issues for the observation with your peer.
7. Decide with your peer where you will sit and how you will be introduced to students

Using the Observation Form

1. Identify aspects that you think are strengths of your peer's teaching practice.
2. Identify aspects that you think he/she needs to develop.
3. Document observations by completing the form either (1) during the observation or (2) by taking "field notes" and/or relevant quotes of your observations and then use them to complete the observation form after the session. Choose the approach that would best work for you.

Giving Feedback to Peers

1. Organize your observations to share.
2. Exchange observations.
3. Wrap up and share learning.

For more detailed information about how to use this form and descriptors of the teaching behaviors, please see the "Guidelines" handout.

Instructor:
 Target Audience:
 Session Observed:

Observer:
 Session Format:

Date:

PEER FEEDBACK ON LECTURES & SMALL GROUP TEACHING

Establishing Learning Environment

- Knows learners and adjusts session accordingly.
- Demonstrates sensitivity to diversity
- Listens to learners.
- Encourages learners' participation.
- Incorporates learners' ideas.
- Encourages learners to voice uncertainty and ask questions.
- Keeps eye contact with learners.
- Shows enthusiasm.

Comments:

Managing Session

- Communicates clear goals.
- Structures session according to the goals.
- Starts and ends session on time.
- Summarizes session.
- Solicits learners' feedback.
- Encourages group collaboration if appropriate.
- Limits digressions of group discussion.

Comments:

Presenting the Material

- Varies voice, body language, pace, movement, *etc.*
- Uses audiovisual materials appropriately.
- Refers to appropriate written materials.
- Speaks clearly.

Comments:

Instructor:
Target Audience:
Session Observed:

Observer:
Session Format:

Date:

PEER FEEDBACK ON LECTURES & SMALL GROUP TEACHING

Conveying Content

Comments:

- Delivers appropriate amount of material.
- Organizes content logically.
- Provides clear explanations.
- Explains relevance of topics to learners' training.
- Links to previous material or learner knowledge, and to future material.
- Shows relationships between theory & practice.
- Uses examples related to student experience and/or knowledge.
- Acknowledges personal knowledge limits.
- Directs learners to useful literature.
- Provides up-to-date information.
- Gives periodic summaries.

Implementing Strategies to Promote Learning

Comments:

- Uses questions to probe thinking and reasoning.
- Gives learners time to organize thoughts and respond.
- Asks for learners' clarification of ideas.
- Restates learners' ideas to promote understanding.
- Encourages learners to question & critique.
- Provides feedback.

Overall Rating of Effective Teaching Skills:

- Emerging
- Evident
- Exemplary

GUIDELINES

Pre-Observation Exchange

- **Determine the purpose of the observation:** Ask the instructor
 - What he/she hopes to gain from this observation
 - Whether he/she is thinking of using this observation for formative purposes (promoting the development of his/her teaching practice) or summative purposes (using the outcomes of this observation for departmental or promotional review)
 - How you can best address his/her expectations and needs.
- **Establish confidentiality:** Point out that you will keep your observations and post-session discussion confidential and that you will send the completed observation form to the instructor, unless he/she requests that you disclose this information.
- **Set up the schedule and share the procedures:** Schedule the observation and the post-session feedback encounter (20- to 30-minute meeting). Explain the procedures for the observation and post-session to the instructor.
- **Learn about the context of the session to be observed:** Ask for information about
 - Target audience
 - Course syllabus or session plan
 - Session format
 - Session goals
 - Any other information the instructor wants you to learn about before you observe
- **Identify teaching behaviors to be observed with the instructor by**
 - Asking what he/she would like you to focus on during the observation.
 - Sharing the observation form
 - Asking the instructor to identify any specific teaching behaviors on the form that he/she suggested aspects of teaching (items) described in the form he/she would like you to pay particular attention to during the observation.
- **Decide on the observer's position and introduction:** Before the session begins, decide with your peer where you should sit and how you will be introduced to the learners in order to share with them the focus of your observation.

Observation

- **Maintain the focus of the observation:** Focus on the aspects the instructor indicated and be attentive to other aspects you might want to consider drawing the instructor's attention to as well.
- **Identify aspects that you think are strengths of your peer's teaching practice.**

- **Identify aspects that you think he/she needs to develop.**
- **Document observations:** During the observation, you can take field notes to record your observations and/or relevant quotes and then use those notes to guide your completion of the form after the observation. Note times throughout the observation. You may also complete the form during the observation itself. Choose the approach that would best work for you.

Feedback

- **Organize observations to share:** At the end of the session,
 - Give yourself time to organize your observations and complete or review the observation form.
 - Invite the instructor to take this time to reflect on the session and identify issues he/she would like to discuss with you.
- **Exchange observations**
 - Start the discussion by asking the instructor to share his/her reflections with you.
 - Share your observations on the issues he/she wants to discuss with you.
 - As you move along, include in the discussion other issues you observed.
 - Identify 3 strengths and 3 areas for improvement objectively and support your comments with the data you collected. For example, you could say, “I noticed that you made connections between the topics discussed in this session and the learners’ clinical experiences” or “I noticed that the learners kept asking questions at the end of the session.”
 - Offer suggestions for improvement and help the instructor identify specific teaching strategies he/she might want to consider putting into practice.
- **Wrap up and sharing learning:** At the end of the encounter,
 - Summarize your observation
 - Share something that you learned from observing this teaching and learning event. For example, I like how you probed learners to think about other hypothetical cases and I look forward to using that strategy in my own teaching.”

Descriptors for Teaching Behaviors Listed on Observation Form

Establishing Learning Environment

1. Knows learners and adjusts session accordingly.
 - Designs the session based on the learners’ needs and interests.
 - Takes group’s “vital signs” (background/knowledge on topic, anxiety, etc.) before and during session and adjusts material accordingly.
2. Demonstrates sensitivity to diversity.
 - Treats learners impartially, thoughtfully, and respectfully

- Does not express prejudicial or biased opinions and questions about those expressed by others.
 - Is sensitive to learners' individual interests, abilities, knowledge, skills, and cultural background.
3. Listens to learners.
 - Listens actively and non-judgmentally to what the learner is communicating without interruption.
 - Incorporates learners' ideas and comments into the session.
 4. Encourages learners' participation.
 - Welcomes and demonstrates appreciation of learners' participation.
 - Reminds learners that they are to respect their peers' participation.
 - In problem-solving sessions, clarifies that everyone is part of the "team" to resolve the problem, including the instructor.
 - Draws nonparticipating learners safely into the discussion without "grilling" learners.
 5. Incorporates learners' ideas
 - Draws/builds on learners' comments to offer examples, provide reinforcement, or expand a concept.
 6. Encourages learners to voice uncertainty and ask questions
 - Elicits learners' concerns, critiques, and questions.
 - Encourages learners to openly express what they do not know.
 - Emphasizes that no question is a "stupid question" and that all responses are valid as long as the learner can support his/her reasoning.
 7. Keeps eye contact with learners
 - Maintains moderate to high eye contact with learners. Learners need to feel that someone is talking to them as individuals.
 - In small groups, eye contact should be established with every learner as equally as possible.
 - In lecture settings, makes sure to make eye contact with learners from every section of the auditorium, using sweeping rather than darting eye movements.
 - Does not read from notes or speak to board or screen.
 8. Shows enthusiasm.
 - Is enthusiastic about the subject matter and makes it interesting
 - Shows interest in learners' ideas, comments or concerns
 - Uses humor, energy, and passion.

Managing Session

1. Communicates clear goals
 - Clearly explains and/or collaborates in identifying the goals of the session
 - Offers a preview of the entire lecture by presenting the goals, questions to be answered, or an outline of the key points.

2. Structures session according to the goals.
 - Topics of discussion are aligned with the session goals.
3. Starts and ends session on time.
 - Is aware of the session time frame and plans material accordingly, also leaving ample time for questions from learners.
 - Keeps track of time during the session.
4. Summarizes session.
 - Summarizes and concludes decisively or asks learners to summarize.
 - Reflects on what learners have accomplished and what still may need to be done.
5. Solicits learners' feedback.
 - Solicits learners' feedback and suggestions for improvement on the session or/and his/her teaching.
 - Ask individuals what they specifically are taking away from session.
 - In small group sessions, reflects on how well group has worked together.
 - Asks learners what factors facilitated or blocked their learning.
 - Ask learners how they plan to apply what they've learned.
6. Encourages group collaboration if appropriate.
 - Promotes active exchange of ideas and redirects questions to other members of the group instead of answering himself/herself.
 - Fosters learner interaction, not facilitator-learner one-on-one discussions.
 - Helps learners become more responsible for the group, to teach each other.
 - Turns conflict or differences of opinion into learning opportunities.
 - Helps learners to collectively solve problems or make decisions together.
 - Remind learners that he/she is a member of the learning team.
7. Limits digressions of group discussion.
 - Facilitates group focus on discussion topics, but allows digressions that reinforce or enrich the group's understanding of the topic – keeping in mind the time limits, as well.
 - Reorients digressions that may take the group off tangent – including his/her own.

Presenting the Material

1. Varies voice, body language, pace, movement, *etc.*
 - Uses a variety of vocal qualities, varying pitch, speaking rate, and volume to convey enthusiasm – avoids a monotone.
 - Experiments with movement; doesn't stay rooted behind the lectern.
 - Gestures and facial expressions are natural and meaningful, reinforcing the subject matter (no nervous mannerisms e.g., tapping pencil).

2. Uses audiovisual materials appropriately.
 - Audiovisual (including use of the board) materials are simple, uncluttered and clear
 - Slides support the presentation, not substitute for it.
 - Uses graphs, pictures, etc. in slide presentations – not all text.
 - Provides a handout that duplicates the slides for learner note-taking
3. Refers to appropriate written materials
 - Calls learners' attention to related assigned readings and/or handouts.
 - These materials should be appropriate for learners' knowledge level and consistent with goals of teaching session.
4. Speaks clearly
 - Avoids using fillers (e.g., ums and aahs).
 - Clearly pronounces words.
 - Does not speak too rapidly.

Conveying Content

1. Delivers appropriate amount of material
 - Does not provide learners with excessive amount of material that would result in having to rush through the session.
 - Material is consistent with session objectives.
2. Organizes content logically
 - Arranges main points in a logical format that fits the material (e.g., chronologically or in a problem-solution, inductive or deductive format)
4. Explains the relevance of topics to learners' training
 - Clearly states why the topic is relevant to learners' current and future training and profession.
5. Links to previous material or learner knowledge and to future material
 - E.g., “As you learned last week....”; “When you go to the floors....”; “When you see a patient with symptoms of.....”
6. Shows relationships between theory and practice
 - Associates concepts with professional practice (e.g., how basic science can be applied in a clinical or a research situation).
7. Uses examples related to learner experience and knowledge.
 - Uses learners' experiences and knowledge to reinforce concepts.
8. Acknowledges personal knowledge limits
 - Recognizes when he/she does not know the answer to learners' concerns.

- In a problem-solving group, doesn't try to overwhelm learners as "the content expert"
 - Admits he/she knows a lot, but many more things he/she doesn't know.
 - Self-portrayal as "content expert" may intimidate learners, stifle discussion, and hamper learners' ability to "think outside of the box."

9. Directs learners to useful literature

- Encourages outside reading and refers learners to specific bibliography
- Cites evidence to support practice decisions

10. Provides up-to-date information

- Shares accurate and current information from the field

11. Gives periodic summaries

- Reinforces key learning points throughout the session.

Implementing Strategies to Promote Learning

1. Uses questions to probe thinking and reasoning

- Phrases questions clearly and waits adequate time for learners to organize thoughts and respond
- Raises stimulating and challenging questions that provoke learners' reasoning
- Questions learners, to elicit underlying reasoning
- Uses appropriate balance between closed questions (to probe learners' knowledge about procedures or facts) and open questions (to open additional areas for exploration by learners)

2. Gives learners time to organize thoughts and respond

- Gives learners time to organize thoughts and respond (tolerates silence) – waits 3-5 seconds after asking questions to allow adequate think time.

3. Asks for learners' clarification of ideas.

- Requests learners to restate their ideas to promote understanding and refinement.

4. Restates learners' ideas to promote understanding

- Paraphrases learner's ideas to reinforce understanding for group and to make sure he/she is clear as to what learner is stating.

5. Encourages learners to question and critique

- Solicits questions and comments from learners

6. Provides feedback

- Provides specific descriptive feedback supported by examples that is based on goals collaboratively set with the learners
- Gives learners ideas or help them identify strategies to improve in their knowledge, skills, and/or behavior.

