

A Rubric for the Design of In-Class Observation

Submitted for Review by:
The Academic Senate of Calumet College of St. Joseph

March 23, 2011

The Faculty Affairs Committee of
The Academic Senate of Calumet College of St. Joseph

Introduction

As part of the on-going work on the implementation of the Boyer Model of Scholarship at Calumet College of St. Joseph, the 2010-2011 Faculty Affairs Committee has focused considerable attention on the assessment of teaching effectiveness. This work has been done with a focus on identifying how the processes used to collect data about teaching effectiveness can provide faculty with an opportunity to engage in the scholarship of teaching.

While researching several institutions' approaches of gathering data on teaching effectiveness, it was revealed that many institutions include in-class observations within their processes. Of particular interest were contributions from The IDEA Center in Manhattan, Kansas and the process used at The University of Minnesota. Of particular interest were suggestions from both sources on how to structure this process around its purpose which can be either formative, summative or both over time. The findings of this research are reported in a separate document entitled, "Assessing Teaching Effectiveness: A Review of the Research" prepared for The Faculty Affairs Committee by Dr. Eileen Stenzel. The elements of best practice identified in that research have been incorporated into a rubric for the design of a three-part in-class observation process. The three parts are as follows:

- 1) A Pre-Conference interview between the observer and observed instructor (either in person or by phone);
- 2) The Observation (the timing of the observation (every semester, yearly, bi-yearly) will be determined by the department chair and program director; however, tenure-track faculty will be observed each semester until tenure); and.
- 3) A Post-Observation Conference and Reporting Process (either in person or by phone).

The Faculty Affairs Committee is presenting that rubric to the Academic Senate in March of 2011 and will recommend its adoption at the April 2011 meeting of the Academic Senate pending discussion and review at the departmental level.

Rubric for In-Class Observation Process

Scale

5 = All parties involved agree that the process was done exceptionally well.

4 = All parties involved agree that the process was done well.

3 = None of the parties involved agree that the process was done either exceptionally well or well.

2 = One or more of the parties involved agree that the process was done poorly.

1 = All parties agree that the process was done poorly.

STANDARDS	1	2	3	4	5
All faculty and academic supervisors have completed a professional development workshop on in-class observation, its collaborative nature, its purpose(s), and the procedures and instruments that will be used to complete the process.					
PRE-OBSERVATION CONFERENCE					
The conference is designed to focus on questions about: the lesson goal, objective, strategies/methodology, and assessment.					
The results of the conference are summarized in writing to the faculty member for review and further discussion, if needed, prior to the observation.					
THE OBSERVATION					
A checklist that was designed and approved by the Academic Senate was used in the observation.					
The checklist contains items that focus the observer on the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • how the class was begun and closed, • the use of formative assessment strategies • identification of learning objectives for each session, • instructor's interaction with students and its effect on the learning environment, • level of sustained engagement among students, • evidence of instructor's preparation, • instructor's use of tools (humor, visual aids, handouts, small group work, guided discussion, quizzes, lecture, Blackboard, etc.), and, • use of assessment strategies as identified in the pre-observation conference, if any. 					
POSTOBSERVATION CONFERENCE					
<i>Observer's general questions designed to elicit the instructor's view of the class session observed:</i>					
Was this a typical class meeting?					
What is your impression of how this class went?					

What were the strengths of this class session in meeting your goals?
If you were teaching this session again what would you repeat and what would you do differently?
What teaching strengths could you use to improve the outcome?
How does this class compare with others that you teach?
Additional question regarding specific events in the class could be asked.
<i>Constructive Feedback:</i>
Was the feedback descriptive, not evaluative?
Was the feedback specific rather than general?
Did the feedback focus on behaviors rather than persons?
Did the feedback focus on behavior that the instructor can do something about?
Did the feedback emphasize sharing of information rather than giving advice or directives?
Was the feedback focused in amounts that the receiver can use, rather than everything that could possibly be said?
Was the communication process checked to ensure accuracy?
Did the observer help the instructor identified his/her next steps?
<i>Written Report</i>
Did the observer meet with the instructor prior to drafting the report?
Was the instructor given the opportunity to review and respond to the initial draft before a final draft of the observation was filed.
Was the written report filed together with the instructor's response?

Qualitative Data: Please use this space for additional information regarding the in-class observation process at any of the three junctures.