

Policy Proposal for Conducting Faculty Peer Observation of Teaching at UTEP

(Passed, UTEP Faculty Senate, November 26, 2013)

1. All academic departments and programs, with extensive consultation from faculty members, engage in faculty peer observation of teaching on a regularly scheduled basis determined by their respective faculty members.
2. Peer observation is organized and managed by departments with a named individual (the chair/director of department/program or a nominee) responsible for the process.
3. Process and procedures for the formative evaluations should be determined by the respective department/program, with reference to peer observation materials available through CETaL.
4. Departments will designate faculty members who will serve as peer observers. Faculty members who serve as observers should receive significant service credit.
5. A department may choose to adopt or adapt one or more of the numerous peer observation processes and instruments that exist (see Roberson et al, 2006). CETaL can provide advice on the process and instruments (See attached). A unit may develop its own.
6. The department's chair or program director is responsible for ensuring that the faculty discuss the process on an annual basis as an integral part of program learning outcomes assessment and identify issues that need further attention and improvement.
7. Teaching assistants, graduate student instructors and part time faculty making a significant teaching contribution may be observed at the discretion of the department.
8. Departments are permitted and encouraged to produce their own guidelines on peer observation of teaching to better suit their context in accordance with and to supplement this while following best practices.
9. **It is the responsibility of the Colleges and School to ensure that this policy is implemented in all academic departments and programs.**
10. Each unit (college, school, or department) should develop its own processes, procedures, criteria and standards for peer observation based on the policy guidelines that are appropriate for the discipline, the department's context and the course format (e.g. lecture, lab, experiential, on-line, one-on-one, studio).
11. Academic units should define "peer" for their purposes and determine whether a peer can be of higher, equal, or lower rank and/or drawn from different departments, but should ensure that observers are trained to perform their task well.
12. Each unit should specify the frequency and format options for faculty peer observations of teaching and timelines for both formative and summative assessments, for example:
 - Junior faculty: At least once a year.
 - Tenured faculty: Once every three years.
 - Entry level, non-tenure track faculty: Once a year.
 - Senior non-tenure track faculty: Once every three years.