

Peer Classroom Visit Program

The purpose of the Peer Classroom Visit Program is to provide a mutually-supportive opportunity for self-reflection and sharing of good practice. Through observing each other and discussing teaching informally, this program will allow faculty members an opportunity to reflect upon, enhance, and celebrate their teaching.

This program is meant to spur personal self-reflection rather than peer evaluation. Participants focus their conversations on what they have learned about their own teaching from the observation process and avoid direct commentary on their colleagues' performance. Participants are encouraged to approach the process in a spirit of appreciation – even celebration – of the work of their colleagues.

By participating in Peer Classroom Visit Program you will have an opportunity to:

- Observe, analyze, and celebrate good teaching,
- Increase your understanding of and appreciation for the work of your colleagues, and
- Enhance your own teaching based on the shared observations and reflections with your peer group.

Program Process

The main steps of this program are:

- Instructors will be matched into small “peer learning groups” of three instructors for one academic quarter.
- Instructors attend a kick-off meeting to learn more about the program and its goals.
- Peer group members meet with each other and plan their observations (will have time at kick-off to do this, though another peer group meeting may be necessary or desired). As part of this peer group meeting, we recommend group members:
 - Share a bit about themselves with each other
 - Discuss why you signed up for this program
 - Share syllabi and begin to arrange observation times and follow up meetings
- Instructors observe at least one class taught by each member of their group during the quarter.
- Peer groups will meet informally at least one more time to share observations and reflections with their group members (focusing on what they've learned about their own teaching, not their colleagues' performance).
- Everyone is invited to a celebratory meeting at the end of the quarter to share overall insights and takeaways.



Program Guidelines

Sharing Course Information

You can help your peer group gain a greater appreciation of the work that you do by providing a copy of the course syllabus and any relevant handouts for that day's visit.

Information to Share with Students

Most students are curious about the presence of a visitor in the classroom. You may want to introduce the visiting instructor and explain the purpose for the visit. Most students are impressed to learn that their instructor is participating in a project to enhance teaching.

How is this a “non-evaluative” process?

Peer Classroom Visits are meant to spur personal self-reflection rather than peer evaluation. Personal growth is the primary goal of this program. Please refrain from evaluating/assessing the teaching practices of your peer group. The success of this program depends on the professionalism and discretion of all team members involved. This will require all team members to enter into this endeavor in the spirit of collaboration and support.

Classroom Visit Duration

Class times can vary considerably. Observing an entire class session from start to finish offers the best (and least disruptive) experience for you, your team member, and the students. If scheduling conflicts do not allow you to stay for an entire class, discuss with each other the least disruptive means of joining and leaving the class.

Group Processing

After completing your classroom visits, meet with your peer group to share your learning and growth. During this meeting, reflect on the following questions:

- ◆ What did I learn from watching others that I want to START doing?
- ◆ What did I learn from watching others that I want to CONTINUE doing?
- ◆ What changes have I made in my own teaching as a result of my participation in this program?

This program is based on the original Teaching Triangles concept from Duke University. Special thanks to Beth Whitaker from Indiana State University for the concept and content of this document.