

Observation Policy for Composition Courses

Introduction

The goal of the Class Observation Policy is to develop strong composition teachers who are the foundation of an excellent composition program. The Policy is designed to insure that all teachers receive quality support in their teaching.

This Policy is based on formative assessment. This type of assessment is designed to give non-threatening, structured feedback focused on improvement. The result of formative assessment is **not** a grade or a rank. The expected result is collaborative conversation centered on excellent teaching.

Although peer observations may be developed, observations in the policy will be completed by the DOC or ADOC.

Frequency of Observation

New teachers in the Composition Program will be observed by at least twice during their first two semesters of teaching. Typically, this would mean that a new teacher would be observed once a semester for two semesters.

Teachers beyond their first full year of teaching will typically be observed once a year.

Both the teacher and observer can decide that more observations than the typical number might be beneficial for a teacher. If a teacher wants more observation support than this Policy provides, that will be provided.

Observation Scheduling

By the third or fourth week of the semester, the DOC or ADOC will email all teachers requesting a date(s) when an observation would be appropriate. If a teacher does not respond to this request, a second request will be sent. After the second request, the DOC or ADOC may email the teacher and suggest a firm date for the observation.

Pre-Observation Planning

Research in teacher assessment shows that a some sort of pre-observation planning improves the quality of the assessment and makes the observer more responsive to the teacher's needs. So that both the teacher and the observer can collaborate more fully in the observation process, a Pre-Observation Form must be completed and emailed to the observing person at least two days before the observation.

Observation

During the observation, the observer will take notes tracking the progress of the class. The observer will focus on the ideas that the teacher provided in the Pre-Observation Form. The observer is not limited by the ideas provided by the teacher and should use her/his professional judgment in addressing other elements observed.

Post-Observation Meeting

Collaboration and feedback should take place as soon as possible after the observation, at most within one week. It is the teacher's responsibility to schedule the Post-Observation Meeting.

Composition Program Pre-Observation Form

This form must be completed and emailed to the observer at least two days before the observation. Providing this information will help you and the observer have a more collaborative observation experience.

Name:

Date and time of observation:

- 1) Brief explanation of the observed class project and goals.
- 2) Brief explanation of how the project and goal for the day fit with what's happened previously in the class as well as what will happen after the class. In other words, what is the context for the day's activities?
- 3) Please provide at least one (but not more than three) elements of your teaching that you'd like to have the observer focus on.
- 4) Please send a copy of your syllabus and schedule along with your completed form.