

## Liberal Arts Guidelines for Peer Review of Teaching

Peer reviews are a required component of assessment of teaching for all instructional faculty and should be obtained in an objective and unbiased manner. They must be based on one or more classroom observations, but they should also take into consideration a holistic assessment of other instructional materials such as syllabi, course assignments, presentation materials (handouts or PowerPoints), and teaching philosophy statement. For further information and best practices for conducting evidence-based reviews, see [https://www.schreyerinstitute.psu.edu/assessment\\_of\\_teaching/peer\\_review](https://www.schreyerinstitute.psu.edu/assessment_of_teaching/peer_review).

Reviewers may be selected from either within or outside of the Department, Program, or School. Heads/Directors should collaborate with the faculty member under review on choosing reviewers, with the administrator making the final decision. (This review must be signed by the evaluator and dated.) (Guidelines, Appendix A)

Peer teaching reviews were suspended in March of 2020 and resumed in Fall 2020. The omission of reviews from Spring 2020 does not provide any evidence relevant to the assessment of teaching effectiveness.

### Peer Reviews for Tenure-Line Faculty

Peer reviews of tenure-line faculty should be conducted by tenured faculty, not untenured faculty. The reviewer should be at equal or higher rank.

- **Provisional (not yet tenured) faculty** should receive one peer review per academic year during their probationary period. One review per academic year since the date of appointment to tenure track position at PSU should be included in their promotion and tenure dossiers.
- For **tenured faculty** being **reviewed for promotion only**, a minimum of three peer reviews should be included in the dossier. Reviews should be from the previous 10 years or from the date of last promotion or hire, whichever is shorter.
- For **all tenured faculty**, reviews should occur no less than every five years and should be included in the Senior Faculty Review dossier.
- For **tenure line faculty**, reviews should be of in-person, hybrid, or remote synchronous courses, unless a significant portion of the faculty member's teaching effort consists in developing or teaching asynchronous online courses See sample peer review template(s).

### Peer Reviews for Non-Tenure line faculty

- For **all teaching faculty**, reviews should occur no less than every five years.
- For **teaching faculty seeking promotion to the next rank**, promotion dossiers must include at least two and no more than four peer reviews of teaching from the previous five years. Peer reviewers for teaching faculty

may be either tenure-line or non-tenure-track faculty, with non-tenure track faculty holding the same or higher rank as the candidate.

- Those non-tenure line faculty (typically research or clinical professors) whose job responsibilities do not include any classroom instruction are not required to have peer reviews.
- For **non-tenure line faculty**, reviews may be based on any course modality. See sample peer review template(s)

**Penn State**  
**College of the Liberal Arts**  
**Peer Review of Teaching Effectiveness Course Observation Template<sup>1</sup>**  
**For use in In-person, Hybrid, or Remote Synchronous Courses**

Instructor's Name:	Course(s) Reviewed:
Reviewer's Name	Date(s) of Review:

All peer reviews should begin with a preliminary consultation between the reviewer and the faculty member being reviewed. During this consultation, the reviewer will learn more about the faculty member's courses and teaching philosophy and the reviewer and faculty member will decide on the materials to be reviewed and class(es) to be observed.

**Teaching Materials Reviewed:**

_____ Syllabus	_____ Canvas Page
_____ Course Assignments	_____ Teaching Philosophy Statement
_____ Presentation Materials (slides, handouts, etc.)	_____ Other: <input type="text"/>

**Check all that apply. Use the boxes to the right to describe the context in which your answers appeared and provide specific examples of how the instructor completed/did not complete the tasks marked.**

**Course Design**

<input type="checkbox"/>	Syllabus and other materials are coherently organized	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Classroom policies and grading procedures are clearly conveyed	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Syllabus includes the components required by <a href="#">Faculty Senate Policy 43-00</a>	

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<sup>1</sup> Adapted from Angela Linse, Schreyer Institute for Teaching Excellence, Penn State. Adapted from Chism, N.V.N. (1999) Chapter 6: Classroom Observation, *Peer Review of Teaching: A Sourcebook*, Bolton, MA: Anker.

	Assessments are sequenced in a way that supports the development of skills and knowledge	
	Learning objectives are clear, challenging, and attainable	
	Course assignments support learning objectives	

### **Content knowledge**

	Instructor displays appropriate mastery of course content	
	Instructor sets appropriately high expectations	
	Instructor incorporates current research in the field where relevant	
	Instructor identifies sources, perspectives, and authorities in the field where relevant	

### **Organization**

	Instructor arrives on time	
	Instructor provides goals or objectives for the class session	
	Instructor provides an outline for the class session	
	Instructor uses educational technology effectively	
	Instructor summarizes material periodically and at the end of class	

### **Presentation**

	Instructor speaks clearly and audibly	
	Instructor establishes and maintains eye contact	
	Instructor's pace permits students to understand and take notes	
	Instructor uses visual aids effectively	

### **Clarity**

Updated: August 27, 2024

	Instructor explains new concepts clearly and effectively	
	Instructor uses relevant examples to explain content	
	Instructor provides students opportunities to ask questions	
	Instructor answers student questions effectively	

### **Classroom environment**

	Instructor invites student participation and comments	
	Instructor uses positive reinforcement	
	Instructor draws non-participating students into activities/discussions	
	Instructor effectively guides the direction of the discussion	
	Instructor mediates differences of opinion	
	Instructor attends respectfully to student comprehension or puzzlement	

### **Additional Comments**

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### **Overall Evaluation**

☐ Excellent   
 ☐ Very Good   
 ☐ Good   
 ☐ Adequate   
 ☐ Unsatisfactory

Signature of Reviewer:

Date:

**Penn State**  
**College of the Liberal Arts**  
**Peer Review of Teaching Effectiveness Template<sup>2</sup>**  
**For use in Asynchronous Online Courses**

Instructor's Name:	Course(s) Reviewed:
Reviewer's Name:	Date(s) of Review:

All peer reviews should begin with a preliminary consultation between the reviewer and the faculty member being reviewed. During this consultation, the reviewer will learn more about the faculty member's courses and teaching philosophy and the reviewer and faculty member will decide on the specific materials to be reviewed.

**Course materials reviewed:**

<input type="checkbox"/> Syllabus <input type="checkbox"/> Instructional Materials <input type="checkbox"/> Course Assignments <input type="checkbox"/> Discussion Forums <input type="checkbox"/> Email Messages	<input type="checkbox"/> Posted Announcements <input type="checkbox"/> Chat Space <input type="checkbox"/> Course Gradebook <input type="checkbox"/> Teaching Philosophy Statement <input type="checkbox"/> Other <input style="width: 100px;" type="text"/>
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**Check all that apply. Use the boxes to the right to describe the context in which your answers appeared and provide specific examples of how the instructor completed/did not complete the tasks marked.**

**Instructor Presence**

	Instructor uses a self-generated "welcome message"	
	Instructor initiates contact with and/or responds to students regularly	
	Instructor reminds students about course events and due dates regularly	
	Instructor responds to students in a timely manner	
	Grading criteria are clarified before assignments are due	
	Supplemental Materials are added to the course to benefit students, as appropriate	

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<sup>2</sup> Adapted from an evaluation form developed in 2016 by Doug Lindsay for the MPS program in the Psychology of Leadership.

### Course climate

	Instructor consistently models professional communication	
	Instructor consistently uses a positive and encouraging tone	
	Instructor fosters a positive and inclusive course climate	
	Instructor encourages a healthy exchange of ideas, as appropriate	
	Instructor handles sensitive topics appropriately	
	Instructor fosters a climate that promotes academic integrity	

### Educational contributions

	Instructor consistently demonstrates mastery of course material	
	Instructor encourages students to self-reflect, as appropriate	
	Instructor provides relevant examples to augment the course material, as appropriate	
	Instructor provides students with meaningful feedback	
	Instructor provides students with timely feedback	
	Instructor feedback is consistent with the course objectives	
	Instructor assists struggling students by providing reasonable routes for success	

### Course administration

	Instructor's practices are consistent with those explained on the course syllabus	
	Instructor enters students' grades in the gradebook in a timely manner	
	Instructor is appropriately flexible with students who face legitimate obstacles to success	
	Instructor takes reasonable steps to assist students who need disability accommodations	

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	Instructor provides a clear and reasonable rationale when denying student requests	
	Instructor handles challenging situations well	

**Additional Comments**

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**Overall Evaluation**

☐ Excellent
 ☐ Very Good
 ☐ Good
 ☐ Adequate
 ☐ Unsatisfactory

Signature of Reviewer:

Date: