

Peer Observations

In 1993, the UNC General Administration issued Memorandum 338 which directed all constituent institutions to design and implement procedures for peer review of teaching. In 1996, the Carolina Colloquy for University Teaching received a grant from UNC-GA to design and sponsor an Intercampus Dialogue on Peer Review of Teaching. Fifty-six faculty members from UNC universities, including eight Faculty Assembly delegates, assembled to exchange information on the current status of their efforts in this regard. One of the basic recommendations that came out of the Intercampus Dialogue was that of conducting peer observations of classroom teaching for summative purposes. Recommendations also were made for formative evaluations. Additionally, the recommendation was made that peer observation processes be reviewed occasionally.

The College of Education at UNC-Charlotte began the development of their peer observation process in 1994 and peer observations of untenured faculty members have been conducted since the process was developed. The process was re-examined and revised in 1998 and 2003. The most recent revision in 2012 includes a process for supporting the development of effective teaching for non-tenure eligible and part-time faculty.

Peer Observations in the College of Education include both formative and summative procedures. A set of procedures for tenure eligible, non-tenure eligible, and part-time faculty are described below.

Part-Time Instructors

Newly hired part time instructors will participate in 1 formative peer observation by the course mentor in the first or second contract period. The department chair will consult with the course mentor to determine whether the process will be implemented in the first or second contract period. Part time faculty who have completed their first two contracts, may request or be asked by the Department Chair to participate in the peer observation process. It is optional, but should be encouraged, for the part time instructor to participate in a formative peer observation of the course mentor during the first or second contract period.

Focus and structure are required for meaningful formative observations. Any form of observation (running records, anecdotal notes, etc.) may be utilized for formative evaluation purposes. The instruments used for summative evaluation may be used but are not required for formative observations.

For each formative observation, follow these steps:

1. Hold a pre-observation conference, classroom observation, and post observation conference.
2. Select an observation instrument or method for documentation (e.g. anecdotal records, running records, the instruments used for summative evaluation, etc.).
3. Obtain the signature of the mentor on the Part-Time Instructor Peer Observation Schedule and Documentation form during the post-observation conference.

The peer observation process for part time faculty would occur once every 3 years with chair recommendation or as an option of the faculty member. The department chair will identify the course in which this process would be fulfilled.