

GUIDE FOR PEER OBSERVATION OF ONLINE SYNCHRONOUS AND ASYNCHRONOUS CLASSES

For 2020-21, consideration of how COVID-19 has affected teaching is paramount. The outcomes of peer observation of teaching effectiveness may be consequential. During the emergency conditions of 2020-21, peer teaching observations should not be the only factor used in making any long-term personnel decisions.

Definitions

Synchronous: class meets on a scheduled day and time via zoom or other videoconferencing platform.

Asynchronous: class is completely online with no meeting days or times and uses the campus learning management software.

Blended or hybrid: courses use a model with both synchronous and asynchronous elements.

None of these models are in-person or face-to-face.

Observation of Instruction

1. Peer observation of online synchronous and asynchronous classes must follow the Collective Bargaining Agreement ([CBA 15.14](#)).
2. Observing virtual classes will vary depending on the model used by the class (synchronous, asynchronous, blended a/synchronous).
3. Peer observation of an online course should be comparable in scope to the observation of an in-person course and should be consistent within each department.
 - It should not be a review of the entire course
 - It should be an evaluation of a specific lesson, learning module, or unit
 - An evaluator should only have the same access to the course as students
 - An evaluator should only have access for a limited period of time
 - For each type of observation, the instructor may provide course materials, such as the course syllabus, assignments, exams, and rubrics to the observer as per department guidelines
4. For **asynchronous courses**:
 - A peer observer is granted limited access to the course as a guest or observer (comparable to the student view) for a limited and predetermined time through consultation with the instructor and visits the asynchronous class for a specified time, reviewing a specific lesson, learning module or unit
 - Alternatively, the instructor may provide a live or pre-recorded guided tour of the course covering a general overview including the syllabus, the welcome or “start here” section of the course, and a specific lesson, learning module, or unit
 - The peer observer has access to discussion boards, or platforms or apps not housed in the Learning Management System, only if these are part of the unit/module being reviewed
 - The evaluator does not have access to gradebooks or other student materials
5. For **synchronous courses**:
 - A peer observer joins the synchronous class session on a specific day and time in consultation with the instructor
 - Alternatively, the instructor provides a recorded class session to the peer observer as long as the students are informed of the session recording
6. For courses with **both synchronous and asynchronous** elements:
 - The peer observer and the instructor should collaborate on what elements the observer will use for the observation