



Faculty Evaluation: Peer Review

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Overview

- ✦ Peer Review and Education Code
- ✦ Preparing for Peer Observation
- ✦ Observing Faculty
- ✦ Discussion of Best Practices at Your Campuses



Peer Review is Required



- ✦ §87633 of Education Code specifies that the required evaluation of faculty must include peer review!
 - ✦ *(c) Evaluations shall include, but not be limited to, a peer review process.*
 - ✦ *(d) The peer review process shall be on a departmental or divisional basis, and shall address the forthcoming demographics of California, and the principles of affirmative action. The process shall require that the peers reviewing are both representative of the diversity of California and sensitive to affirmative action concerns, all without compromising quality and excellence in teaching.*

Am I Qualified to Review Someone?



- ✦ Imagine that you are a history professor and your dean asks you to teach a physics class, even though you have never taken physics before. Do you think this is appropriate?
- ✦ When teaching a class, it is assumed that the instructor has been trained in the subject. Often, reviewers are not provided any guidelines or training about the peer review process.
- ✦ How can a reviewer know what to look for when they have never been trained?

But We Are All Educators

- ✦ While we are all experts in our discipline, many of us have never had any formal training about teaching or pedagogy.
- ✦ We could be a peer reviewer and not know what to look for because we only know one way of doing things.
- ✦ The goal of peer review is to help us improve our teaching. How can someone help us improve when they aren't sure what to look for during an observation?



Training Is Key



If instructors were never shown a course outline, how could we be sure that different instructors would cover the same material?

Similarly, a peer review process that doesn't provide any guidelines or training will vary greatly depending on the reviewer.

Providing clear expectations is one way to ensure that peer reviews are conducted professionally and that they will help us all improve our teaching.

Be Prepared

- ✦ Before going to observe a colleague, make sure you know what to expect.
- ✦ Take time to review his or her syllabus and see what will be covered and the types of expectations that they have for the class.



Plan to Stay Awhile



- ✦ When it is time to observe, plan to stay the entire class period.
- ✦ While you might be able to tell whether the instructor is doing a good-or-bad job in 10 to 15 minutes, you won't have enough information to help provide comprehensive feedback for improvement.
- ✦ Staying the entire time shows the person being observed that you take this process seriously and are there to get a complete picture of how they are in the classroom.

Be Like a Student



- ✦ During the observation, take detailed notes.
- ✦ Your notes should include specific examples of things that were presented in class, how they were presented, and how the students reacted to the presentation.
- ✦ Without sufficient detail, it may be difficult for you to provide constructive feedback to the instructor you were hoping to help.

What To Look For

- ✦ During the observation, here are some things to look for.
 - ✦ Did the class start on time?
 - ✦ How does the instructor begin their class?
 - ✦ Are the students active participants during class?
 - ✦ Is the instructor building on previous material?
 - ✦ What parts of the class worked really well?
 - ✦ What parts of the class could have gone better?



After The Observation



- ✦ **Your college/district may have established requirements for meeting with an instructor that is being evaluated. These procedures have been collectively bargained and must be followed.**
- ✦ Before meeting with the instructor you observed, review your notes and think of what you want to say to them.
- ✦ Remember that the purpose of the observation is improvement, but criticism can be hard to hear, so make sure that you are ready with examples of good things, not just places for improvement!
- ✦ Allow the faculty member being observed time to respond and provide any specific reasons for their choices.
- ✦ Does your college/district permit follow up to see if suggestions were implemented?

How Do We Facilitate Improvement?

✦ Peer evaluation is an opportunity for us to improve our teaching.

✦ After the evaluation has been completed and suggestions have been made for ways we can improve, what do we do next?

✦ There are many possible ways to help faculty improve their teaching. These could include faculty mentors, attending conferences on teaching in your discipline, or having campus sponsored professional development activities on pedagogy.

✦ How does your campus help faculty address areas for improvement?



What Happens at Your Campus?

- ✦ Do you provide any training for peer evaluators?
- ✦ Are there any guidelines that peer reviewers are required to follow?
- ✦ Are there things that don't work in your peer review process?
- ✦ Does the peer review process differ for probationary and tenured faculty?
- ✦ Why types of professional development do you offer to assist faculty in the classroom?
- ✦ How are you dealing with the evaluation of instructors teaching online?
- ✦ Does the peer evaluation of counselors and librarians differ from that of classroom faculty?

Thank You For Coming



- ✦ Do you have any questions?
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