Georgia Tech Center for Teaching and Learning

Tools to Facilitate Peer Engagement Around Teaching

Frameworks and rubrics are helpful in guiding peer conversations around teaching. They focus conversations on evidence-based teaching principles, help observers overcome personal preferences related to content or teaching style, and prompt a broader consideration of teaching practices than are typically visible in a single class session. Frameworks and rubrics are also useful tools for self-reflection about teaching as they prompt the faculty member to recognize their own strengths and consider exploring new approaches to teaching for any areas identified in need of growth.

The frameworks and rubrics selected below have been developed to support formative feedback, summative evaluation or research about teaching. Each focuses on a somewhat different set of principles, but all support a learner-centered approach to teaching.

Frameworks *(Observer compares the observed to teaching to examples of teaching behaviors to comment on the extent to which the instructor is aligned with the general teaching principles identified by the framework.)*

- Critical Teaching Behaviors Framework (Barbeau and Cornejo Happel 2020)
    - Focuses on six categories, which include: Align, Integrate Technology, Include, Engage, Assess, and Reflect. Each category includes a definition, example actions, and recommendations for documentation. In addition, a detailed observation, peer conversation, and self-reflection worksheet and process has been developed for use for this framework.
- Scientific Teaching Taxonomy (Couch et al 2015, the taxonomy is on page 6-7)
    - This is a taxonomy based on the pedagogical framework, *Scientific Teaching* (Handelsman et al 2004), that is comprised of 3 core principles (active learning, assessment) and inclusivity. And organized along four categories (course alignment, scientific practices, student participation, cognitive processes). Each category includes pedagogical goals supporting practices. The taxonomy has not been formatted into an observation protocol.
- Faculty Peer Review of Online Teaching (website, can be customized)
    - Based on Chickering and Gamson's Seven Principles for Good Practice in Undergraduate Education, this framework provides examples of online teaching behaviors for each principle and prompts observers to make notes about strengths and weaknesses. The framework was developed to support a formal, summative peer review for faculty promotion at Penn State, but can be customized and used for informal conversations.

Evaluative Rubrics *(Observer is prompted to rate the quality of each teaching behavior along a likert scale)*

- Reformed Teaching Observation Protocol (RTOP Sawanda 2002, Lawson et al 2002, Manual (including the instrument on page 27)
    - This instrument focuses on the use of reformed teaching practices in STEM classes. It consists of 5-point scale items organized into two categories, Lesson Design and Implementation and Content.
- UTeach Observation Protocol (UTOP)
    - These rubrics measure classroom teaching effectiveness in STEM and the Humanities and Social Sciences. Each rubric provides a 5-point scale for rating classroom indicators in 4 categories, including Classroom Environment, Lesson Structure, Implementation, and Content Area.

Descriptive Rubrics *(Observer indicates whether or not a teaching behavior is present without rating quality of the behavior)*

- Teaching Dimensions Observation Protocol (TDOP, User Manual, Hora 2015, Hora and Ferrare 2013)
    - This instrument allows observers to record classroom behaviors in 2-minute intervals by checking off teaching behavior codes on a spreadsheet. The teaching behaviors are organized into 6 categories: Teaching methods, Pedagogical strategies, Cognitive demand, Student-teacher interaction, Student engagement, and Instructional technology.
- The Classroom Observation Protocol for Undergraduate STEM (COPUS-both paper and digital versions available, Smith et al 2017)
    - A simplification of the TDOP, the COPUS includes codes for behaviors in 2 categories (Teacher behaviors and student behaviors) with a similar check off system as the TDOP. The simplified format requires less training for faculty to use effectively.