

**Full-Time and Part-Time Faculty
Peer Observation Process
Soules College of Business
The University of Texas at Tyler**

Statement of purpose of peer observation process

The purpose of this policy is to comply with the University of Texas at Tyler HOP section 3.36 and to honor the importance of teaching by providing a system for formative feedback designed to strengthen teaching in the Soules College of Business. The university recognizes the essential contribution of its faculty members to the quality of students' education and learning experiences and supports faculty development in all aspects of instruction. An effective tool for faculty development is formative peer observation of teaching, which involves a constructive and open review of teaching for the sole purpose of fostering improvement.

The goal of the peer observation process is to improve teaching and student learning and should serve as a tool for mentoring. The peer observation process should foster a culture of teaching excellence through collegial dialogue. Thus, the outcome of the faculty peer observation process should be a reflective summary written by the observed faculty member describing any steps taken or changes made towards the enhancement of teaching and improvement of student learning.

A. Frequency of Peer Observations

Each full-time faculty member shall be observed annually. Each part-time faculty shall be observed each semester that they are teaching. First-year full-time faculty are expected to be observed but are not required to serve as observers.

The Associate Dean will develop and maintain a spreadsheet to ensure that all observations are completed annually.

B. Peer Observers Eligibility

Each full-time faculty member shall participate in serving as a peer observer for at least one colleague annually. Peer observers need not be of higher rank or tenure status. Observations should be based on teaching insight and relevant training. Junior faculty may serve as observers, with confidentiality and collegiality guiding the process.

C. Timeline for Peer Observation Process

Appendix A of the Peer Observation Report will be submitted via DocuSign no later than the last day of classes for the semester in which the observation takes place. The DocuSign will be filed in the dean's personnel files electronically.

By October 1 each year, the Associate Dean will submit to the Provost's office a list of full-time and part-time faculty who were observed during the prior academic year.

D. Description of How Detailed Guidance and Opportunity for Training will be Provided to Observers

Before peer observations are conducted peer observers shall be provided detailed guidance and opportunities for training on effective observation procedures using observation instruments, pre- and post-observation conferencing, and on the preparation of summary statements based on observations.

College policies must include procedures for observing online and hybrid courses. Observers shall receive training tailored to digital learning environments, using the institution's most current Online Instruction Checklist. Observation tools must be adapted to reflect course format, enrollment size, and disciplinary context.

E. Assurance that Observed Faculty Members Have a Say in the Selection of Peer Observers

Faculty may request specific peers to serve as observers based on mentoring relationships, disciplinary alignment, or teaching respect. Such requests should be honored when feasible.

F. Number of Visits Per Observation

The number of observations is at the discretion of the faculty member and peer observer. A minimum of one visit is required.

G. In Classes Consisting of Lecture and Lab

In classes consisting of both lectures and labs the number of observations is at the discretion of the faculty member and peer observer.

H. Description of Content of Peer Observation Report (Appendix A) found in DocuSign

- i. Number and title of course observed
- ii. Date of report
- iii. Name and signature of observer
- iv. Date of pre-observation meeting between observer and instructor
- v. Date of classroom or online observation
- vi. Date of post-observation meeting of observer with instructor
- viii. Peer observer's signature
- ix. Instructor's signature affirming discussions took place

- x. Department chair signature of receipt

A copy will be sent via DocuSign to the dean's office representative to be electronically placed in personnel file and marked completed on spreadsheet.

I. Observation Instrument(s) that will be Used by the Unit (Appendix B)

Appendix B contains the Peer Observation Checklist for face-to-face and the Online Instruction Checklist is to be used for online or hybrid courses.

J. Description of Requirements for Pre- and Post-Observation Meetings

The purpose of the pre-observation meeting between the peer observer and instructor is to help the observer understand the context of the classroom, receive and review a copy of the syllabus and selected instructional materials, address special instructor concerns, and mutually agree on a class and date for the observation. The observation instrument will be reviewed and discussed as part of the pre-observation conference (Appendix B). For online or hybrid courses the aforementioned information can be shared electronically using appropriate technology.

A post-observation conference must take place soon after the observation. During the post-observation session, the instructor will receive a completed Peer Observation Checklist or Online Instruction Checklist prepared by the peer observer. Feedback should be constructive, specific, focused, action oriented, clear, and positively phrased.

After each observation, the observed faculty member shall complete a brief reflection on the experience. (Appendix A, Section B) These reflection narratives shall be included in evaluation files and may be considered in annual or promotion reviews.

K. Statement of Confidentiality for Peer Observation

The Peer Observation Report or Online Instruction Checklist is considered "collegial communication" between observer and instructor (Appendix B). This is considered to be confidential and will not be submitted via DocuSign. It may be given to the department by the instructor.

Appendix A – Peer Observation Report Requirements

Section A

(This section must be included in T&P package)

Date: _____

Faculty Member: _____

Course: _____

Observer: _____

Date of Pre-Observation Meeting: _____

Date of Observation: _____

Date of Post-Observation Meeting: _____

I certify that Peer Observation Report was completed, discussion between observer and instructor took place, and all information is true and correct.

Peer Observer's Signature: _____

Instructor's Signature: _____

Department Chair Signature: _____

Copy to Dean's Office via DocuSign _____

Section B

Faculty Reflection Narrative

(This section must be included in T&P package)

The observed faculty member must submit a brief reflection on the experience to include what was learned from the observation.

Appendix B

Face-to-Face Peer Observation Checklist

Instructor: _____ Course: _____

Observer: _____ Date: _____

	Check Mark if Observed	Comments
Instructor clearly communicates the purpose of class session and instructional activities.		
Instructor uses concrete examples and illustrations that clarify the material.		
Instructor uses a variety of activities to ensure all students are engaged.		
Instructor challenges student to think analytically.		
Instructor uses activities in class to determine whether students understand course material.		
Instructor fosters student to student interaction.		
Instructor links new material to previously learned concepts.		
Instructor uses visuals and handouts where appropriate to accompany verbal presentation.		
Instructor requires students to be active (e.g. completing a task, applying concepts, or engaging in discussion instead of passively listening)		
Students are comfortable asking questions.		
Students actively participate in class activities and discussion.		

Additional Comments/Observations:

Major strengths demonstrated by instructor:

Suggested areas for instructor improvement:

Instructor Name: _____ Course Title, Number, Section: _____

Title: _____ Semester Reviewed: _____

Email Address: _____ Reviewer: _____

Which training and professional development activities did the instructor complete to develop and teach an online or hybrid course?

Reviewer Comments:

Online and Hybrid Course Review Checklist

The University of Texas at Tyler is dedicated to delivering high-quality education across all delivery formats. Our online and hybrid courses are categorized as distance education by the US Department of Education, which mandates 'regular and substantive interaction' to distinguish them from correspondence courses. To ensure compliance with this standard and to uphold the quality of online and hybrid classes at UT Tyler, we have developed a checklist aligned with the [Principles of Good Practice for Distance Education](#). This checklist adheres to guidelines from THECB, SACSCOC, and other regulatory agencies. It serves as a tool for instructors and department chairs to assess the design and implementation of online and hybrid courses, offering actionable feedback and fostering continuous improvement.

Key Considerations

While online classes can vary in how they are organized and taught, there are some key elements that are considered essential for quality in online courses. Our review will focus on the following key areas:

- Course Setup & Organization
- Instructional Content & Assessment
- Instructor Presence,
- Communication &
- Feedback
- Technology

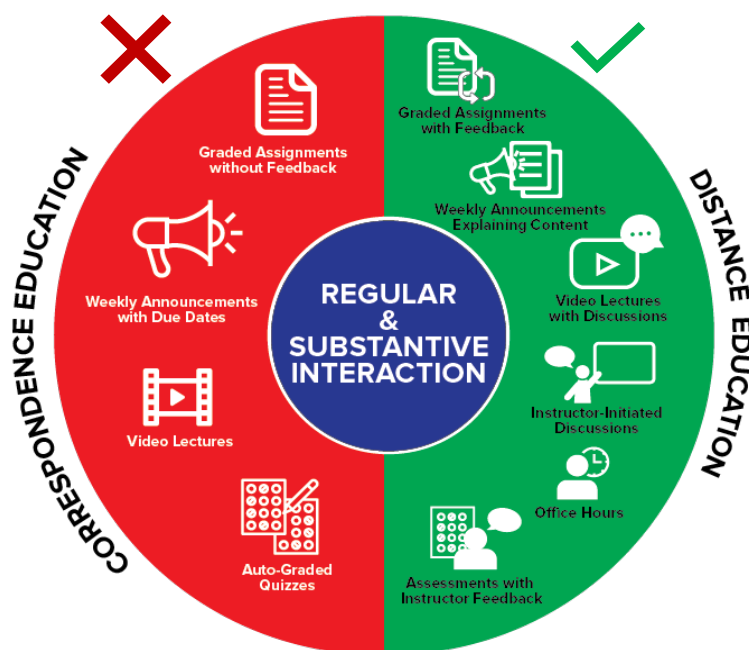


Image by UTRGV, [Center for Online Learning and Teaching Technology](#)

Course Setup & Organization

Comments/Suggestions

<input type="checkbox"/> Course Format <p>The course must be offered in the format it is listed on the schedule (face-to-face/hybrid/online). In an asynchronous course, instructors can offer optional synchronous sessions and share recordings of the sessions with the class. These synchronous sessions need to be listed on the course schedule and syllabus with specific dates and times.</p>	
<input type="checkbox"/> Visual Layout / Organization <p>The course content is clearly presented and structured in a logical, consistent, and uncluttered manner. Course navigation facilitates ease of use. All pages/modules have a consistent format and organization throughout the course. Visible Canvas navigation tabs only include those utilized by the course. The course content is organized into modules or weekly units which make logical sense.</p>	
<input type="checkbox"/> Getting Started <p>It is obvious where to begin through a visually prominent “Getting Started” or “Start Here” module or page. It provides clear expectations on the flow and structure of the course.</p>	
<input type="checkbox"/> Instructor Introduction <p>The instructor creates community by providing an opportunity for students to connect with the instructor and introducing themselves both personally and professionally.</p>	
<input type="checkbox"/> Course Introduction <p>An overview of the course and its content is provided with information about the organization of the course, course objectives, expectations, and course policies.</p>	
<input type="checkbox"/> Student Introductions <p>The course provides opportunities for students to connect with the instructor and with each other starting at the first week of class. Students introduce themselves in both a professional and personal manner.</p>	
<input type="checkbox"/> Learning Outcomes <p>Learning outcomes are explicitly stated and contain measurable action verbs and expected outcomes. These outcomes are of an appropriate level to the course and its position in the program.</p>	

<div data-bbox="105 111 154 157"><input type="checkbox"/></div> <div data-bbox="191 111 308 147">Syllabus</div> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Contact Info: Instructor name, office, phone, and email contact <input type="checkbox"/> Office hour dates, times, and modality <input type="checkbox"/> TA Contact (if appropriate) <input type="checkbox"/> Course overview <input type="checkbox"/> Student learning outcomes <input type="checkbox"/> Required textbooks and recommended readings (if applicable) <input type="checkbox"/> Special course notes (e.g., external websites or resources required, proctoring requirements, field trips, etc.) <input type="checkbox"/> Assignments with weights/point values and grading scales. Brief descriptions of significant assignments are required. <input type="checkbox"/> Late work and make-up exam expectations <input type="checkbox"/> Calendar of topics and due dates <input type="checkbox"/> Expectations for any required face-to-face, on-ground work (e.g., internships, specialized laboratory work) are stated clearly <input type="checkbox"/> AI statement <input type="checkbox"/> Available before the first day of class 	
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Instructional Content & Assessment

Comments/Suggestions

<div data-bbox="105 837 154 884"><input type="checkbox"/></div> <div data-bbox="191 837 313 873">On-Level</div> <p>The tone and rigor of course content is appropriate for the level and demographic of students enrolled in the course.</p>	
<div data-bbox="105 1003 154 1050"><input type="checkbox"/></div> <div data-bbox="191 1003 417 1039">Equivalent Effort</div> <p>Online course academic standards match expectations of face-to-face course academic standards. <u>Follow UT-Tyler definition and expectations for credit-hour.</u></p>	
<div data-bbox="105 1169 154 1215"><input type="checkbox"/></div> <div data-bbox="191 1169 560 1205">Current and Timely Content</div> <p>Instructional content is relevant to the course topic and has been produced within the last three years.</p>	
<div data-bbox="105 1335 154 1381"><input type="checkbox"/></div> <div data-bbox="191 1335 597 1371">Aligned Instructional Materials</div> <p>Instructional materials contribute to the achievement of learning objectives.</p>	
<div data-bbox="105 1501 154 1547"><input type="checkbox"/></div> <div data-bbox="191 1501 579 1537">Varied Instructional Materials</div> <p>Materials use a variety of mediums and formats (text, video, lectures, scholarly articles, etc.)</p>	
<div data-bbox="105 1667 154 1713"><input type="checkbox"/></div> <div data-bbox="191 1667 704 1703">Instructor Generated Content Included</div> <p>Every module has at least one short instructional video created by the instructor. (less than 15 minutes) Instructors develop their own videos and text explaining concepts in addition to any publisher content and/or externally developed materials.</p>	
<div data-bbox="105 1833 154 1879"><input type="checkbox"/></div> <div data-bbox="191 1833 550 1869">Aligned Learning Activities</div> <p>All activities align with the course learning outcomes and promote achievement.</p>	

<input type="checkbox"/>	Active Learning Learning activities facilitate multiple meaningful interactions between students and course content, students and instructor, and students with other students. (For example, students are required to do an assignment or participate in discussions to further engage with learning materials and apply the concepts learned in the module.)	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Available Learning Activity Resources All activities are technologically achievable and referenced appropriately in Canvas for easy access.	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Multiple & Varied Assessments A combination of formative and summative assessments are used throughout the course. Every module or unit includes formative assessments where students apply the concepts and receive instructor feedback. (quizzes, projects, discussions, essays, case studies, presentations etc.) Online courses containing only a mid-term and final exam is not best practice.	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Clear Assignment Criteria Each activity and assessment are presented in detail. Rubrics are provided before student work is started which outline criteria in a manner understandable to a third party. Each rubric accurately measures student learning outcomes. When needed, students are provided with examples.	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Timely Assignment Feedback A timeframe is clearly articulated for instructor feedback. Feedback is provided in a timely manner after student submissions.	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Accurate Gradebook Activities have corresponding items in the Canvas gradebook and align with the syllabus policies and grading scheme. Grades are posted regularly throughout the course.	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Copyright Observed All course materials meet copyright standards by citing sources and obtaining permission as appropriate.	
<input type="checkbox"/>	First Week Assignment During the first week of class, a student submission is required for financial aid purposes. (For example, graded introductions post, discussion post, quiz etc.)	

Instructor Presence, Communication & Feedback

Comments/Suggestions

<input type="checkbox"/>	Communications Policy Students are given expectations which are outlined regarding the timeliness and appropriateness of the communication mediums provided. Interactions are productive and respectful.	
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Instructor Presence

The instructor feels present in the course and initiates communication. Interactions are productive, respectful and promote student engagement with the course material in a meaningful way. (Regular announcements, timely personalized feedback on assignments, instructor facilitated discussions, scheduled regular office hours, review/ help sessions, etc.) Instructors are available to support and communicate with students and oversee student projects and evaluation. The instructor's image is used in course content to promote a personalized classroom experience.



Regular & Substantive Interaction

The U.S Dept. of Education requires all online and hybrid courses to have regular and substantive interactions. Regular and substantive interaction is defined as consistent and meaningful interaction between students, instructors, and instructional content. The instructor is actively involved in teaching and engaging students through regularly scheduled and intentionally planned activities. At least one hour per week is spent by instructors in direct instructional activities for every credit hour associated with the course (i.e., 3 hours per week for 3-hour course). Regular interactions with students occur through a variety of methods and mediums:

- ☐ Provide direct instruction through on-screen text, videos, or synchronous sessions
- ☐ Communicate with students regularly through a variety of mediums: email, assignment feedback, regular office hours, etc.
- ☐ Regular announcements are used to remind students of coursework, clarify assignment expectations, discuss previous topics, and/or highlight key concepts.
- ☐ Timely, personalized, and detailed feedback are provided to students regularly. In addition to assigning grades, feedback should include written comments, detailed rubrics, audio or video notes, and/or examples for improvement.
- ☐ Actively participate in online discussion boards by posing questions, proposing alternative viewpoints, connecting ideas, encouraging struggling students, and/or summing each discussion.
- ☐ Schedule synchronous sessions for review sessions, office hours, and/or live lectures, when appropriate. Record these sessions for students who cannot attend.
- ☐ Student feedback is gathered mid-course about their course experience. Consider making adjustments based on their input.



Weekly Course Announcements

Identifying feedback on assignments, instruction for upcoming assignments, and other course reminders.



Virtual Office Hours

Regular, scheduled virtual office hours are communicated up front and held live using video with technologies such as Zoom or Teams and not via email or offered just "by appointment."



Instructor Guided Discussion Boards

All discussion boards have instructor participation through contributing, summing, and/or providing feedback.

<input type="checkbox"/>	Canvas Engagement Data Monitor student participation through Canvas course data and reach out to students in need of further engagement.	
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Technology

Comments/Suggestions

<input type="checkbox"/>	Required LMS Features All online and hybrid courses must be taught using Canvas. Instructors need to utilize announcements, assignments, gradebook, office hours and other Canvas tools to regularly interact with students and to provide feedback.	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Accessibility Content is laid out observing accessibility standards: Images have descriptions and alt text; appropriate font headings are utilized; colors meet readability standards; PDFs are used in lieu of PowerPoints. All videos contain closed captioning.	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Universal Design Course materials are provided in multiple mediums: alt-text for images, captions or transcripts for videos and simulations.	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Functional LMS Integrations All External tools are operational, align with course outcomes and are accessible from Canvas.	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Student Support Information is provided on academic support services: Tutoring, Disabilities Resource Center, Library, etc.	

Final Comments/Suggestions/Notes: