

**Guidelines for Peer Teaching Review**  
for the Department of Fisheries & Wildlife  
revised Fall 2013

**Goals and Intent**

- Peer teaching review is intended to be a positive, constructive experience for the instructor and should be conducted fairly and with a spirit of collegiality.
- Peer teaching review has a role in both formative and summative teaching evaluation (Keig and Waggoner, 1994).
  - Formative: review intended to improve teaching.
  - Summative: review that functions in decision-making relative to P&T and compensation (required in OSU guidelines for P&T)
- Goals of peer teaching review:
  1. To review the teaching program of individual instructors including course design (e.g., course content, objectives, syllabus, organization, methods and materials for delivering instruction), methods of assessment of student performance, relationship to overall curriculum objectives (including themes and skills appropriate to the courses), classroom presentation or presentation of online materials, and rapport with students.
  2. To provide insight into and context for results from other forms of evaluation (e.g., student evaluations).
  3. To foster interaction among faculty; faculty work collaboratively to assess teaching and assist in improvement of teaching.
- Peer teaching reviews become part of the instructor's dossier for tenure and/or promotion. As such, the final report of the committee will be reviewed by the Associate Department Head for Academic Affairs, the Department Head, the Department Promotion and Tenure Committee, College- and University-level review committees, and external reviewers.

**Who Should Experience Peer Teaching Review**

- All faculty teaching regularly-scheduled courses should periodically experience peer teaching review. This includes courtesy faculty and instructors that teach recurring on-campus or on-line courses.
- The entire teaching program (all courses that are taught by an instructor, as well as courses that he or she supervises) should be included in the review.

**Frequency of Evaluation**

- The teaching program of tenure-track assistant professors should undergo peer review every three years. Most non-tenured faculty would experience review twice prior to P&T. A principle purpose of the first evaluation is to identify, well in advance of P&T, areas of teaching that need improvement.
- The teaching program of tenured faculty should undergo evaluation every 4-5 years.
- The teaching program of instructors and non-tenure track faculty with instructional appointments of 0.5 FTE or greater should undergo evaluation every 2-3 years. This includes instructors who teach online courses.

**Peer Review Committee**

- For reviews that affect tenure-track promotion, the committee should be composed of two faculty members or instructors from inside the department and one from outside the department. *At least 2 committee members should have the expertise necessary to evaluate course content.* Reviews of Full Professors or Senior Instructors can be conducted without an external member.

- The Associate Department Head should work with the instructor in selecting mutually acceptable panel members. The instructor should not be evaluated by a colleague whom the instructor believes might exhibit unfair bias.
- Review committees may include untenured and non-tenure track instructors, but these reviewers should have some experience teaching in the department. Familiarity with the FW curriculum can be helpful in evaluation of course content and delivery.

### **Procedure for Conducting Peer Teaching Reviews**

The peer evaluation consists of three parts: evaluation of instructional materials, classroom visitations, and interviews with students. For on-line courses where classroom visits are not an option, accessing the course through Blackboard as a “Test Student” will replace this component of the review.

Members of the committee review the teaching summary and meet as a group to determine how the peer evaluation will be conducted, including a schedule for classroom visitations and how student interviews will be conducted. The conduct of the review should be discussed with the instructor.

#### *Evaluation of Instructional Materials*

The instructor provides to the committee a summary of the teaching program that includes an instructor’s narrative and self evaluation consisting of the instructor’s *personal teaching philosophy, perceived strengths and areas needing improvement*, recent efforts in *teaching development, problems* encountered by the instructor that hamper effective teaching (e.g., students lack of necessary quantitative skills, lack of TA support, problems interacting with students), and *comments and concerns* relevant to evaluation.

For each class the instructor should provide the following, with notes for which material he or she developed or modified:

- a. Syllabus and outline for lecture and lab including course descriptions and course objectives, relationship with other courses in the department (pre-requisites, subsequent courses, etc.), reading list/text(s), description of methods and approach for delivering instructional materials, and expected outcomes.
- b. A description of course learner outcomes and content sufficient to allow detailed peer review.
- c. A sample of exams, problem sets, and other materials and means of evaluating student performance.
- d. Method of grading and grade distributions.
- e. Student evaluations. *Only the summary of scores from the computerized student evaluation form can be used for teaching evaluation. It is university policy that the written comments from students on the Student Assessment of Teaching form cannot be used in evaluation of teaching and are only for feedback to the instructor. Department heads may not review the written student comments intended for instructors. The exception to this rule is signed student comments, where the student has waived his or her right to anonymity.*
- f. Access to the Blackboard site for courses he or she is actively teaching. This can be Guest/Observer access, but preferably access as “Test Student” so reviewers can see the course from a student’s perspective. The latter is required for courses that are on-line only.
- g. A list of students (name, onid ID) who were enrolled in the course(s) over the last 2 years. This can be obtained through Online Services or with assistance from the front office staff.

#### *Classroom Visitations*

Done properly, visitation by peers can be useful in both improving and evaluating teaching. Classroom

visitation also can be helpful in resolving discrepancies between student evaluations and perception of the peer evaluation committee. In addition, in-class components must be part of peer teaching reviews within the OSU Guidelines for Tenure and Promotion.

Guidelines for classroom visitation are given in Attachment 2. In general, more than one classroom visitation is recommended; reviewers should try to attend at least one class period for each course that the instructor teaches. The instructor should be informed prior to each visitation. The committee should meet with the instructor prior to each visitation to discuss the objectives of the lecture and review content and materials, and after the visitation to discuss strengths/weaknesses, etc. Lectures can be videotaped and viewed by committee members who were unable to attend the visitations.

For on-line courses, each committee member should conduct a review of the course through Blackboard as a Test Student. Specific guidelines are included in Attachment 2.

### *Student Interviews*

A variety of methods could be used to conduct student interviews. The committee should attempt to avoid bias in selecting students for interviews and should solicit a cross section of student opinions on the instructor's teaching performance. A list of potential questions for students is provided in Attachment 3, and can be modified to fit the nature of the course under review (e.g., graduate vs. undergraduate, course format).

To avoid concerns over confidentiality of the identity of interviewed students, students should be interviewed in a group setting, perhaps after a class visitation by the peer review team. For online courses, comments should be solicited from a large proportion of the students who took the course (can be more than one term). A class list can be provided by the instructor or obtained through Banner (see front office staff for this).

Comments should be summarized in a way that protects student identity; this is especially important for courses with low enrollment. Courses with enrollments of <6 students cannot be reviewed through eSET, so this should be a general rule for the review. However, if the committee feels that student comments from a low enrollment class are important and the comments can be separated from their source, a summary of those comments can be included in the review.

A list of students who provided comments **MUST** be included in the final review document. These should be provided in alphabetical order at the end of the student comments section of the review.

### *Review of Course Supervision (on-line courses)*

If the instructor or faculty member is a Course Supervisor, the committee should review the organization of the online course(s) through Blackboard and eSET summaries provided by the instructor. However, the committee should recognize that eSET scores are driven by instructor quality as well as course quality, so scores associated with course organization and content are most appropriate for discussion and review. The Course Supervisor will only have access to eSETs for terms in which their course was taught by a non-promotable employee, e.g., a graduate student.

### *Meeting with the Instructor*

The committee should meet with the instructor to discuss, clarify, and expand the materials summarizing the teaching program, and results of classroom visitations and student interviews. Committee members can attend remotely if necessary. Every effort should be made to keep the tone of the meeting positive and constructive. An oral summary of the committee's reaction to the teaching program should be presented to the instructor. Strengths and weaknesses of the program and suggestions for teaching improvement should be discussed with the instructor.

## **The Review Document**

Based upon the teaching summary, discussions with the instructor, and classroom visitations, individual reports or a consensus report is submitted by the committee to the department head. *This letter will become a part of the instructor's dossier for promotion and tenure.* A list of possible questions for consideration by the committee is attached (Attachment 1). The list of questions is suggestive of general areas to be addressed in the review and can serve to focus evaluation of instructional materials. Individual responses to each question are not necessary. In general, the committee should:

- *Document the process used in conducting the review*
- *Summarize the teaching responsibilities and general mode and method of teaching*
- *Summarize findings from classroom or Blackboard site visitations and student interviews*
- *Provide an analysis of student evaluation scores and trends in scores, if appropriate*
- *Identify the strengths and weaknesses of the teaching program and areas needing improvement*
- *Evaluate course content and recommend improvements*
- *Highlight innovative teaching methods*
- *Note efforts to improve teaching*
- *Provide specific recommendations for improvement of teaching.*
- A copy of the evaluation(s) will be provided to the instructor who may respond to it in writing. Both the peer evaluation and the instructor responses must be considered in summative evaluation.

## **References**

- Keig, L. and M.D. Waggoner. 1994. Collaborative Peer Review: The Role of Faculty in Improving College Teaching. ASHE-ERIC Higher Education Reports. The George Washington University, Washington, DC.
- The University of Missouri. 1992. Teaching Evaluation.
- Seldin, P. 1985. Changing Practices in Faculty Evaluation. Jossey-Bass Publishers, San Francisco.

## Attachment 1

Guidelines for Reviewing the Teaching Summary (Adapted from Seldin, 1985 & University of Missouri, 1992).

### Course Content

Is it up-to-date?

Is the treatment balanced and fair?

If appropriate, are conflicting views presented?

Are the breadth and depth of coverage appropriate for the course level (lower division undergraduate, upper division undergraduate, graduate)?

Has the instructor mastered the subject matter?

Is the coverage responsive to the needs of students? It is relevant to the discipline?

### Course Objectives

Are the objectives clearly communicated to the students?

Are they consistent with overall curricular objectives?

Does the course incorporate the appropriate themes and skills?

Are in-class and out-of-class work appropriately balanced?

Does the instructor encourage students to think for themselves?

### Grading and Examination

Are exams suitable to content and course objectives?

Are exams representative of course content?

Are exams clearly written and fairly graded?

Are grading standards made clear to the students?

Course Organization Is the syllabus current and relevant to the course objectives?

Is the course outline logical?

Are class participation expectations and due dates clear?

Are the lecture, laboratory, or other assignments integrated? Should they be?

Is the time devoted to each topic appropriate?

Has this course been reviewed by Ecampus for “Best Practices” or Quality Matters (QM)?

### Assignments

Do assignments supplement lectures, discussions, labs, and field work?

Do assignments reflect and support course objectives?

Are they appropriate for the level of the student?

Is adequate time given to complete the assignments? Is it consistent with expected quality?

Are the assignments challenging to the student?

### Interest in Teaching

Does the instructor discuss teaching with colleagues?

Does the instructor seek advice from others and participate in teaching-related workshops and committees?

Is the instructor sought out by others on teaching-related matters?

Is the instructor knowledgeable about current developments in teaching?

### Instructor Concerns

Are the instructor’s concerns about evaluation well-founded?

Are the instructor’s needs for course improvement well-founded?

## Attachment 2

Guidelines for Reviewing Classroom Visitations (Adapted from Seldin, 1985).

### Structure and Goals

Are the instructor's presentations well-planned and organized?

Are the various instructional elements (lecture, blackboard material, handouts) effectively integrated?

Is the class time used efficiently?

Is the material presented clearly and effectively?

### Teaching Behaviors

Is the oral delivery appropriately paced?

Is the language used understandable to students?

### Instructor-Student Rapport

Does the instructor demonstrate fair and equitable concern for all students?

Do the students seem receptive to the instructor's ideas?

Is the instructor sensitive to response of the class?

Are student questions answered clearly and simply?

Does the instructor provide opportunities and encourage student questions?

Does the instructor accept student ideas and comments?

How would you describe the instructor-student classroom relationship?

### Subject Matter and Instruction

Does the instructor demonstrate adequate knowledge of the subject?

Are the transitions between topics effective?

Is the course material presented in a lively and interesting style?

Are the students generally attentive?

Does the instructor demonstrate enthusiasm for the subject and for teaching?

Does the instructor include material relevant to existing student interest?

### Specific to On-line courses:

Is lecture material presented in a clear and engaging manner?

Does the instructor participate in on-line discussions?

Is there an opportunity for students to have "live" discussions and/or interactions with the instructor?

Are students given an opportunity for anonymous course feedback?

Does the instructor respond to posted questions in a timely manner?

### Attachment 3

**Suggested** questions for student interviews – choose among these for student interviews or feedback requests. The questions can be asked orally or through email; responses should be summarized across multiple students.

*Was the syllabus clear on grading and expectations?*

*Is the content appropriate to course level, and were prerequisites appropriate?*

*How have communications been? Are expectations clearly articulated, and is feedback on assignments appropriate and helpful?*

*Does the instructor use Blackboard and other teaching tools effectively?*

*Is the course material relevant to you and your degree?*

*Does the course meet your expectations based on how it was described in the course catalog?*

*Are assignments appropriate?*

*Are tests and exams appropriate? Do they match class material?*

*How effective is the instructor at engaging students in discussions and other active learning activities?*

*How approachable and available is the instructor when students need extra help?*

*Are there enough office hours?*

*Are office hours helpful?*

*What is the best aspect of this instructor?*

*How might this instructor improve his/her teaching?*

*Any other comments?*