CENTRAL OREGON
community college

Faculty
Peer Evaluation
Handbook

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Task force assigned by Chairmoot
in the 2017-18 Academic Year

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Previous Version 2004

CONTENTS

The following are shared values concerning teaching and learning at Central Oregon Community College.

MASTERY OF THE COURSE CONTENT AND SKILLS, INCLUDING

- using appropriate discipline-specific pedagogy.

- staying abreast of current knowledge and new developments in the subject matter field.

- using course materials and co-requisites that complement course objectives and effectively assist students in mastering course content and skills.

COURSE STRUCTURE THAT

- allows students the opportunity to succeed.

- uses class time effectively.

- clearly defines course outcomes.

- provides students with adequate time and reasonable preparation to complete assignments and exams successfully.

- incorporates assessment practices that are consistent, fair, and responsible.

- gives students regular, timely feedback on their progress and performance in the course.

- provides students with access to all course materials and feedback on assessments given in the course.

COMMUNICATION THAT INCLUDES

- enthusiasm and passion for the subject, engaging students in the content and motivating them to learn.

- skills such as voice, level of diction, volume, pace, poise, eye contact, facial expression, movement, gesture, and other non-verbal signs that are effective and advance rather than obstruct instructional goals.

- examples, explanations and directions that are clear, direct, relevant, and unambiguous.

- instructor's expectations and evaluation criteria for student work which are clearly articulated in advance of due dates and are consistently applied by the instructor in practice.

CREATION OF A LEARNING ENVIRONMENT THAT

- is safe, constructive, and stimulating, including tolerance of disagreement; is open to suggestion and criticism and encourages the expression of multiple points of view, when appropriate.

- uses classroom authority fairly and equitably, without condescension or favoritism to facilitate mutual respect in the classroom.

- effectively employs diverse teaching strategies to accommodate different learning styles in an effort to bring all students into the learning process and keep them engaged.

- allows for taking risks in the spirit of innovation.

- works respectfully and cooperatively with colleagues and students.

SECTION 2: COCC FACULTY MEMBER CATEGORIES

PART-TIME FACULTY MEMBERS

These are COCC instructors that receive no more than 24.4 load units (LU) per academic year.

The following apply to this faculty category:

1. Summer is not normally part of the load unit total.
2. Not eligible members of the Faculty Forum and no benefits.
3. Assigned load as needed by their Department Chair on a term-by-term basis.
4. Paid according to the Adjunct/Part-Time Salary Schedule.
5. Evaluated by the Designated Evaluator (DE) or designee in their first academic year and every 2-3 years thereafter.
   - [Classroom Observation form for Full-Time Temp and Part-Time Faculty](#) (may require COCC login to access)
   - [GP manual](#) (PT Faculty Evaluation Policy)
6. Have no peer team.

ADJUNCT FACULTY MEMBERS

These are COCC instructors that are on an annual contract with the intent to teach a minimum of 24.5 LU and a maximum of 37.5 Load Units per each academic year.

The following apply to this faculty category:

1. Summer is not normally part of the load unit total.
2. Eligible to be members of the Faculty Forum and eligible for adjunct benefits.
3. If position is approved, Adjunct Faculty Members are assigned an estimated load for the academic year prior to Fall term (Courses and LU could change based on department needs and enrollment).
4. Paid according to the Adjunct/Part-Time Salary Schedule.
5. Evaluated by the Designated Evaluator or designee in their first academic year and every 2-3 years thereafter.
   - Link to [Classroom Observation form for Full-Time Temp and Part-Time Faculty](#) (may require COCC login to access)
6. Have no peer team.

FULL-TIME TEMPORARY FACULTY MEMBERS

COCC instructors that are on an annual contract (typically not longer than 3 straight years) with the intent to teach approximately 45 Load Units each academic year.

The following apply to this faculty category:

1. Summer is not normally part of the load unit total, unless they are on an approved alternative contract.
2. Eligible to be members of the Faculty Forum and eligible for Full-Time benefits.
3. If position is approved, Full-Time Temporary Faculty Members are assigned an estimated load for the academic year prior to Fall term (Courses and Load Units could change based on department needs and enrollment).
4. Paid according to the Full-Time Faculty Salary Schedule.
5. Evaluated by the Designated Evaluator or designee in their first academic year and every 2-3 years thereafter.

- o Link to [Classroom Observation form for Full-Time Temp and Part-Time Faculty](#) (may require COCC login to access)

6. Have no peer team.

FULL-TIME TENURE-TRACK FACULTY MEMBERS

COCC instructors that are on an ongoing contract with the intent to teach approximately 45 Load Units each academic year.

The following apply to this faculty category:

1. Summer is not normally part of the load unit total unless they are on an approved alternative contract.

2. Eligible to be members of the Faculty Forum and eligible for Full-Time benefits.

3. Assigned an estimated load for the academic year on an ongoing basis. In addition to primary assignment (includes student advising responsibilities), also have expectations in the areas of college service, and professional improvement. In addition, community service is expected for Assistant Professor II and beyond.

4. Paid according to the Full-Time Faculty Salary Schedule.

5. Evaluation / Peer Team:

   a. Peer Team Formative Evaluation: In the **first year** as a Full-Time tenure-track faculty member, a 3-person peer team composed of the DE, a faculty member from within the department, and a faculty member from outside the department will be established to provide feedback for improvement. No documentation goes to their personnel file in Human Resources (HR).

   b. Peer Team Summative Evaluation: In the **second year** as a Full-Time tenure-track faculty member, a 3-person peer team composed of the DE, a faculty member from within the department, and a faculty member from outside the department will be established to evaluate performance. Summative peer team reports will be submitted to the faculty member's personnel file in Human Resources (HR). After the faculty member is tenured, peer teams can be reduced to the DE and one other faculty member. After first and second year peer team evaluations, summative evaluation will occur the year prior to tenure and every fifth year thereafter.

      o Link to [Classroom Observation form for Full Time Faculty](#) (may require COCC login to access)

LINK TO OFFICIAL EVALUATION PRACTICES

NOTE: Part-time and Adjunct faculty members are eligible to move to the next rate of pay each Fall provided that they have met the criteria of "next three quarters with successful evaluation". For purposes of counting quarters, a contract of three load units or more counts as a quarter. Contracts of less than three load units over several quarters may be aggregated to count as a quarter. More than 24 load units in two quarters may be counted as three quarters.

LINK TO COURSE EVALUATIONS FAQS

NOTE: This link contains information about course evaluations FOR ALL FACULTY CATEGORIES.

SECTION 3: PEER TEAM GUIDELINES FOR FULL-TIME FACULTY

These guidelines are provided as a productive first step toward instituting more consistency in our peer observation practices and evaluation criteria. These guidelines are intended as starting point for a conversation within departments and peer teams. Designated Evaluators in conversation with the faculty and peer team members should adapt these to best fit the specific teaching situations.

SETTING UP A PEER TEAM

The **Designated Evaluator** is responsible for setting up the peer team. See Designated Evaluator Best Practices in Section 4 in this document.

FULL-TIME TENURE-TRACK FACULTY

FORMATIVE PEER TEAM (YEAR ONE)

During the first year at COCC all Full-Time, tenure-track faculty will have a formative peer team. This peer team consists of four members, including the faculty member. In organizing the Peer Team, the DE should consider gender representation. Ideally, the peer team will include:

- A Designated Evaluator (DE). The DE is usually, but not always, the Department Chair
- An internal peer (usually someone with content knowledge of the area when possible)
- An external peer

The formative goals of the peer team include the development of a collegial/mentoring atmosphere, the introduction of the faculty member to the procedures and culture of COCC, the development of an environment aimed at the sharing of ideas on teaching and mutual learning, the provision of prompt and informal feedback after visitations. The faculty member should consider the members of his/her peer team as resources to consult concerning any aspects of the primary teaching assignment, procedures at the College, or other areas of concern.

SUMMATIVE PEER TEAM (YEAR TWO)

During the second year at COCC all Full-Time, tenure-track faculty will have a summative peer team. This team can be, but is not necessarily, the same as the formative peer team. The summative peer team consists of four members, including the faculty member. In organizing the Peer Team, the DE should consider gender representation. Ideally, the peer team will include:

- A Designated Evaluator (DE). The DE is usually, but not always, the Department Chair
- An internal peer (usually someone with content knowledge of the area when possible)
- An external peer

The summative goals of the peer team include the evaluation of the faculty member's role in the primary teaching assignment; determining areas for growth or areas of concern; offering positive, concrete suggestions for that growth; and documenting the faculty member's development as a teacher.

PRE-TENURE PEER TEAM (YEAR FOUR)

The pre-tenure peer team should be structured much as the summative peer team with four members, including the faculty member. In organizing the Peer Team, the DE should consider gender representation. Ideally, the peer team will include:

- A Designated Evaluator (DE). The DE is usually, but not always, the Department Chair
- An internal peer (usually someone with content knowledge of the area when possible)
- An external peer

TENURED FACULTY PEER TEAMS

All faculty members will continue to have regular peer teams every five years after tenure. At this point faculty may elect to have a smaller peer team, consisting of the DE and 1 additional peer.

TEMPORARY FULL-TIME FACULTY

Temporary Full-Time faculty do not have peer teams but are evaluated by their DE or their designee. Evaluators use the Classroom Observation form for Full-Time Temp and Part-Time Faculty (may require COCC login to access).

PEER TEAM INITIAL MEETING

The designated evaluator will call an initial meeting among peer team members and the faculty member to discuss peer team responsibilities and establish deadlines.

The faculty member is given the opportunity to share individual goals and requests for feedback from the peer evaluators and to give peer evaluators the opportunity to ask questions and offer suggestions. The Classroom Observation forms for Faculty (may require COCC login to access) has some good suggestions for the initial conversation. These include:

- What could the person observing your class focus on that will most help you improve your teaching?
- Describe your assessment practices and explain how they connect to student learning outcomes.
- What concerns you the most about teaching this course? Are there any areas that you are having difficulty with, in or outside of the classroom (Student interaction, group work, maintaining policy, resources, etc.)?
- What assistance from COCC would be beneficial to help you become a better instructor?
- Are there other questions or concerns you have that can be addressed either in the classroom visit follow-up session or by the department or department chair?

The committee should also consider strategizing visits. Some suggestions to consider include:

- Try to arrange a sequence of consecutive visits to the same class. This enables you to see the continuity of course material and the "building" of concepts in the same way that the student sees the development of the material.
- If the instructional assignment includes year-long sequences and the period of the peer team assignment allows, consider visiting more than just the first term course in the sequence. Visits to second and third-stage courses in the sequence allow you to monitor continuity, concept building, and student development at different stages of the year-long learning experience.

- Several "one-shot" visits to different courses may be useful in order to visit as many different teaching/learning situations as possible.

If a peer reviewer is evaluating an online course, there are additional questions that should be addressed prior to visiting the course. These questions include establishing overall structure of the course where and how student- faculty interactions occur (on blackboard or via email or in some other location). If the faculty member is teaching online classes see online course observations.

SYLLABUS

PEER TEAM REVIEW OF SYLLABUS

The faculty member should provide all Peer Team members with copies of syllabi for all courses, every term during the peer evaluation year.

SYLLABUS REQUIREMENTS

According to the COCC Syllabus Policy (may require COCC login to access) for Credit Classes each instructor must provide a course syllabus to enrolled students at the beginning of the course and to the department administrative assistant (who maintains a historical record for the College) for each section taught. Instructors must complete each syllabus and post it to the Blackboard course site before the first class meeting of the term.

The syllabus serves as an outline of the course of study and communicates the instructor's design. The syllabus is a legal document and may be used in grievance and judicial hearings; therefore, clarity and specificity are very important. Please see the Syllabus Template (may require COCC login to access) for required and optional elements of a COCC course syllabus.

REVIEW OF BLACKBOARD

- A syllabus is required to be posted in Blackboard.
- It is strongly recommended that instructors post their office hours to their course shell.
- It is helpful for students to be able to access as much course information as possible on Blackboard.
- The Faculty member being reviewed should request that their peer team members have "peer reviewer" access to their Blackboard courses.

CLASSROOM OBSERVATIONS

The college recognizes and values the diverse teaching situations and discipline-specific objectives and methods that contribute to the educational experience at COCC. As such, the following guidelines are intended to provide a starting point. Each evaluator should adapt and modify their approach to meet each specific situation. Open conversation between peer evaluators, the DE, and the instructor is essential in balancing the goal of consistency in our evaluation practices and criteria, with the desirability of adapting such practices and criteria to specific and diverse teaching situations.

NOTE: During the Peer Team Evaluation year, **at least two class visits** are expected by each peer team member.

PRIOR TO YOUR CLASS VISIT, CONSIDER REVIEWING THE FOLLOWING:

- Visit with the instructor before the class session to get a feeling for what is to be covered, the goals for the sessions, and how the materials used (if any) support the learning goals of the presentation.
- Know what you are looking for. Review the "Shared Values of Teaching and Learning at COCC", and the evaluation guidelines and responsibilities of a peer team member in advance so that you come prepared to make helpful and constructive observations.
- Know the prerequisites of the class you are visiting and the general abilities and level of students in the class.

WHILE VISITING THE CLASS:

- Arrive early; be in class before the majority of the students arrive.
- If possible, stay for the entire class period. There could be situations where the entire class period is not appropriate to observe (e.g., a quiz or video). In this case the evaluator and instructor should agree upon an appropriate length in advance.
- Attempt to be inconspicuous; you are there to observe and your presence should not detract from the normal classroom routine.
- Seat yourself in the back of the classroom or position yourself such that you have a good vantage point from which to observe the entire room with special attention to student behavior and interactions with each other and with the instructor.

SOME SUGGESTIONS ON WHAT TO OBSERVE DURING YOUR VISIT:

- Rapport with students
  - Observe student behavior before class begins. (Are they talking with each other about the class, the instructor, the homework? Do they seem interested in the class? Are they collaborating on the material? Are they interested enough in the material to talk about it with one another?)
  - Watch student reactions to the instructor; watch instructor reactions to individual students.
  - Are the students engaged and are they encouraged to participate?
  - Are students comfortable asking questions and is the instructor actively seeking to clarify areas of misunderstanding?
- Structure and Organization of the Teaching/Learning Environment
  - The goals for each class session are well defined and clearly conveyed to the students.
  - The presentation and classroom activities support the student learning outcomes.
  - The pace of presentation allows for effective use of the allotted class time.
  - A variety of teaching methods are used to facilitate student learning as appropriate.
  - The lesson is well organized and connections are made across content topics and to real life experiences.
  - The instructor allows adequate time for student questions and (when necessary) review of a prior topic
- Skill of presentation
  - The instructor is enthusiastic about the course content.
  - The instructor tries to motivate the students (enthusiasm, enjoyment of material/teaching, beauty, relevance to "real world," etc.)
  - Presentation is appropriate to level of the material and ability of students.
  - Presentation is clear, unambiguous, and free from instructor bias.
  - Use of teaching/learning aids is appropriate to achieving class goals and outcomes.

- o General communication skills (language appropriate to level of student, body movement, gestures, eye contact, voice is easily heard throughout classroom, instructor is articulate, inflection, poise, and freedom from annoying mannerisms) encourage attentiveness and involvement.
  - o Evidence that the instructor is able to re-involve students that get off task or off track.
  - o Students are allowed adequate time to respond to questions; instructor is able to guide students to a response through additional and continual questioning.
  - o Students are able to get on-task quickly during individual, group, or lab activities.
- Subject Matter and Content Expertise
  - o Instructor demonstrates excellent course content knowledge base.
  - o Current pedagogical practices relative to the discipline are used in the classroom.
  - o Instructor demonstrates applicability of subject matter, where appropriate, to "real world situations."

ONLINE COURSE OBSERVATIONS

All peer team members or DE (for non-Full-Time Faculty) should be peer reviewers in Blackboard and/or other online platforms used by the faculty member for any online course. It is recommended that at least one peer team member have online teaching experience. Current work is being done on developing guidelines for online course peer evaluation.

Return to "Setting up a Peer Team"

POST-VISITATION CONFERENCE BETWEEN FACULTY MEMBER AND EVALUATOR(S)

A post-visitation conference should be held promptly (ideally within 48 hours) between the visiting peer team member and the faculty member to debrief on class observations.

THE REPORTS

FORMATIVE PEER TEAM REPORTS

Individual feedback should be given to the faculty member. Peer teams should meet with the faculty member and designated evaluator to discuss their final observations. At that time, possible concerns for the summative stage of the peer evaluation process should be raised. No written report will be submitted to the faculty member's personnel file.

SUMMATIVE AND SUBSEQUENT REPORTS

The Summative Report is submitted to the faculty member's personnel file and is part of the documentation considered for promotion and tenure. The Summative report consists of:

1. DE summary and report
2. Report from internal peer
3. Report from external peer

Peer evaluators should be prepared to write complete, detailed reports to offer positive feedback to the faculty member offering real guidance for further growth as well as documenting perceived problems and identifying goals for the development of the faculty member's teaching effectiveness over time.

The most helpful evaluations are characterized by the following qualities, identified by Stephen D. Brookfield in *The Skillful Teacher: On Technique, Trust, and Responsiveness in the Classroom,* Jossey-Bass, San Francisco, CA, 1990:

- Clarity: evaluation criteria are specified and supported with detailed observation and examples; communication is clear and straightforward.

- Immediacy: evaluative judgments are given as soon as possible after the assessment process is completed.

- Regularity: comments are made regularly even when the peer team member is simply acknowledging that suggestions are being followed; major changes are monitored closely, keeping in mind that the rhythm of significant student learning may fluctuate incrementally (two steps forward, one step back).

- Accessibility: peer team members provide the faculty member with opportunities to discuss and consult regarding evaluations.

- Individualized: respect for the faculty member's work is evidenced in the peer team's detailed, clearly individualized attention to the faculty member's efforts; however, constructive criticism is focused on the faculty member's actions, not his/her personality, to ensure that the faculty member does not feel that his/her whole being is under assault.

- Affirming and Balanced: peer team evaluations acknowledge the faculty member's achievements and strengths before identifying weaknesses and making critical commentary; acknowledge what is good at the same time that attention is drawn to what needs work; to maintain and improve the quality of teaching, faculty members need to recognize both their strengths and weaknesses as teachers to support on-going self-assessment and growth.

- Future-Oriented: clear suggestions are given about specific actions the faculty member should take in the long and short run to improve or maintain teaching effectiveness.

- Educative: good evaluations are those from which the faculty member can learn; to provide such helpful guidance, peer team members should keep this question in mind: What can this person learn from my comments?

The purpose of faculty summative evaluation at COCC is to maintain and strengthen the quality of COCC instruction, and to assess and evaluate a pattern of performance in the primary (teaching) assignment over time as a basis for making personnel decisions (e.g., rehire, tenure, promotions). Toward this end, it is important to identify and to document any problems or concerns as early in the evaluation process as possible so that improvement can also be identified and documented.

In the past, tenure and promotion committees have observed that constructive criticism and documentation of problem areas and growth in those areas rarely appear in peer evaluation reports. Uncritically glowing reports throw into question the value of the peer summative evaluation process. It is important to emphasize that personnel decisions based in part on peer team reports are concerned with long-term trends and that issues of concern raised early in the evaluation process offer valuable benchmarks against which to measure growth and development of the faculty members. Major concerns documented for the first time in tenure and promotion recommendations at the end of the faculty member's fourth or fifth year are threatening to the faculty member, difficult for the designated evaluator to write, and put promotion and tenure decisions in jeopardy. It is important to recognize that the purpose of the peer team is to encourage growth over time. This process must begin at the earliest stages of the faculty member's association with the College and continue throughout the years preceding key personnel decisions.

- The designated evaluator/chair consults with the faculty on the selection of peer team members. One of the peer team members needs to be a content expert, if possible.

- It is advisable that the designated evaluator meets with the faculty member prior to the peer team meeting to discuss the process. The designated evaluator should encourage the faculty member to identify areas for feedback from the peer team members.

- The designated evaluator is responsible for confirming the peer team members' appointments and calling an initial meeting (early fall term) with the peer team to discuss peer team responsibilities and establish deadlines.

- During the peer team meeting, the designated evaluator facilitates a discussion about potential areas of feedback and any special circumstances to be considered.

- The designated evaluator also highlights the importance for the team reports to reflect a balance between positive feedback and constructive criticism with specifics on potential areas of growth for the faculty member. It is important to emphasize that tenure and promotion committees rely on such peer reports to identify long-term trends and areas of growth raised early in the evaluation process as valuable benchmarks against which to measure development of the faculty member.

- The designated evaluator ensures that the team members' feedback is submitted by the agreed-upon deadlines.

- For the formative report, it is recommended that the designated evaluator keep notes on the first-year visits and conversations, so that these can be used as needed to measure/report growth in the designated evaluator's second-year summative report.

- For their summative report, the designated evaluator should include their own independent observations as well as any areas of growth noted in the other peer team reports. The designated evaluator should only submit one report.

- Peer team member reports should be submitted to the DE by May 15th.

- The designated evaluator may refer to the Department Chair Manual (may require COCC login to access).

- Return to Setting up a Peer Team

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