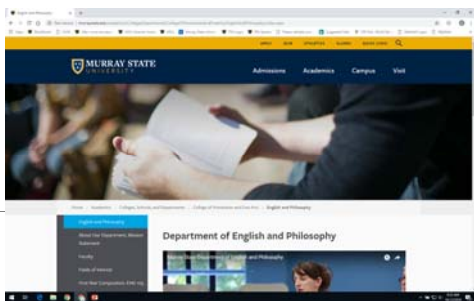


Old Dogs, New Tricks: Using Teaching Observations for Faculty Annual Review



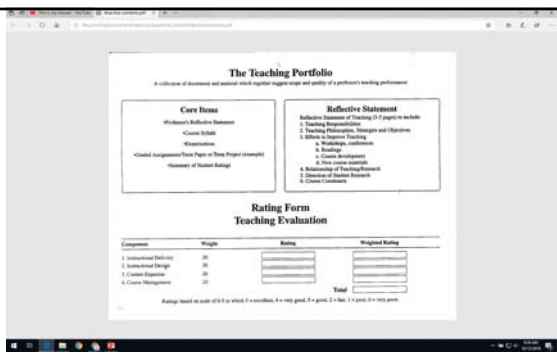
Gina Claywell, Murray State University

This process can be
“mysterious,
frustrating, and
frightening...
high stakes” (Weiser 646).




“The Blue Box”









Increased Work Potential for Biased Observations	Improved Collegiality & Awareness of Effective Pedagogy
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SACSCOC Principles of Accreditation (Section 6: Faculty) require the “quality and integrity” of “the learning enterprise” through “appropriate content and pedagogy.”

Department’s Benefits

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Actually talk about teaching	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Mentoring• Getting to know each other better	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Integrating Revision Ideas
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Rationale for Change

“We had no way of knowing what goes on in the classroom.”

(Oct. 12, 2018, dept. meeting notes)

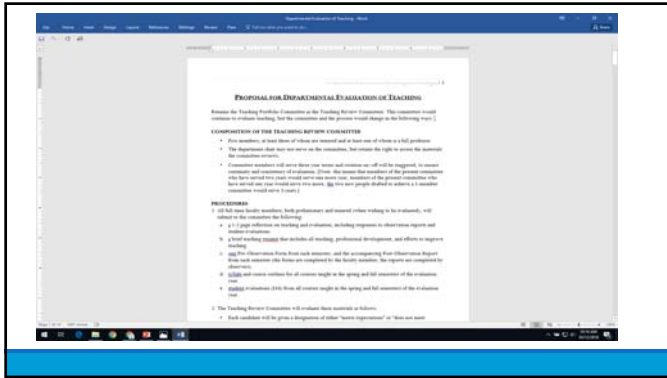
“...classroom observation can be a means for improving instruction” (Cohen and McKeachie 152).

Concerns as we
established the
program?

Concerns as we
established the
program?



Proposal for
Departmental
Evaluation of Teaching



COMPOSITION OF THE TEACHING REVIEW COMMITTEE

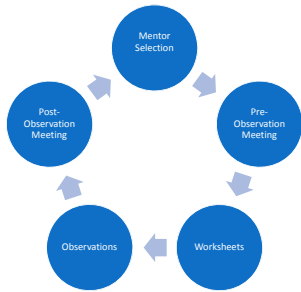
5 members (at least 3 are tenured and 1 is a full professor)	3 year terms Rotation on/off is staggered for continuity and consistency	No department chair, but chair has access to materials
---	---	--

New Evaluation Requirements

- a 1-2 page reflection on teaching and evaluation
- a brief teaching resumé
- two Pre-Observation Forms
- two Post-Observation Reports
- syllabi and course outlines
- student evaluations

Procedures

Classroom Observation Requirements



- Two tenured faculty members per calendar year
- One observation each semester

- Pre-observation report by observee
- Pre-observation meeting
- Observation
- Post-observation meeting
- Jointly-written summative report of the observation

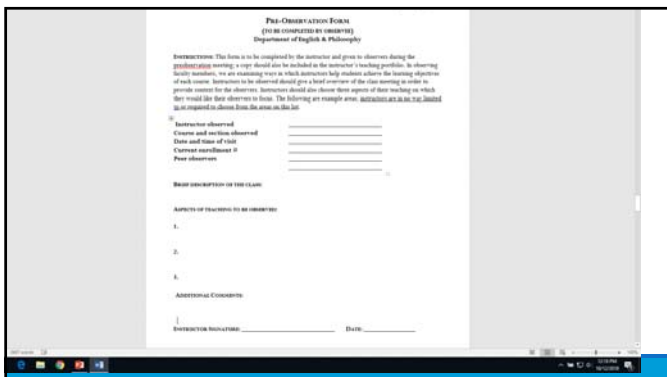
- One lottery-chosen observer
- One observee-chosen observer
- The second tenured faculty member can accept or decline
- Second observer can be lottery-chosen instead

- Faculty members choose course and class period
- Each semester should evaluate different courses

Calendar Year Model rather than Academic Year



Pre-Observation Form



Description of Course:

- Course Context
- Objectives
- Preparation
- Strategies

Aspects of Teaching to be Observed:

- Classroom Management
- Instructional Coherence
- Subject Mastery
- Teaching Strategies Used
- Instructor Attitudes and Characteristics

Pre-Observation
Meeting

Meet at least one day before the observed class

Provide observers with materials

Observation

Murray State University
Department of English/Composition Program
Classroom Observation Report

Instructor Observed
Course
Date
Number of Students Present
Evaluator: Gina Claywell
Content of the Class

Presentation Style of the Instructor

Pedagogical Strategies Employed

Strengths

Observers

- ➔ Reflect
- ➔ Reread
- ➔ Include positives
- ➔ Consider recommendations

Post-Observation Meeting

- . Meet within one week of the observation
- . Start with general observations from the observee
- . Give the instructor a snapshot of the class
- . Indicate the things that worked
- . Limit suggestions or recommendations

Post-Observation Report

POST-OBSERVATION REPORT
(TO BE COMPLETED BY OBSERVERS)
Department of English & Philosophy

This form is to be completed jointly by the observer after the post-observation meeting with the instructor, no later than two weeks after the date of the observation. A hard copy and an electronic soft copy should be given to the instructor.

Instructor observed _____
 Course and section observed _____
 Date and time of visit _____
 Current Enrollment # _____
 Number of students present _____
 Peer observers _____

I. Brief overview of class _____

II. Three aspects of teaching _____

III. Additional Observations _____

IV. Summary & Recommendation _____

Jointly-written Post-Observation Report:

A 500-1000 word summative report should include

- A brief overview of the class proceedings
- A commentary on the observee-identified three aspects of teaching
- A summary recommendation of meets or does not meet expectations for teaching

- Signed hard copy and electronic copy
- Within two weeks of the observation

The Teaching Review Committee assesses the following holistically:
the reports,
the 1-2 page reflection,
the teaching resume,
the syllabi, and
student evaluations.

The candidate "meets expectations" or "does not meet expectations" for teaching excellence.



Results

"...both observers and observees reported...that their own teaching improved as a result of their participation" (Millman 24).

Concerns as we
implemented
the program?

Concerns as we
implemented
the program?



Concerns as we
implemented
the program?



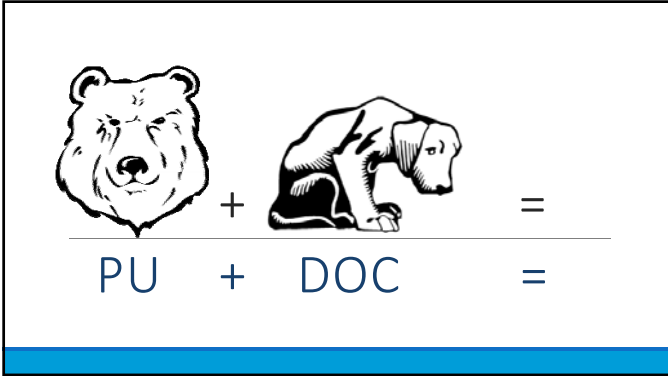
Scenario with Potential
for Problems:

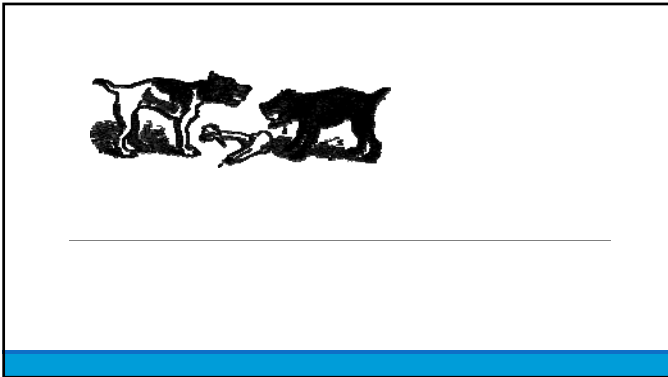
Professor
Unenthused
(Lottery
Chosen)
= PU

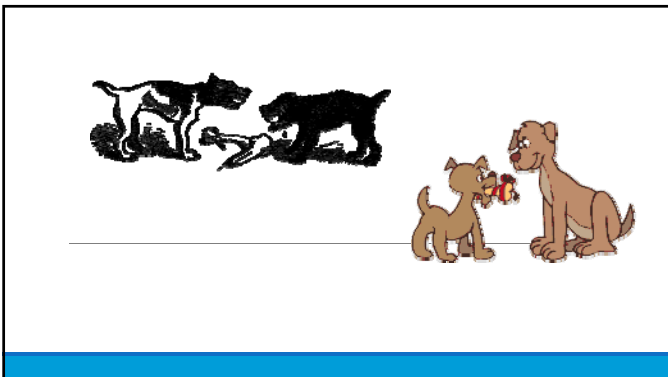


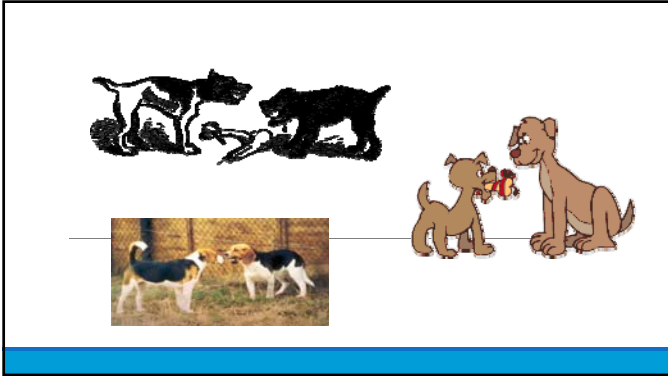
Docile
Observer
(Candidate
Chosen) =
DOC














Consequences?

Consequences?






A vulnerable,
untenued
faculty
member



The results can be
disastrous for faculty in the
middle of their tenure
and/or promotion process.



➔ The course itself,
➔ its content, and/or
➔ its delivery method...
are issues over which the Observee
may have little to no control.

“It is difficult...to be non-defensive
about the quality of one’s teaching,
a role that requires so much
personal involvement”
(Cohen & McKeachie 153).

Appeals Process

If the observation is unfair, inaccurate, or reflective of an unusually unrepresentative teaching performance:

- Submit a written response
- Request another observation by different observers



Observation Findings

SACSCOC 2018 Principles of Accreditation require "regular evaluation of faculty members, regardless of contract or tenure status" (Principle 6.3) .

Feedback Usefulness

Iqbal (2014) found that “reviewers rarely gave feedback to candidates, and when they did, comments were typically vague and/or focused on the positive” (108).

Iqbal’s concern about “lack of pedagogical experience” (108) is not an issue in my department but could be for other departments.

Inexperienced or Resistant Observers (PU) issues can be solved by Alternate Observations.

- ➔ Professionalism
- ➔ Compassion
- ➔ Adherence to Academic Rigor & Standards
- ➔ Desire to Improve One's Own Teaching

Faculty wait much too long in the semester to schedule observations and related meetings.



Unanticipated Settings		
Asynchronous Online Teaching	Synchronous Online Teaching	Hybrid Online & F-t-F Teaching

“While faculty will always experience a degree of discomfort when being evaluated, it is important for them to know that the procedures used in an evaluation are fair”
(Cohen & McKeachie 153).

Other options?

- ➔ External reviewers
- ➔ Return to The Blue Box
- ➔ Better pedagogical training for observers

Future Steps

- ➔ Observe post-tenure faculty
- ➔ Review the process, especially the validity and reliability of results

“...[peer review] is itself subject to review and critique and revision—including by the faculty it impacts—and therein lies its strength”
(Weiser 670).



Recommendations
Welcome



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