

Peer Observation in Support of Effective Teaching Observer¹ Guidelines

A. Initial meeting with faculty member who has asked to be observed (observee)

1. Introduce the purpose of the observation activity – why it will be useful to both of you, and thank the observee for requesting a peer observation.
2. During this meeting you are primarily a listener seeking to determine what the observee wishes to learn from the observation and why. Resist the temptation to offer advice on teaching approaches until after making the actual observation so that you can point to actual teaching behaviors of the observee rather than infer what those might be or present too much information about how you teach before the observation.
3. Have the observee reflect on prior experience of being observed while teaching (e.g., What was helpful? What was not? What does s/he need in order to maximize the opportunity to learn about how s/he teaches via a peer review process? What concerns does s/he have about the process?)
4. Discuss logistics about the learning session – when, where, and who will be there
5. “What am I going to see?” Ask directly about what the instructor plans to do for the observed learning session
6. Ask how the observed instruction fits into the course/block/rotation; e.g., information that students know, background reading or activities that the learners completed prior to the session
7. Review and discuss the format of the observation form
8. Empower the observee to choose what to observe by selecting behaviors to include on the observation form; include discussion of why these choices were made (i.e., learning issues for the observee). Recommend selection of no more than 6 (optimally 4-5) behaviors in order to focus the attention of the observer and usefulness to the observee; the “Teaching Behaviors Menu for Peer Observation of Teaching” and example forms may help to generate ideas but behaviors *do not* need to be selected from the menu.
9. Schedule the time and location for the debrief meeting following the observation
10. Reminder that the comments resulting from the observation and debrief are confidential; only participation and feedback on the process are reported to OMED

B. During the observation

1. Minimize disruption: Arrive early to the instructional site and, remain through the entire learning session until learners are dismissed/class is adjourned or until an appropriate break that has been agreed on with the observee

¹ To be considered applicable for an Achievement in Medical Education Program (AMEP) certificate pathway (a promotion requirement for faculty hired as of 9/1/2015), POSET observations must be conducted by Observers who have completed POSET training through CPL.

2. Do not use your cell phone, tablet, or computer during the session in order to avoid distracting the learners or instructor
3. Do not participate in the learning sessions or offer suggestions to the instructor during the session in front of students
4. Make sure students understand that the faculty member, not the students, is being observed
5. Observe the session with the observee's selected behavior and learning issues particularly in mind
6. Pay attention to how learners are behaving and responding to instruction or interacting with the instructor in addition to the teacher's behavior
7. Be sure to make note of strategies/behaviors that were particularly effective, and ones you might utilize in your own teaching
8. You are encouraged to use the observation form to guide your documentation

C. Debrief – Giving feedback and planning for next steps

1. Ask for the observee's impressions of the session: **"How do you think the session went?"**
 - Listen only; make no comments; ask questions only where necessary to understand the response
2. Follow with use of the Harvard Feedback Model (observe/advocate/inquire) to debrief
 - Give observations – **"I noticed ..."** (*observe*), **"I think ..."** (*advocate* - based on evidence, experience), **"I wonder what you were intending ..."** (*inquire* - explore their framework for doing something differently than you would have expected)
3. After delivering the feedback, ask the observee to reflect on changes s/he will consider making and why?
4. Share your own learning from this experience: What you will take away from the process as an observer
5. Share resources for on-going teaching professional development as appropriate
6. Remind observee to complete the *POSET Self Reflection and Feedback Form* and send a copy to CPL (recorded for completion of expectations for the Achievement in Medical Education Program [AMEP] and for CPL program evaluation)

D. Complete the *POSET Self-Reflection and Feedback Form* and submit a copy to CPL

1. Completing the form serves to
 - Consolidate your learning from the POSET experience
 - Provide feedback to CPL for improving POSET
2. Providing a copy of this form to CPL allows a record of completion as part of the expectations for the Achievement in Medical Education Program (AMEP) and is used for CPL program evaluation.