



Online Peer Observations





Agenda

1. Introduction
2. The observation process
3. The observation form
4. Best practices
5. Questions?

Who gets observed



Classroom Teaching Observations of Online Courses: Article 18: Professional Evaluation

1. At least once during each academic semester, **non-tenured and non-certificated members** of the teaching staff shall be observed for a full classroom period.
2. **Tenured and certificated members of the teaching staff** may be observed once each semester.
3. After ten (10) semesters of service teaching observation for **adjunct personnel** shall be held at the request of the chairperson or the adjunct.

PSC Agreement



Classroom Teaching Observations of Online Courses: Amend Article 18.2 (b) 1 and add a new section, Section 18.2 (b) 3.

- c. In a fully online asynchronous course (that is, a course conducted entirely online without a scheduled class period), the designated observer shall be given limited access to the course platform, usually defined as "student" or "guest" access but in no event "instructor" or "administrator" access, for no more than a 48-hour period that will commence at a specified time not earlier than seven calendar days after the notice of the teaching observation has been given to the instructor. Within 48 hours of receiving notice of the observation, the instructor shall inform the students of the teaching observation and its beginning and end time via the method for announcements normally employed by the instructor in the course."
- f. For observations of other than a fully online synchronous course, the observer shall not review online activity that occurred more than seven calendar days prior to the 48-hour period of access to the course platform, nor shall the post-observation memorandum refer to any course activities that occurred more than seven calendar days prior to the 48-hour period of access.
- g. For a fully online course, the post-observation conference set forth in Article 18.2.b may be held, at the request of the instructor, in person, by telephone, or by video conference.

In summary from the contract and Memorandum of Agreement 2019:

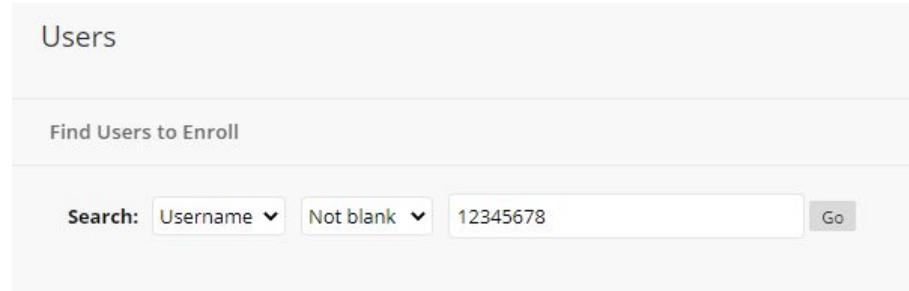
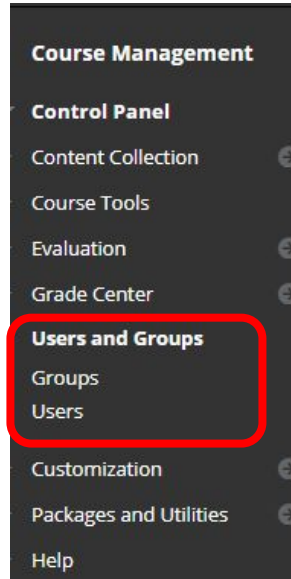
- There must be a 7 day period between the Observee receiving the notice of the observation and the observation actually happening (for asynchronous observations).
 - The employee shall be given no less than 24 hours of prior notice of observation (for face to face/synchronous observations).
- Under no circumstances should an observer be given access using administrator or instructor. Only student or guest access should be granted.
 - While the PSC CUNY contract specifies the observer should be added either as a 'student' or 'guest', on BlackBoard the observer must be given a 'student' role in order to see content.
- Students must be informed of the teaching observation within 48 hours of receiving notice of the observation, including its beginning and end time via the method for announcements normally employed by the instructor in the course.
- The post observation memo should not refer to any course activities that occurred more than seven calendar days before the 48-hour period of access.
- Peer observation must occur in first 10 weeks of the semester.
- The post-observation conference may be held, at the request of the instructor, in person, by telephone, or by video conference.

Observation guidelines for courses with some online element, per the PSC Agreement

Course Type	Period of Observation	BB Role	Other
Fully Online, Fully Synchronous	Only for the scheduled class period.	Student or Guest	Do not refer to the conduct of course activities outside of the observation period.
Fully Online, Fully Asynchronous	No more than a 48-hour period that will commence at a specified time not earlier than seven calendar days after the notice of the teaching observation has been given to the instructor.	Student or Guest	The instructor must be given a 7-day notice prior to the start of the observation period.
Fully Online Mixed (Asynchronous and Synchronous)	Adhere to Online, Fully Synchronous, unless instructor requests and department chair consents to observation adhering to the parameters of an online, fully asynchronous course.	Student or Guest	The post observation memo should not refer to any course activities that occurred more than seven calendar days before the 48-hour period of access.
Hybrid or Blended, Face-to-Face and Online	Adhere to Face-to-face instructions, unless instructor requests and department chair consents to observation adhering to parameters for an online course.	Student or Guest	

Adding/Removing an observer to BlackBoard

- To add a user: Go to Users and Groups -> Users and click on Find Users to Enroll. Search on the EMPLID of the observer (as the Username) and enroll them as a **Student**.
- To remove a user: Please email the request to blackboardsupport@lagcc.cuny.edu from your LaGuardia email account.
 - The Instructor cannot manually remove a User from the course.



On the 'Users' list page, click the arrow next to a User to get the menu to change the role to 'student' in case it defaults to 'guest'.





Blackboard Technical Support

- Adding/Removing Users from BlackBoard: Send an e-mail to BlackBoardSupport@lagcc.cuny.edu
 - Include: Instructor name, full course code, observer name and EMPLID
- Other IT help and for general BlackBoard troubleshooting:
 - ITHelp@lagcc.cuny.edu or NetAdminHelp@lagcc.cuny.edu also work, but it will take longer to process your request.
 - From the LaGuardia Web Site choose My LaGuardia > Faculty & Staff, log in, then under Request Support, click on IT HelpDesk
 - Bookmark: <https://services.laguardia.edu>
 - Visit the IT Website at: <https://it.laguardia.edu>
 - For general BlackBoard help, after hours support available 8 p.m.- 8 a.m. at [646-664-2024](tel:646-664-2024).

Using the observation form



I. CONTENT:

Knowledge of subject matter _____

Consider (asynchronous):

- Selection of materials
- Explanations in discussion board
- Curation/creation of slides and recordings

Consider (synchronous):

- Similar to face-to-face

Using the observation form

II. METHODOLOGY:

- A. Preparation for lesson _____
- B. Clarity of presentation _____
- C. Appropriateness of presentation _____
- D. Clarity of lesson goals _____
- E. Achievement of goals _____
- F. Ability to stimulate and focus discussion _____
- G. Ability to frame thought-provoking questions _____
- H. Ability to respond to questions _____
- I. Ability to vary style _____

Consider (asynchronous):

- Clear agenda of classwork for the day/week/unit.
- Discussion board work
- Materials selected
- Opportunities for student questions
- Use of different formats (lectures, video, readings, etc.)


Consider (synchronous):

- Management of student discussions
- Ability to toggle between text-based chat and audio/video conversations
- Similar to face-to-face

Using the observation form



III. ORGANIZATION:

- A. Logical sequence of instruction _____
 - B. Development of a cogent design _____
 - C. Ability to gauge pacing _____
 - D. Provision for summary or evaluation _____
- 

Consider (asynchronous):

- Organization of the remote class space
- Presentation of materials
- How everything is tied together
- Active and appropriate links
- A clear, logical and consistent path for the lesson

Consider (synchronous):

- Similar to face-to-face

Using the observation form

IV. STUDENT DYNAMICS:

- A. Ability to stimulate students to interact _____
- B. Student awareness of what is happening _____
- C. Responsiveness to student needs _____
- D. Respect for students _____
- E. Adaptations of methodology to accommodate individual differences _____
- F. Individual and active involvement of students in the learning process _____
- G. Existence of a learning culture in the classroom _____
- H. Evidence of student learning _____

Consider (asynchronous):

- Discussion board
 - Student to student interactions
 - Student to Faculty interactions
- Opportunity for student questions
- How are students engaged?
- Faculty framing of lesson
- Use of different formats (lectures, video, readings, etc.)

Consider (synchronous):

- Use of varied formats for student engagement for interaction between students and between instructor and students
 - Breakout groups, discussions, chat feature
- Similar to face-to-face

Using the observation form

V. ABILITY TO COMMUNICATE:

- A. Appropriate vocabulary _____
- B. Ability to draw analogies and/or analyze _____
- C. Ability to explain difficult concepts _____
- D. Quality of voice _____
- E. Speech pattern _____

Consider (asynchronous):

- How are concepts explained?
- How are questions answered?
- Are multiple modalities used (video, audio, discussion, lecture, etc.)?

Consider (synchronous):

- Similar to face-to-face

Best Practices from: Hostos Community College [Asynchronous Observation Guidelines](#) on determining content in accordance with the LaGCC Peer Observation Form

1. Knowledge of the subject matter
 - a. Is the content thematically-integrated?
 - b. Is the content clear and accurate?
 - c. Is the language appropriate for the audience?
 - d. Does the content reflect awareness of current trends and developments?
2. Methodology/Organization
 - a. Adequate announcements and directions to enable easy navigation?
 - b. A clear, logical and consistent path through the site?
 - c. A clear statement of specific goals and expected outcome?
 - d. Appropriate assignments and/or assessment items?
 - e. Sufficient content either directly or through links and other reference?
 - f. Relevant and clearly-presented content?
 - g. Active and appropriate links.
3. Student Dynamics/Ability to Communicate
 - a. Provide compelling instructions of the work to be completed by the students?
 - b. Provide opportunities for students to integrate different types of knowledge?
 - c. Value discussion board participation?
 - d. Encourage student-to-student interaction?
 - e. Address questions and issues presented by students?
 - f. Give positive feedback to students' postings and ideas?
 - g. Achieve a balance between the medium and the content?
 - h. Clearly state their office hours and availability?

Best Practices from: [NYU SPS](#) on the expectations of an asynchronous course



An asynchronous course environment is expected to:

- Provide a well-structured learning platform within which
 - topics are presented in a logical sequence;
 - expectations, outcomes and course format are clearly communicated;
 - materials are provided in Resources and other related sections where needed;
- Provide a variety of means of content delivery as text, videos, audio, etc
- Provide clear and adequate information and guidance in the course site (probably in the Syllabus, Lessons, Announcements, Messages) to communicate where, when and how the learners are expected to join the online session.
- Provide easy navigation and up-to-date links to class related internal and/or external materials and resources.

Best Practice from: Online Learning Consortium/Chronicle Article: [Conducting Observations in Online Classes](#) on presentation and design of an online course



Useful online observations need to consider not only the course content and engagement, but how the material is presented and designed. Asynchronous classes should have a:

1. Clear central hub. Students need a starting point from which every trail should be clear and easy to follow.
2. Organizational consistency. Learning management systems often have multiple ways to share content, with pages, announcements, blog posts, discussion forums, and assignments often existing in their own categories. Faculty need to determine which of these tools make the most sense for their class and then use them consistently.
3. Accessible use of mixed modalities. Teaching online offers lots of opportunities to bring in multimedia. Does the course prioritize accessibility and Universal Design?

Considerations



- What is part of the individual class and observable?
 - What would you have access to in a face-to-face observation?
- The Observee may ask for an alternative date/time/class which may better illustrate their remote teaching.
 - Negotiation of an alternative date/time/class may happen by email or phone.
 - A final date/time/class should be agreed upon and put into writing in a letter (email) to the Observee.
- The Post-Observation meeting can be used to discuss the observer's questions about the class.
- Marking "N/A" on the Peer Observation Form
 - Depending on what course content is available during your 48 hours, you may need to mark "N/A" for some categories.
- What type of comments are helpful to your colleague?
 - Positive reinforcement, constructive feedback, and specific examples all help improve remote teaching. It is helpful to include detailed comments on the Peer Observation form.

A few more details



Access to the new and improved Peer Observation forms:

- Peer Observation Form:
www.laguardia.edu/uploadedFiles/Main_Site/Content/Faculty_Staff/Docs/Observation-Fillable-Form.pdf
- Post- Peer Observation Form:
www.laguardia.edu//uploadedFiles/Main_Site/Content/Faculty_Staff/Docs/Post-Observation-Fillable-Form.pdf

Signatures on these forms:

- Signature are expected on these forms.
- Use Adobe Pro for digital signatures or download Adobe Reader DC for free
- Sign using Mobile Devices and tablets. To fill and sign on the go, please download the Adobe Reader mobile app. Click here to learn more information about this free app for iOS and Android Devices.

Submission of final signed documents to HR:

- Faculty observers: Submit through usual departmental procedures
- Departments: Email final, signed Peer Observations to HRfaculty@lagcc.cuny.edu for both Full-time faculty and Adjuncts.
 - Indicate Full-Time or Adjunct on the Subject line.
 - DO NOT send Full-time faculty and Adjunct observations together in one email.