

The Writerly Framework: An Observation Protocol for Online Courses

The Writerly Framework of Teaching and Learning Observation Protocol is a tool developed to support peer-review of teaching with the purpose of helping to make teaching and learning more “writerly.” Writerly teaching and learning puts the student at the center of the process, where students participate actively in the creation of a course or lesson’s meaning, making them not consumers of the course content but rather producers of it. Writerly teaching and learning involves creating spaces for student to make connections with and between different aspect of the content and discipline, engaging in dialogue to enable students to interact meaningfully with the content, and making meaning so that students don’t imply record the content but create new understandings of it.

Instructor Questionnaire

Please answer the following questions. It is best if you answer them thoroughly and honestly (i.e., please don’t just say what you believe the reviewers will want to hear). That being said, the purpose for these questions is two-fold: 1) the information provided here will give the reviewer a clearer and fuller understanding of the course and the intentions behind the course, and 2) your reflective consideration of these questions will hopefully provide you with some insights about the course and possible pathways toward improving it. The purpose of this process has nothing to do with judgment of you, your teaching, or your course. All courses can be improved. Therefore, the purpose of this process is to make your course better, partly for you but mostly for your students and their learning.

1.	What are the relevant situational factors that shape the design of your course?	
	a.	Where does the course fit in the program’s curriculum?
	i.	What level is the course?
	ii.	What do students need from previous courses in the program to get the most out of this one and what can you count on the students knowing when they arrive?
	iii.	What will students need to carry with them from this course to future courses in the program? In their careers?
	b.	What are the nature and disciplinary norms of the subject in regard to teaching and learning?

		i.	Is the subject theoretical, practical, or somewhere in between? Is it convergent, divergent, controversial, or constantly changing?	
		ii.	Does teaching in the discipline tend to emphasize memorizing facts and concepts, or does it call more for critical thinking and analysis?	
		iii.	Do you tend to push for memorizing facts and concepts, or do you call more for critical thinking and analysis?	
	c.	What are the characteristics of the students in the course?		
		i.	How many students will be in the course?	
		ii.	How many students will be in the course?	
	iii.	Where do they come from (e.g., socio-economic background, disciplinary background, first-generation, work/family obligations, international, diverse backgrounds, identities, and abilities)?		
d.	What are the characteristics of the teacher?			
	i.	What are your beliefs and values about teaching and learning?		
	ii.	What are your expectations and intentions for how they intend to facilitate and foster your students' learning in the course?		
	iii.	How do you rate your teaching ability and expertise in the subject matter being taught in the course?		
e.	What are the characteristics of the course?			
	i.	In what modality is it offered (face-to-face, online, blended, etc.)?		

	ii.	How often does it meet and for how long?
	iii.	How often is it offered? How often is it taught by this instructor?
2.	What are the core design principles in the course?	
a.	What is the nature of the course's learning outcomes?	
i.	What do they say and mean explicitly?	
ii.	What do they say and mean implicitly?	
iii.	Are they more focused on memorizing and "knowing" or are they more about critical thinking and analysis?	
b.	What primary strategies do you use to engage students?	
c.	How often and in what ways do you assess students (formatively and/or summatively) and what deliverables are expected from them?	
d.	How often and in what ways do you ask students to interact?	
i.	With the content?	
ii.	With each other?	
iii.	With the instructor?	
3.	What are the goals and expectations for this review?	
a.	Why are you putting the course up for review?	

b.	What are you hoping to get out of the review?	
c.	How will the reviewer gain access to the course and its materials?	