

English Department Formative Evaluation of Teaching

The members of the English department affirm the process of formative evaluation for the following purposes: to support one another in becoming more effective teachers and to give new faculty members a clear sense of the expectations of the department and of the college for performance in the classroom.

In recognition of the varying experience and needs of all faculty members in the department, we think it important to have a formative system that individuals can adapt to specific purposes at different moments in a career. Therefore, we have developed lists of options from which junior and senior colleagues can choose. We encourage each member of the department to pursue whichever options he or she finds most relevant and helpful.

Junior Faculty

Each junior faculty will select two tenured faculty from the English department by the Fall of the second year to observe some classroom sessions. The junior colleague and the selected senior faculty will agree on a schedule of visits and procedures before any observations take place. Before a classroom visit, the junior faculty should outline the objectives for the class session and share relevant course materials; after an observation, the senior faculty will offer feedback.

In addition, junior faculty may select any of the following options:

1. Ask the selected tenured faculty to continue to observe one's teaching every semester or every year until tenure.
2. Ask selected faculty members to review student evaluations, graded papers, assignment sheets, and/or lesson plans.
3. Consider asking a mentor to observe two or more meetings of the same class to generate more comprehensive assessments.
4. Seek junior faculty mentors both inside and outside the department.
5. Observe the classes of a senior faculty mentor.
6. Exchange classroom visits with selected senior or junior colleagues.
7. Seek faculty mentors outside the English department.
8. Ask faculty mentors to review materials written and gathered as part of the first-year "salary review."
9. Request the videotaping of a class (or classes) to review with a faculty mentor.
10. Participate in department conversations about pedagogy.
11. Participate in a "teaching circle" with a smaller group of faculty, either inside or outside the department.
12. Do a "dry run" of the third-year/tenure review, including an evaluation of teaching materials and scholarship with the faculty mentors and the department Chair.
13. Examine the teaching materials available in the department office.
14. Suggest ways to improve formative evaluation.

Senior Faculty

1. Invite senior colleagues to observe one's teaching.
2. As part of a senior review, invite colleagues to observe one's teaching.
3. Team-teach.
4. Participate in department conversations about pedagogy.
5. Participate in a "teaching circle" with a smaller group of faculty, either inside or outside the department.
6. Participate in teaching workshops.
7. Examine the teaching materials available in the department office.

Teaching resources and materials are available in the English department office for examination by any department faculty member. These resources include sample syllabi from many courses. A teaching library includes books and articles related to pedagogy and mentoring.

Every four years the department will review our formative plan to assess its effectiveness in meeting the needs of junior faculty and in contributing to our development as teachers.

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