

## PEER OBSERVATION OF TEACHING

This policy on peer observation of teaching becomes effective on July 1, 1999, when the approved tenure policy has been fully implemented at Dominican University.

- I. **PURPOSE:** To document teaching effectiveness for the purposes of continued appointment, promotion, or tenure. Teaching effectiveness includes classroom teaching and course structure.
- II. **CRITERIA FOR PEER OBSERVATION:** A minimum of two peer observation reports are submitted to the Professional Review and Ethics Committee (PREC).
  - 2.1 Observation of Teaching by Class Visit. The following areas may be considered:
    - 2.1.1 intellectual command of subject matter;
    - 2.1.2 the ability to provoke and broaden student interest in the subject matter, hold attention, use relevant examples, exhibit patience with questions;
    - 2.1.3 sensitivity to group dynamics/class participation;
    - 2.1.4 clarity of course materials and syllabi.
    - 2.1.5 any other aspect of teaching that the candidate may specifically ask the peer observer to evaluate.
- III. **CONFERENCES:** The peer observer and candidate meet for discussion before and after the observation.
  - 3.1 A pre-conference between the peer observer and the candidate is required. During this time, the candidate can talk about the aims/purpose of the class session.
  - 3.2 A post-conference follows the observation. In a meeting at a mutually convenient time, the peer observer provides constructive remarks on the strengths and weaknesses observed. The candidate may respond, if s/he wishes, with his/her own assessment of the classroom visitation.
- IV. **PEER OBSERVERS:** A minimum of two peer observers are named by the Vice President for Academic Affairs (VPAA) during the year prior to a request for continued appointment, promotion, or tenure.
  - 4.1 The VPAA and the candidate will confer on the choice of peer observers. In cases where a disagreement over selection of observers occurs, see V.5.5.
  - 4.2 The VPAA will select 2 peer observers from a list of faculty, one of whom will be a senior member of the discipline, if possible.
  - 4.3 Outside peer observers are used when appropriate. Such situations might include, but not be limited to, a faculty member with specialized knowledge not held by anyone else at the University or departments where several faculty members are reviewed in the same year.
  - 4.4 Faculty members selected as peer reviewers receive appropriate training. They may serve as peer observer for up to three candidates a year.
  - 4.5 Peer observation is considered part of a faculty member's service to the University community. Outside peer observers are reimbursed for expenses.
  - 4.6 Peer observers must have had a successful review by the Professional Review and Ethics Committee.
- V. **DOCUMENTATION**
  - 5.1 Each peer observer fills out the appropriate form, Peer Observation Report Form, and signs it.
  - 5.2 At the post conference, the candidate signs the report, indicating that s/he has read the report.
  - 5.3 The peer observer then sends the Peer Observation Report to the VPAA's Office.
  - 5.4 The candidate may add to or clarify the report by a peer observer by writing a statement for the PREC. S/he forwards this statement to the VPAA's Office, to be included as an addendum to the appropriate Peer Observation Report.
  - 5.5 If the candidate wishes, s/he may supplement these reports with a maximum of three formative peer observation reports from any semester within three years of the review. (These formative peer observation reports follow the same format, process, and criteria as the summative reports.) The candidate must understand, however, that the PREC will in most cases weigh the summative reports more heavily than those completed for formative purposes.

