



TYPES OF PEER OBSERVATIONS

Peer observation of teaching can come in multiple forms, and the purpose may be either formative or summative. The chart below provides information about different types of peer observations, to help you identify the right approach to meet your needs.

Description	Best Practices & Other Notes	Example
I observe you teach for my own professional development.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Individuals opt in and visit one or more classes, taught by one or more instructors Focus is on individual reflection and formative development, as they observe others teach Can be true peer exchange, or can provide opportunities for individuals to observe exceptional instructors 	CTL's <i>Teaching Triads</i> program
You observe me teach and provide me with formative feedback on my teaching.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Individual requests observation of their teaching, for the purpose of receiving formative feedback. Instructor shares information with observer ahead of time to set the stage for a productive observation. Observer meets with instructor afterwards to share targeted feedback on the teaching they have observed. 	CTL's observation services ¹
You observe me teach and produce an evaluation of my teaching effectiveness.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clear information provided to both parties about how teaching effectiveness will be measured. Multiple observations – possibly conducted by different observers – incorporated into a summative report. Summative report reflects change over time. Summative report provided in concert with an instructor's self-evaluation or reflection on their teaching, as well as information from student evaluations of teaching. 	Traditional departmental peer observations

Formative feedback is focused on development or improvement – or *formation*. It is typically provided to an individual or group in a way that allows them to adjust their approach in an informed way. Formative feedback on teaching can also contribute to more summative evaluation of teaching by informing (1) a self-reflection statement about teaching, and/or (2) a summative report capturing growth and development over time.

Summative evaluation is focused on making judgments about level of proficiency (or progress toward specific goals). It is typically provided to an individual or group as well as to an outside party (sometimes the evaluator themselves) in a way that provides information about how well the individual or group is doing as compared to defined measures of success. Summative evaluation of teaching can also be used formatively and can contribute to an individual's reflection on their own teaching effectiveness.

¹ CTL's services are not true 'peer observations' as they bring a teaching and learning expert into the process. However, the form of the observation is parallel.