Classroom Observation Form

for Tenure Track Faculty

This form is to be completed by administrators, department chairs, or tenured faculty members performing formal observations for inclusion in a tenure track faculty member’s portfolio. When possible, observers are encouraged to meet with the tenure track faculty member prior to the observation to gain context for the class session that will be observed and to identify any areas where the faculty member would like specific focused feedback.

This form must be completed and returned to the faculty member within **one week** of the formal observation. It is suggested but not required that the observer meet with the faculty member to review feedback in person.

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| Instructor’s Name | **Linda Monroe** | Class and Section Observed | **Microbiology 233 Section EFG** |
| Observer’s Name | **Dana Department Chair** | Date of Observation | **XX/XX/XX** |
| Relation of Observer to Instructor | **Biology Department Chair** | Number of Students Enrolled | **18** |
| College | **Olive-Harvey** | Number of Students Attending | On time: **11** Tardy: **5****(two students absent)** |

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| **Directions for Assigning Ratings** |
| For each category below, a description is included to guide the observation. **It is not necessary for all bullets to be addressed or observed**; rather, the bulleted list offers direction and suggestions to guide ratings and comments. In commentary, describe observed strengths as well as areas for growth. ***Commentary is required for each section.*** After offering commentary, select the appropriate descriptive rating based on the following definitions:* **Strong**—evidence indicates that the instructor consistently meets and sometimes exceeds expectations. Specific examples illustrating strength should be included in commentary to justify the rating.
* **Satisfactory**—evidence indicates that the instructor tends to meet expectations and the observer does not identify any specific concerns in a given area.
* **Needs Improvement**—evidence indicates minor to moderate concerns in the given area and focused support is needed. A detailed explanation of concerns and the type of support needed should be outlined in commentary.
* **Significant Concern**—evidence indicates significant concerns in the given area, suggesting that a formal action plan may be needed. A detailed explanation of concerns and necessary improvements should be outlined in commentary.
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| **Syllabus** |
| *The following list of elements is offered to guide your comments and rating:** Official course description and course prerequisites are stated
* Course objectives and Student Learning Outcomes are stated, are appropriate for the course, and match departmental master syllabus if existent
* Student Learning Outcomes are measureable
* Grading system is stated clearly and standards used to assess students’ work are adequately explained
* Variety of assignments listed (e.g., in-class tests, lab reports, essays, etc.) indicate that Student Learning Outcomes will be assessed using multiple methods
* Course policies (e.g., ADW, late work, participation) are stated clearly, and all policies are consistent with college policies
* Adequate information regarding course content (e.g., required texts and materials, course outline, etc.) is included
* Adequate information regarding student support (e.g., office hours, and appropriate academic support services) is included
* Syllabus is easy to navigate, well written, and professional
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| Comments:**The syllabus is thorough and easy to navigate. It includes important supplemental material to help students to be successful in the class such as the “Strategies for Success” section. Policies appear to be carefully considered and crafted to help students succeed in the course.**  |
| [x] Strong [ ] Satisfactory [ ] Needs Improvement [ ] Significant Concern |

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| **Description of Class Session Observed** |
| Describe the class session observed including the session’s intended purpose, the types of instructional techniques used (e.g., lecture, discussion, small group activities, in-class writing, experiential learning, etc.), and the sequence of activities, including the approximate amount of time spent on each activity.**The class observed dealt with the preparation of a bacterial smear and the Gram staining procedure. According to the instructor, “the Gram stain is a method for staining bacteria to characterize their shapes and chemical structures, and thus aid in their identification.” The class began with the students preparing a bacterial smear on a microscope slide (30 minutes), followed by a lecture of approximately 20 minutes on the Gram stain procedure. The class then transitioned back to lab work (45 minutes), where the students performed the Gram stain procedure themselves and observed their slides under the microscope. The last 30 minutes of the class was used to begin coverage of a new topic (Eukaryotic Cells and Microorganisms).** |

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| **Learning Environment** |
| *The following list of elements is offered to guide your comments and rating:** Class is managed in a way that is conducive to learning and demonstrates respect for students
* Distractions (cell phones, side talking, etc.) are minimized and do not interfere with learning
* Policies stated in the syllabus are appropriately and consistently enforced
* Instructor’s expectations of students are clear and consistent throughout the class session
* Instructor works to ensure that students are on task (e.g., by circulating during group work, by acknowledging off-task behavior and redirecting students, etc.)
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| Comments:**Students appear to be respected by the instructor. No recurrent major distractions were noted. Instructor’s expectations may have been made clearer, however. For example, when students began doing performing the Gram stain, the instructor did not seem to have a clear preference on whether or not students wore goggles or gloves, which seem as though they should be basic lab procedures. (I also noted one student chewing gum, which, I imagine, is inappropriate for a lab environment.) Clarifying these expectations, as well as explaining the reason for them, may help students develop positive habits for lab behavior necessary for the work place.** **Instructor did circulate among the students while lab procedures were being performed and spoke to them individually to address any questions they had.**  |
| [ ] Strong [x] Satisfactory [ ] Needs Improvement [ ] Significant Concern |

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| **Content and Lesson Organization** |
| *The following list of elements is offered to guide your comments and rating:** Class session’s purpose is clear and time is organized effectively to meet the session’s purpose
* Class session’s purpose is aligned with one or more of the stated Student Learning Outcomes
* Lesson is organized logically and content is sequenced appropriately
* Pacing and difficulty of material are appropriate for the level of the class
* Instructor’s command of subject matter is evident (TO BE COMPLETED BY OBSERVERS WITH DISCIPLINE TRAINING ONLY)
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| Comments:**The instructor had written the outline for the day on the board at the beginning of the class. She also had listed the steps of the Gram stain on the board, for easy reference for the students.****I would have liked to get more set up for how Gram Staining fit into the larger SLOs of the class at the very beginning. As an outside observer, this was not immediately clear to me; however, it may have been clear to students. I also found that the importance of Gram Staining became clearer throughout the instructor’s presentation as she started to provide examples of how this procedure can be applied in healthcare settings.****The pacing and difficulty of the class seemed reasonable and appropriate for the level.** **At one point the instructor referred back to an earlier biology class, thus jogging students’ memory. I found this reference useful in order to activate prior schema, and it helps students see how courses in a sequence fit together.** |
| [ ] Strong [x] Satisfactory [ ] Needs Improvement [ ] Significant Concern |

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| **Presentation and Delivery** |
| *The following list of elements is offered to guide your comments and rating:** Instructor conducts him/herself in a professional manner
* Instructor begins and ends class on time
* Instructor manages time effectively to maximize students’ time engaged in learning activities
* Instructor opens and closes lesson effectively, situating learning within the broader context of the course
* Instructor’s verbal communication is effective (e.g., instructor enunciates clearly and can be heard and understood throughout the room, etc.)
* Instructor’s written communication is effective (e.g., use of board, handouts, PowerPoint, visual aids, etc.)
* Instructor is clear when delivering content, giving directions, and answering questions
* Instructor helped students to grasp challenging material by presenting examples to clarify points, relating new ideas to familiar concepts and students’ prior knowledge, restating important ideas at appropriate times, and/or varying explanations of complex material
* Students are actively engaged (e.g., taking notes when appropriate, participating in activities and discussions; demonstrating body language that suggests engagement)
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| Comments:**Some minor technical difficulties impeded the immediate start of class, although these difficulties are standard and did not result in a net loss of more than a few minutes. If possible, it may be helpful to try to set up PowerPoints, etc. before class or while students are working independently.** **There was one point where a student asked the instructor to speak louder; I am not sure if some students had difficulty hearing throughout the lesson, but this may be worth asking students.****Visuals were very clear and easy to read. The instructor also clarified that they were available to students, limiting the need for note taking, except for one detail that she encouraged students to jot down. I appreciated these verbal cues indicating when students did or did not need to take notes.** **I noticed that the instructor mostly made eye contact with students on the left hand side of the room—and indeed these are the students who answered more of the questions. I encourage the instructor to use eye contact, and ideally the use of names, to ensure that the \*whole\* class is engaged in the presentation.****After the students had completed the viewing of their slides, the instructor returned to a discussion of new material (Eukaryotic Cells). She used Powerpoint slides, which had also been provided to the students as copies. Because they had the copies, most of the students were able to pay attention to the lesson. They would write down occasional additional notes on points that were not included on the hand-out. The instructor would let the students know when a particular concept was not included on the slides, so that they knew they should write it down. At the beginning of the lesson the instructor also had distributed a series of questions which followed the sequence of the presentation. The questions were mainly short answer or fill-in-the-blank. This seemed effective in helping students to stay focused. Most of them were listening to the lesson and writing in the answers as they came up during the discussion. I would suggest that the instructor consider giving these worksheets out in advance of the lesson and making it in assignment which students complete on their own. That way, they can check their own work rather than simply record the answers as the instructor presents the lesson. This would help cultivate greater responsibility on the part of the student and also help them be more prepared for the lesson.** |
| [ ] Strong [x] Satisfactory [ ] Needs Improvement [ ] Significant Concern |

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| **Critical Thinking** |
| *The following list of elements is offered to guide your comments and rating:** Instructor employs methods that develop students’ ability to communicate and problem solve using the discipline’s thinking, practice, and procedures
* Class session provides the appropriate level of challenge and is designed to help students grow intellectually and think in new ways
* Method of instruction helps to build critical thinking
* Instructor creates an environment that fosters students’ intellectual curiosity
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| Comments:**Several critical thinking questions were posed to students within the lecture portion of the class; however, the instructor’s wait time was very brief and students called out answers. This meant that quieter students or those who needed a longer process time were not encouraged to engage with the question. I encourage her to expand wait time after questions to encourage more students to consider the question and formulate an answer. For critical thinking questions, a think/pair/share model may be used to ensure that all students are actively working to answer the question.****Brief case studies that illustrate problems lab technicians encounter could be employed to help students think critically about various consequences of skipping certain steps of the process or using old samples, etc. Such case studies need only include a few sentences of text plus a photo of a slide illustrating the inconclusive or erroneous result, but engaging this way with the material may help visual students to better grapple with potential pitfalls, internalize the importance of each step of the process, and improve their ability to troubleshoot in the future.****Although I would rate this area as “satisfactory,” I see it as a great area to demonstrate growth in the future through more deeply engaging students’ ability to troubleshoot and anticipate problems and solutions that frequently occur in lab procedures such as this one.** |
| [ ] Strong [x] Satisfactory [ ] Needs Improvement [ ] Significant Concern |

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| **Student Assessment and Support** |
| *The following list of elements is offered to guide your comments and rating:** Instructor exhibits ability to determine whether or not students understand material and uses formative assessment to determine appropriate pacing of instruction and next steps (e.g., follow up assignments, use of student resources, etc.)
* Instructor promotes students’ reflection on, and ownership of, their own learning progress by helping them self-assess and determine appropriate next steps
* Instructor displays respect for and interest in students (e.g., uses of students’ names, maintains eye contact with students, greeting students as they enter the class, etc.)
* Instructor identifies and assists students who are struggling
* Instructor conveys confidence in each students’ ability to learn
* Instructor engages all students, including both quiet or low-achieving students and those who are vocal or successful
* Instructor fosters student peer interaction that supports learning and promotes cooperation, collaboration and teamwork
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| Comments:**During the lecture observed, student assessment and support was very limited. Although the instructor did ask some questions to ensure that students were engaged and following along, it appeared as though the same students were answering these questions. Because she allowed students to call answers out, there was no good way to assess if \*all\* students were engaged and following along.** **Use of the think/pair/share method combined with teacher circulation could greatly help the instructor assess students and offer support before the lab procedure began. If time limitations make this strategy untenable, ensuring that each student receives eye contact throughout the lecture, and encouraging quieter students to answer questions could help.****During the lecture/PowerPoint presentation in the last portion of the class, the instructor could consider incorporate the use of “clicker” questions throughout the lesson to encourage more student participation and to use as an assessment tool.**  |
| [ ] Strong [ ] Satisfactory [x] Needs Improvement [ ] Significant Concern |

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| **Additional Comments** |
| Use this space for any of the following purposes:1. to comment specifically on any focus area the instructor has identified for the observation;
2. to report on progress since the last observation (when applicable);
3. to provide any questions you had during the observation regarding instructional or classroom management choices;
4. to offer any additional commentary not covered above;
5. to offer summative commentary to highlight notable strengths or areas for growth and/or to offer focus for the faculty member’s future professional development;
6. to include any needed action plans. (An action plan must be developed in coordination with the candidate and must include an agreed upon list of measurable next steps with dates for completion and follow up.)
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| Comments:**Overall, I found this class to be satisfactory. I had no major concerns, although I did note a few areas for growth in the sections above. I specifically noted that student assessment and support was limited during the lecture portion of this class. I suggest that the instructor consider the use of a student response system (clickers) as an assessment tool to streamline the process and allow for greater student engagement.** |

Signature: Dana Department Chair Date: XX/XX/XX