Rossier Classroom Observation Rubric

INTELLECTUAL CHALLENGE
Higher-order Thinking
Appropriate Content
Contextual Relevance

LEARNING ENVIRONMENT
Affective
Physical
Management

DISCOURSE
Learners as Partners in Conversation
Discipline-Specific Language

ASSESSMENT
Learning Goals
Assessments
Feedback

LESSON CYCLE
Prior Knowledge
Instruction and Practice
Shared Reflection
Learner Responsibility
1. Instructor Presentation 2. No Shared Reflection, No Accountability 3. No Accountability 4. All Parts of Cycle
# Classroom Observation Rubric

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dimensions</th>
<th>Levels</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Intellectual Challenge</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>This dimension captures cognitive complexity or academic rigor of learning activities during instruction. Quality of intellectual challenge is determined by both learner and activity. Higher levels of intellectual challenge are associated with the following:</td>
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<tr>
<td>1. <strong>Higher order thinking</strong>:</td>
<td>Learners engage primarily in low-level thinking tasks (e.g., memorization or recall of basic facts) and spend less time* on higher order thinking tasks (e.g., analysis, synthesis, evaluation). Learning activities are not aligned with discipline-specific content. Neither task nor Instructor helps learners transfer learning to real life settings.</td>
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<td>2. <strong>Appropriate content</strong>:</td>
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<td>Learning activities that reflect a developmentally appropriate knowledge core (e.g., course content and professional standards), and</td>
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<td>3. <strong>Contextual relevance</strong>:</td>
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<td>Teaching that helps learners transfer content to application in real life settings.</td>
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### Learning Environment

This dimension examines the context of learning, including classroom cultural practices and norms as well as physical and interactional spaces that foster learning. This dimension considers the following:

1. **Affective:** Emotional safety (trust, respect, norms and opportunities for collaboration, encouraging learners to take intellectual risks); Valuing learner identities (integrating learners' experiences into instruction in a positive manner, respect for cross-cultural differences, helping learners value and make learning relevant, treating all learners fairly); High expectations (Instructor communicates that all learners can learn, improve, and engage in behaviors that foster learning and learners communicate high expectations for themselves and others).

2. **Activity management** (classroom management) and organization: Evidence of routines. Transitions from activity to activity are smooth. Time is not wasted. Instructor ensures all learners are on-task and instills responsibility for self- and peer-management among learners, and

### Discourse

This dimension is the quality of dialogue Instructor promotes and facilitates. In an instructional setting, high quality dialogue occurs when the following features are in place:

1. Opportunities for all learners to participate as **partners in conversation:** Instructor facilitates learner-to-learner interactions, takes up learners' contributions, enables all learners to speak, asks questions that activate prior knowledge, probes for elaboration and evidence, and models language and strategies that facilitate discussion (e.g., Socratic dialogue and clarifying questions).

2. Fostering use of **discipline-specific language** and academic language (e.g., through modeling).

<table>
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<th>Feature</th>
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<tr>
<td>Learning Environment</td>
<td>Environment is primarily negative, with no safety for learners to express themselves and no support from Instructor. Instructor does not appear to know or appreciate individual learners (e.g., does not bring in their backgrounds). Instructor may communicate low expectations (e.g., &quot;I know many of you won't do the reading.&quot;). Time and activities may be poorly managed (e.g., wasted time, learner inappropriate behavior left unchecked, too much time spent disciplining learners) or overly controlled by Instructor (e.g., learners are stifled).</td>
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<tr>
<td>Discourse</td>
<td>Environment is generally safe in that there is no hostile behavior (there may even be a generally polite tone), but learners are not encouraged to voice their thoughts. Instructor makes general references to learners' backgrounds or to their experiences outside the learning setting. Instructor does not communicate expectations to motivate learners. Routines may be followed rigidly. There may be a few instances of unchecked off-task behavior. Instructor occasionally monitors learners' completion of learning tasks.</td>
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</table>

Learners are comfortable giving each other critical feedback and taking intellectual risks. Instructor brings learners' experiences outside of learning setting into instruction in positive ways and connects these experiences to the content. Instructor communicates to all learners that they are capable of mastering the learning at hand and of engaging in behaviors that foster learning. Activities well organized and learners monitor their own work habits as well as those of their peers.
### Assessment

This dimension measures how Instructor uses information about learner performance to drive instruction and provides feedback to learners to support learning goals.

1. **Communication of clear learning goals and assessment criteria.**
   - Instructor does not provide learning goals or assessment criteria or provides these as activities (e.g., "we will have a discussion").
   - While they may be broadly stated (e.g. "to improve our understanding of leadership"), learning goals and assessment criteria are not clearly articulated. Feedback is provided, but it only signals to learners that they are making or not making progress (e.g. "that's right") but does not indicate how.
2. **Use of information from formal and informal assessments (e.g., Instructors’ questioning learners to gauge what they are learning versus what the Instructor is teaching) to alter instruction when necessary, and**
   - Instructor assesses learners’ performance and tailors instruction appropriately.
   - Instructor provides feedback that explains what is good or bad about a learners’ performance. Learners understand how to improve their work.
3. **Feedback.**
   - Instructor and peers provide information to learners about their performance compared to a standard (e.g., use of rubric).
   - Learning goals and assessment criteria are articulated specifically (e.g., "I expect to see you use APA first level heading formats").
   - Instructor articulates clear learning goals and assessment criteria and reinforces these throughout the lesson. Learners demonstrate understanding of assessment criteria and their progress towards learning goals. Instructor monitors the progress of learners and provides feedback to inform the improvement of their work.

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\(^a\) Indicates most important component.
Lesson Cycle
This measures the coherence of a goal-directed process that includes a logical progression of activities. That is, the lesson contains a clear beginning, middle, and end and maps onto the following phases of an instructional cycle:

1. **Accessing prior knowledge** (beginning of the lesson - to motivate students and engage them in content of learning related to learning goals),

2. **Direct, explicit instruction or opportunities for students to engage in inquiry, using guided and/or independent practice** and move toward learning goals (middle of the lesson),

3. **Shared reflection**: Articulating shared understanding of what was learned, (end of the lesson) and

4. **Fostering learners' responsibility** to evaluate, monitor, and adjust their own learning (versus engaging in activity for activity's sake). This should occur throughout the lesson.

| The only aspect of lesson cycle that is evident is direct and explicit instruction and/or opportunities for learners to engage in inquiry, opportunities for learners to engage in guided and/or independent practice. Instructor does not access prior knowledge and there is no shared reflection with learners at the end of a lesson. Learners are not held accountable for evaluating, monitoring, and adjusting their own participation and learning. | Instructor asks learners about their prior understanding. Instructor provides direct, explicit instruction or opportunities for learners to engage in inquiry, opportunities for learners to engage in guided and/or independent practice. However, there is no shared reflection with learners at the end of a lesson, nor are learners held accountable for evaluating, monitoring, and adjusting their own participation and learning. | Instructor asks learners about their prior understanding. Instructor provides direct, explicit instruction or opportunities for learners to engage in inquiry, opportunities for guided and/or independent practice. Instructor helps learners make connections between activities and gives learners opportunities to reflect on what they learned, but Instructor does not hold learners accountable to evaluate, monitor, and adjust their own participation and learning. | Instructor determines learners' prior knowledge by asking them what they know at the beginning of the lesson, provides direct, explicit instruction, and/or opportunities to engage in inquiry, guided practice, or independent practice. It is clear what learners are supposed to learn throughout the lesson. Instructor and learners co-construct a summary of what they learned. Instructor holds learners accountable to evaluate, monitor, and adjust their own participation and learning. |