

CICT Course Observation Guidelines

Pre-Observation Form

Instructor being observed: Please fill out this pre-observation form and share it with your observer prior to the class session being observed.

Instructor observed: Matt Chmielewski **Observer:** Daniel Zajic

Class observed: Bi-302L **Date and time of class:** 10:45am, 2/12/19

1. What do you hope to gain from participating in this observation?

By participating in this observation I hope to gain insight into my teaching style in order to improve the efficacy of my teaching. I'm particularly interested in reflecting on time management and presentation style.

2. What would you like for the observer to know about this course and the class session they will be observing? (Where in the quarter will it take place? What's going on in the course? Anything out of the ordinary or of concern about the class, timing, students, etc.?)

The class is mid-quarter. We are covering the anatomy and histology of the endocrine system as well as working through a lab in which students measure a variety of metrics related to blood cells. Students will generate data from their own blood and process these data by generating common metrics. Conceptual understanding of how these metrics relate to properties of the blood itself will be assessed via a group worksheet in which students are asked to apply their knowledge to evaluate and analyze these measures relative to proposed scenarios.

3. What goal or outcome do you have in mind for your students during this class session?

During this session I would like students to walk away having understood the histological differences between endocrine organs, the components of blood, as well as how various measures of blood count and hemoglobin relate to normal and pathological conditions.

4. What would you like for the observer to pay attention to and give you feedback on during this class session?

I'd like the observer to look at the pacing of the lecture as well as the apparent efficacy of my interactions during group active learning activities.

Observation Form

Observer: During the observation, it's recommended that you take careful notes that detail what the instructor is doing, what students are doing, and any questions or suggestions that come up for you as you watch the session.

Your notes might look like this or you can write your notes directly after the questions on the next page:

What is happening?	What do you notice? What does it mean?
9:00 - Instructor reviews last week's lesson, asks students to recall concepts, and students raise hands to answer.	Good way to remind students of concepts and transition into the next topic.
9:10 - Instructor begins lecture, uses slides and board to illustrate new concepts. Students listen/take notes.	Some students are taking notes, but many aren't. How might they be more engaged? Instructor questions every few minutes may help, or asking students to work together on a problem after 10 minutes or so of lecture.

Considerations:

- Instructor preparedness and knowledge of the content
- Organization and focus
- Time management
- Tone of the class created through speaking style, communication with students, and body language
- Tools such as presentations, handouts, videos, and board use
- Student involvement through speaking, writing, reading, and other forms of interaction
- Checks for understanding (formative assessments) in the form of questioning, show of hands, group work, written assignments, etc.
- Opportunities for students to practice concepts in class
- Evidence of student comprehension, etc.

1. Describe what happened in this class session. What was done by the instructor and/or the students? What teaching methods did you observe? How effective were these activities and methods in achieving the goal or student outcome that the instructor had set out for this class session? Explain.

The class began with the instructor giving an organized introduction and overview of what will be happening during the class and what expectations he had for the students. The instructor gave a PowerPoint presentation, which was available online for the students to follow along to. Throughout the presentation, he used a laser pointer and finger pointing to emphasize certain material on the PowerPoint. The instructor used hand movement and gestures to show and demonstrate certain topics and procedures. I observed some students taking notes when the instructor put special emphasis on certain topics. I believe telling students what they were expected to know before teaching the material was an effective strategy. This allowed students to take notes at a level they were expected to know the material.

2. What “worked” particularly well during this class session? Were there any small-group activities, assignments, or teaching strategies that stood out as most effective or engaging?

The instructor asked a few questions during the lecture which allowed students to engage. I noticed that students were engaged (laughed, smiled, took notes) when the instructor gave real-life examples, non-scientific examples of certain topics, and made funny comments/jokes. It seemed at times the students were getting distracted and no longer engaged (towards the second half of the lecture), but were brought back when the instructor used the previously mentioned methods. Once the lecture was over, the students organized themselves into small-groups (3-4 students per group) to complete the lab assignment. Students appeared ready to complete the assignment and had the basic knowledge to start their experiments because of the instructor thoroughness explaining the experiments during lecture. The instructor walked around the room and checked in on groups as they began their experiments to ensure they knew what they were doing. The students were comfortable asking questions when they needed help.

3. Was there a point during this class session when the instructor “lost” student attention? If so, what do you think caused it? How did the instructor react, what did he/she do to regain student attention? Were the instructor’s efforts in this regard effective?

As previously mentioned, many students appeared to lose interest during the second half of the lecture. This may be attributed to the lecture being particularly longer than others, since the students were going to be completing experiments that usually did not happen. This may have also been attributed to the time of day the class took place (10:45-1:35) – students may have been getting tired and hungry. The instructor was able to regain student attention by telling jokes and making funny comments about the topics.

4. How did the physical surroundings or environment of the class session affect the learning experience, if at all? (For example, the temperature or set up of the classroom, the time of day, number of students in the class, outside noise, lighting, problems with equipment or technology such as VCR, COW, etc.)

The classroom had many windows in it, though the windows were behind the students so they

did not appear to be distracted by them. During the lecture the vent system stopped, which many students noticed and appeared confused by temporarily. Students were again distracted when the vent system turned back on, but only momentarily. This was not the instructor's fault.

5. What suggestions do you have for the instructor you observed in terms of expansion of particularly effective teaching strategies, improvement of teaching strategies that didn't work well, solving problems you observed, etc.?

Incorporating more questions throughout the lecture as well as real-life examples or applicable scenarios. Perhaps including examples of how you would quiz them or test them on the material would be beneficial to the student's studying as well as keeping the students engaged/paying attention during the lecture.

6. Other comments or observations:

Post-Observation Plan

Observer: Please write a letter detailing your feedback with specific suggestions for improvement. In your letter, please point to specific evidence in your observation that supports your praise and suggestions for improvement. Meet with the instructor to review the letter and to complete this plan with the instructor:

1. What did you notice about your own or students' performance during the class I observed?

During the class, I was conscious of the fact that the lecture portion of the course had the tendency to lose students part way through. I also noticed that during group work, some students were comparatively far less engaged than other students.

2. After reviewing my observation letter, what stands out as something that went well?

Asking questions of students during the lecture appears to have disrupted the tendency for students to disengage from the material. I also think that I create an open learning environment in which students are encouraged to ask questions and think for themselves.

3. What stands out as something you'd like to change?

I'd like to transition the lecture portion to be more engaging, and to promote more equal engagement during the active learning group work portion of the course.

4. How do you plan to bring about that change?

Regarding the lecture portion, explicitly constructing the lecture material to include pacing breaks that require student input would help ameliorate the problem with losing student interest. I will achieve this by adding a variety of elements that include asking more question to the class, taking classwide polls about concepts and discussing them, and think-pair-share min-breakouts. To address the uneven group participation, I will have groups explicitly choose tasks toward the common goal of completing the lab activity, and I will emphasize that these should be rotated weekly.