

MEMORANDUM

To: Academic Deans, Department Heads, and Faculty

From: Dr. Aashir Nasim, Provost & Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs 
Dr. Rahim Quazi, Associate Vice Provost, Faculty Affairs 

Date: June 1, 2026

Re: Faculty Peer Classroom Observations

Effective teaching thrives in environments where reflection, collaboration, and constructive feedback are valued and encouraged. As part of its commitment to strengthening instructional excellence, Prairie View A&M University continues to support practices that promote thoughtful engagement with teaching and learning. In this spirit, faculty have consistently emphasized the importance of peer classroom observations that provide substantive, collegial, and actionable feedback to support continuous improvement in teaching. When implemented well, classroom observations offer formative feedback that enhances instructional practice and provides supplemental information for periodic faculty evaluations. To ensure that classroom observations remain a meaningful and credible component of faculty development, the University is revising the requirements for faculty peer classroom observations.

Peer Observation Requirements

Effective Fall 2026, peer classroom observations will be required for:

- Tenure-track (TT), Non-tenure track (NTT, including Lecturers), and Academic Professional Track (APT) faculty during their first year at the University;
- TT faculty undergoing mid-tenure review;
- TT, tenured, and NTT/APT faculty undergoing tenure and/or promotion review; and
- All other faculty at least once every five (5) years, on a schedule determined by the department head / dean to ensure equitable distribution over the five-year cycle. Department heads / deans may, at their discretion, schedule observations at shorter intervals for faculty who may benefit from more frequent feedback.

Peer Observation Committees

Peer observations will be conducted by three-member faculty committees. These committees will be formed at the department level or, in schools and colleges without departments, at the school/college level. Committees are responsible for conducting all required observations; however, department heads and deans retain flexibility in implementation consistent with the guidelines herein. The composition of the peer observation committee is determined by the appointment type of the faculty member being observed. TT and tenured faculty members will be observed exclusively by tenured faculty, and NTT/APT faculty members will be observed by committees composed of two NTT/APT faculty members and chaired by a tenured faculty member.

When possible, committee members should include faculty with experience serving on faculty promotion committees. It is also recommended that committees be composed of faculty from similar academic disciplines and departments, although this is not a requirement, if there is noted and sufficient expertise among committee members to conduct a rigorous and fair evaluation.

Observation Framework and Implementation

Committees will apply evidence-based teaching criteria using the University's standardized peer observation forms (the [Faculty Classroom Visitation Form](#) for in-person courses and the [Faculty Online Classroom Observation Form](#) for online courses), which assess content mastery, instructional strategies, organization and clarity, student engagement, presentation skills, and classroom management. These forms incorporate both quantitative ratings and qualitative narrative feedback, ensuring that evaluations capture measurable indicators of effective teaching while also providing constructive insights for professional growth. This balanced structure is designed not only to assess instructional practice but also to promote continuous improvement and excellence in the classroom through collegial and actionable feedback. All required peer observations must be completed, and the results shared with faculty during the same semester in which the observation takes place. Peer observations are primarily formative in nature; however, observation reports conducted in connection with mid-tenure, tenure, or promotion review will be included in the faculty member's review portfolio and considered as part of the evaluation process — consistent with the University's existing practice.

Department heads are responsible for ensuring that peer observations are conducted according to schedule, that committees are appropriately constituted, and that observations are conducted in a manner consistent with the guidance offered herein. In cases where department heads are subject to review, the college/school dean or their designee will oversee the observation process, ensure that an appropriate peer review committee is convened, and verify that the evaluation is conducted in accordance with established procedures and standards. Faculty who wish to respond to or raise concerns regarding their peer observation report may do so through their department head or dean.

Special Cases

A. Observation of Adjunct Faculty

Adjunct faculty play an important role in the instructional mission of the University and are therefore subject to classroom observation to support instructional quality and student learning. Adjunct faculty should be observed by the department head or by one tenured faculty member designated by the department head. The purpose of the observation is formative in nature and intended to provide constructive feedback that supports effective teaching practices and alignment with departmental expectations. Observations should be conducted in a collegial and supportive manner, with feedback shared with the adjunct faculty member in a timely way to promote continuous improvement in the classroom.

B. Observation of Faculty with Primary Online Teaching Assignments

Faculty whose primary teaching responsibilities are delivered in an online format (defined here as faculty with 50% or more of assigned classes offered online in a semester) will be evaluated through a review of their online course environment and instructional practices. The observation may include an examination of course organization within the learning management system, clarity of instructional materials, communication with students, engagement strategies, timeliness of feedback, and alignment of assignments and assessments with course learning outcomes. The review will be conducted by the designated peer observation committee in a manner consistent with the principles outlined in this guidance, while recognizing the distinct pedagogical approaches associated with effective online instruction. The purpose of the observation is formative and developmental, providing constructive feedback to support high-quality online teaching and continuous improvement in the virtual learning environment.

Teaching Pedagogy and On-Going Support

The [Center for Teaching Excellence](#) remains available to support teaching efforts and offer workshops to ensure understanding of the observation criteria and process. In addition, the Center will provide resources, consultations, and professional development opportunities focused on evidence-based teaching practices, classroom engagement strategies, and the effective use of peer observation feedback. The Center is available to offer training sessions for peer observers to promote consistency and fairness in the application of evaluation standards across departments and colleges. These efforts are intended to foster a culture of continuous improvement in teaching and to ensure that faculty are supported as they refine their instructional approaches.

Deans and department heads are encouraged to provide measured release time or appropriate workload adjustments for faculty serving on peer observation committees, recognizing the time and effort required to conduct thoughtful and meaningful evaluations. Such accommodations should be calibrated to the scope of committee responsibilities and existing faculty workload commitments. This approach helps ensure that peer observations are conducted with the care and rigor necessary to support instructional excellence.

cc: Dr. Tomikia P. LeGrande, President and CEO, Prairie View A&M University
Dr. Tabitha Morton, Chair, Faculty Advisory Council, Prairie View A&M University