Cowles Library

Class Observation Procedures

In keeping with the practice of the other teaching units on campus, Cowles Library's Curriculum and Instruction Committee conducts periodic observations of classes taught by Cowles librarian instructors teaching credit-bearing classes identified by the "LIBR" rubric. The purpose of this document is to describe the procedures to be followed in the observations.

- 1) Observers: class observers shall be selected by the chair of the library's curriculum and instruction committee from the members of the library's instructional team. The instructional team is defined as those librarians who have teaching responsibility for credit-bearing LIBR courses or whose professional responsibilities entail a commitment of 50% or more of their scheduled working time to classroom instruction in information literacy or its equivalent.
- 2) Frequency of observation: Each instructor librarian will be observed at least once a year in one class.
- 3a) Observation procedures: The chair of the curriculum and instruction committee, in consultation with the chair of the library faculty council, shall develop a schedule of observation for each semester and assign a librarian to observe each instructor. The curriculum and instruction committee chair shall charge the observer with preparing a written report on her/his observation according to the criteria indicated in (4) below. The report shall be submitted to the chair of the curriculum and instruction committee at such time agreed upon between the observer and the curriculum and instruction committee chair.
 - b) The observer shall meet with the instructor s/he is assigned to observe at least one week prior to the scheduled observation. At that time, the instructor shall provide the observer with a syllabus, a lesson plan, and any readings assigned for the class to be observed. The instructor will explain the object of the lesson and the outcomes s/he expects students to achieve as a result of the class. The instructor may set reasonable "ground rules" for the observer's participation in or interaction with the class s/he is to observe. (For classes involving the active participation of students in exercises or group work, for example, the observer might be able to participate as a student).
- 4) Subsequent to the observation, the observer shall prepare the written report on his/her observations of the class. The report shall address lesson content, teaching style, pedagogical approaches or strategies employed in conveying the

information taught, and student engagement with the material. This report is to be submitted to the curriculum and instruction committee chair, who will then convene a meeting of the chair, the observer, and the instructor to review the report. A copy shall be made available to the instructor for her/his records.

5) The observation is meant to serve as an assessment tool and the observer's report is to be used as a tool for improving the delivery of instruction by individual instructors and the improvement of the library's instructional program overall. Taken together, observation reports may be used as a basis for developing pedagogical workshops or other means of improving the effectiveness of LIBR courses.

Approved and adopted at the regularly scheduled faculty meeting 10 May 2010.