

## C.O.R.E Program: Collaborative Observational Reflective Experience Program

The Collaborative Observational Reflective Experience (C.O.R.E.) Program provides a template that has been developed to offer a non-judgmental, professional, valuable, and positive experience in a one-to-one setting.

Teacher evaluations have long been an anxiety riddled, 'check-the-boxes', watch-your-back process that leaves faculty questioning the integrity of the methods used to assess the value of their worth as an instructor. Is it possible that the "institution" of education has been doing it all wrong? Why are teachers required to endure antiquated or ill-conceived assessment practices and forms that stifle creativity, innovative practices, and transformative learning models? Why does the process of teacher evaluations permeate such a punitive culture? The Collaborative Observational Reflective Experience (C.O.R.E.) Program provides a template that has been developed to offer a non-judgmental, professional, valuable, and positive professional development experience in a one-to-one setting. It is collaborative because the interaction, dialogue, and involvement is designed to create an egalitarian relationship where both individuals directly involved in the experience benefit equally. The skill sets and knowledge that each participant brings to the table is recognized and valued. This experience has an observational component in that one colleague will visit another's classroom to watch a lesson being taught while taking objective and subjective notes. The follow up chat allows for sharing of ideas and reflecting on teaching practices by both the observer and the teacher being observed. Colleague mentoring transforms into a dual learning situation where authentic self-assessment is facilitated. This workshop will demonstrate and share all aspects of the procedures and practices of the C.O.R.E. Program.

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## **Classroom Visit Guidelines**

These guidelines are listed to help you provide a non-judgmental, professional, valuable, and positive experience for yourself and your colleague.

### Before the classroom visit

1. Make initial communication with your colleague via email or phone.
2. Remind your colleague that your visit is not part of an assessment or evaluation and that you are most interested, and looking forward to, having time to share best teaching practices together.
3. Set a time a date for a 30-minute classroom visit and a 30-minute follow-up chat.
4. Remind your colleague that you will be taking clinical notes and jotting down questions to aid in your discussion. Consequently, you will not be able to participate in classroom dialogue or activities. Inform your colleague that you are not intentionally being antisocial, but rather, you are attempting to be inconspicuous during your visit.
5. Inform your colleague that making introductions is favorable at the beginning of your visit to reduce anxiety or questions from students.
6. Provide the classroom visit form (blank) and answer any questions they may have about the form.
7. Send a formal email (or other documented correspondence) outlining the protocol listed above

### During your classroom visit

1. Have the classroom visit form ready to be completed (initial information already noted).
2. Arrive a few minutes early.
3. Remind your colleague that you will not be engaging in classroom activities.
4. Ask your colleague where you may sit (that will cause the least distraction when you exit).
5. Use the middle column to list chronology (as each activity unfolds)
  - a. Begin timeline before class starts (when appropriate)
6. Use the left column to clinically list activities, observations, quotes
  - a. Clinical documentation
  - b. Include teaching practices that had positive impact
7. Use the right column to list questions; align questions with left column.
  - a. Questions should be non-judgmental

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- b. Questions can address a practice, observation, activity, or quote
  - c. Practice crafting questions that encourage dialogue on reflective teaching, specific methodology, educational technology, learning dispositions, etc.
8. After 30-minutes, leave quietly, providing eye contact and a friendly smile as you depart.

### After your classroom visit

1. Contact your colleague and thank them for allowing you to watch them teach.
2. Forward the classroom visit form to them and remind them that you will be using the form to refresh your memory during the follow-up chat.
3. Confirm the date and time for your 30-minute follow-up chat.

### During your follow-up chat

1. Provide a copy of the classroom visit form for your colleague and yourself.
2. Remind your colleague that your visit to their classroom and the follow-up chat are not part of an assessment or evaluation and that you are most interested, and looking forward to, having time to share best teaching practices together.
3. Inform your colleague how you completed the form
  - a. Center column: chronological
  - b. Left column: clinical observation
  - c. Right column: question that came to you as a result of observation
4. Inform your colleague that the box at the bottom is space for them to document anything of their choosing
5. Discuss classroom visit: There are many different approaches, from a strict sequence, to a more organic free-flowing conversation. Start with something positive. There should be no negatives: In place of negatives, ask questions that you have regarding a teaching practice, activity, quote, etc. Questions can be geared toward beginning a discussion or for your own information or knowledge.
6. Encourage your colleague to note at least one possible actionable item.
7. Continue the conversation past the 30-minute mark if it is appropriate and possible.

### Mentorship Climate

1. Recognize and draw on the expertise and strengths of your colleague by accessing prior knowledge to avoid assumptions.
2. Maintain an informal, professional, relaxed, and conversational style of communication. Be aware of the communication style/preference of your colleague (face-to-face, email, Skype, texting). Social media, as a mode of communication for this program, is not recommended.

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- 3. Share the lifelong learning mindset with your colleague. You do not need to have all the answers, just be willing to share and have a discussion with them.

This form is not part of the formal faculty evaluation process and will not be shared.

Teacher Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Observer: \_\_\_\_\_

Discipline/Course: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

<b>Clinical Observations</b>	<b>Time</b>	<b>Questions</b>

**Teacher's Reflective Thoughts and Possible Actionable Item(s)**