HUNTER
The City University of New York

Synchronous Online Teaching Observation Checklist for P-12 Instruction (Pilot Fall 2020)

This observation checklist is intended for use as a non-evaluative instrument, to be used as a supplement to guide observation of instruction where teachers are providing online, synchronous teaching to P-12 learners. It might be used alongside a familiar program or discipline-specific rubric to provide ideas about what might be present in an effective online, synchronous lesson. This may be used in the context of fieldwork teaching, student teaching, or in practicum. It could also be used or modified for teacher candidates who are carrying out observations of host teachers or peers.

Not Included in this Observation Checklist:
- Evaluation of overall course design.
- Aspects of teaching that cannot be observed in the online environment.
- Best practices that are specific to certain fields, class types or instructional styles.

Recommended Observer Characteristics:
- Has access to the synchronous session or a recording of the synchronous session.
- Observes a minimum of one class session.
- Is familiar with the course learning content and objectives listed in the lesson plan or learning segment/unit of study.
- Understands effective face-to-face instructional practices in the discipline.

Instructions for Use:
- Mark as present all relevant checklist items observed/accessible during the session, and by review of student work and instructor feedback submitted in conjunction with this session. May be used in concert with other tools in pre- and post-observation feedback sessions.

Context:
- Record pertinent characteristics of the course, student population, and physical environment. Examples: enrollment, student demographics, course LMS, class meeting time, and general education status.

Feature	Notes
INSTRUCTIONAL DESIGN	
□The class session demonstrates clear signs of planning and organization, and follows a logical flow. □Instructional materials for this class are age appropriate, ad-free, easily accessible, free of errors and broken hyperlinks □Where relevant, instructional materials include instructions for parental/home implementation and support □Instructor introduces the learning goals for the class session, which are visible to participants. □Universal Design for Learning (UDL) and accessibility issues are addressed in the materials and delivery of this session, including: sight, color-blindness, mobility, hearing, cognition, translation, and technical-(visuals, infographics, use of text features, graphics, accessible text, enlargement of type, use of audio podcasts or narrated slideshows) □Materials are made available to help students who cannot be online or have a technical difficulty (e.g., a recording of a live class is given after class for viewing; materials for performing offline are made available) □Session provides variety in visual, textual, kinesthetic and/or auditory activities to enhance student learning and accessibility. □Materials used in the session comply with copyright and fair use standards. □If co-taught (with co-teacher or cooperating teacher), evidence of co-planning, shared rules and policies for online delivery are evident in shared time presenting, use of breakout rooms, and task design.	
TIME MANAGEMENT	
□The class session starts and ends on time. □Instructor leaves time for questions, discussion/and or summarizing the session □Instructor maximizes in-class time, using active learning or applications.	

□Instructor clearly indicates time limits for all student activities, using a time-based agenda, visual and auditory prompts. □Instructor able to troubleshoot typical software and hardware problems so as to not lose instructional time. □Instructor has prepared technology relevant to the lesson and gathered needed links before the start of class.	

LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

□Instructor reviews "netiquette" and expectation for engagement and behavior □Evidence of community building (introductory or getting to know you activities/icebreakers/review or warmers later in semester) □Instructor creates opportunities for interaction between students (breakout rooms, use of chat, collaborative google docs). □It is evident that instructor is present, proactive, and engaged (if webcam on, is clearly visible and facing camera, keeps an eye on chat or Q & A, monitors waiting room, turns on/off mute as needed, has disabled distractions) □Instructor utilizes and controls webcam/audio features to optimize interactions. □Instructor checks for responsiveness(demonstrated through polls, body language, nods, simple checks or emojis, "thumbs up" to signal affirmation) □Instructor provides calming exercises or opportunities to feel similar to his/her school routine (stretches, provides a virtual "rug" area, uses familiar routines, refers to special connections that learners have at school). □Instructor uses names, and makes references to connect learners' interests, family traditions, home languages and cultures, values or special pets, relatives, etc. as part of the learning experience.	

STUDENT ENGAGEMENT

□Instructor uses active-learning exercises in balance with teacher-led presentation in appropriate relation to students' ages and the nature of the lesson □Before sending students to active learning tasks (group work, paired discussions, polling, team problem-solving, in-class writing), Instructor provides explicit modeling and instructions (e.g. rationale, duration, product) □Instructor monitors and manages active-learning exercises.	

□Students engage in active learning tasks that are goal-oriented, focused, project-based and inquiry-oriented □Instructor utilizes appropriate tools and materials to motivate learners (interactive or competitive games, music, video) □Instructor utilizes UDL principles and multiple means of engagement through choice projects, interactive games or apps (Voicethread, Flipgrid or narrated Powerpoints or low-tech engagement tools such as flashcards). □Draws non-participating students into activities/discussion and prevents specific students from dominating activities/discussion □Addresses potentially disruptive behaviors before they impact learning environment □Instructor builds in pauses in the lesson to provide opportunities for students to ask questions and promptly responds to questions	
ASSESSMENT and FEEDBACK	
□Instructor provides class generalized constructive and encouraging feedback on how to improve their comprehension or performance in class. □Attends respectfully to student comprehension or puzzlement. □Evidence of reinforcement (such as a point chart, a clip-up chart, token economy or certificate, positive points) appropriate to remote or online contexts. □Types of assessments are suitable for distance learning environment and provide immediate feedback □Instructor assesses students both informally and formally within the online or remote classroom through use of games, quizzes, online tests, etc. □Instructor seeks feedback from students on lesson and on ease of online technology and accessibility of course.	

Sourced from:

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