

Definitions: College (College of Health), Chair (Department or Division Chair), Associate Dean (Associate Dean for Academic Affairs, College of Health), University (University of Utah), Full-Time Faculty (Tenure-line and Career-line faculty with ≥ 0.75 FTE appointment and responsibilities in direct instruction)

Preamble

The College of Health has a solid reputation for excellence in teaching at both the undergraduate and graduate levels. We expect faculty to be engaged in administering a curriculum that is reflective of current research and practice. This commitment is central to the College and University as we also strive for excellence in our research and scholarly activities, clinical training programs, and service and outreach endeavors. We acknowledge the rich diversity across units and individual faculty members in the College, and recognize that instructional tactics vary widely, as well. In no way does this policy statement seek to interfere with academic freedom. Rather, this policy statement outlines a process through which we can more objectively assess teaching quality in its myriad forms. Standardized assessment procedures facilitate recognition of excellence as well as needs for support, and provide documentation of peer-review needed for reappointment, retention, promotion, and tenure decisions.

It should be noted that Tenure-line faculty are subject to the performance standards articulated in their individual Department/Division promotion and tenure guidelines.

Procedures

The Department/Division Chair or her/his designee (including staff from the Centers for Teaching and Learning Excellence or Teaching and Learning Technology) will conduct an observation of each faculty member. The Chair is ultimately responsible for determining which of each faculty member's courses will be observed. Standardized forms (appropriate for course format: in-person, online, hybrid) will be used throughout the College.

Each faculty member, including Chairs, should be observed at least once every two academic years. Faculty should be observed on a rotating basis and can also be observed during the summer session.

Following are the typical steps taken in the observation process:

1. The Chair and the faculty member will select three potential observation dates and identify the party to conduct the observation. The faculty member will deliver the syllabus for the course to the Chair and the observer prior to the earliest of the three dates.
2. The Chair will coordinate the observation on one of these three potential dates.
3. The faculty member and the observer will debrief the observation within 20 business days of the classroom visit.
4. By the last day of finals for the semester in which the observation occurred, the faculty member will submit to her or his Chair and the Associate Dean a copy of the observation form along with a personal statement articulating how the information from the observation was or will be used to enhance teaching quality. The faculty member will also submit a copy of the syllabus to the Associate Dean.
5. At the beginning of each semester, the Associate Dean will review the observation files from the previous semester (in conjunction with student feedback) and follow-up as needed with the faculty member:
 - a. Based on these data, the Associate Dean can initiate nominations for College and University teaching excellence awards.
 - b. Should support be necessary, the Associate Dean can facilitate the development of an action plan with the faculty member and serve as a liaison with College and campus resources.