

Plan for Excellence in Teaching

In fall 2017, the Mrs. T.H. Chan Division of Occupational Science and Occupational Therapy began to develop a comprehensive teaching plan, tailored to its discipline's evidence-based pedagogical best practices, that is aligned with the university's initiative for the development, peer evaluation, and reward of excellence in teaching. The current status of the Division-specific materials and procedures for each of these three pillars of teaching excellence, as well as an overview of the plan development timeline and process, is described below.

I. Timeline and Process

October 2017 *Development of Chan Classroom Teaching Observation Checklist*

Shortly before the official launch of USC's new initiative to promote excellence in teaching, a volunteer faculty committee within the Chan Division convened to develop a peer classroom observation form for the evaluation of teaching. In the fall of 2017, this committee reviewed extensive literature regarding best practices related to peer evaluation of teaching along with a variety of classroom observation checklists currently utilized by other departments and universities. Committee members participated in general brain-storming sessions regarding the key components of teaching excellence and provided input on classroom observation items most relevant to the professional field and to classroom teaching in the Chan Division. A sub-committee of this group then met to analyze and thematically group the suggested items into broader categories. Committee co-chairs completed a "cross-walk" between the Chan classroom observation item categories and the USC Center for Excellence in Teaching (CET) Classroom Teaching Observation Checklist and customized the CET form accordingly. A draft Chan Classroom Teaching Observation Checklist was then distributed electronically to all faculty for input which was integrated into the checklist.

March 2018 *Announcement of University-Wide Teaching Initiative and Related Resources*

Provost Quick announced the USC Teaching Excellence initiative to train, assess, and reward exceptional teaching. Accompanying memos by Vice Provost Graddy and CET Director Clark provided further detail regarding the three pillars of the initiative as well as relevant resources available from the Center for Excellence in Teaching (CET).

October 2018 *Constitution of Chan Division Teaching Plan Committee*

A formal Chan Division Teaching Plan Committee, with membership reviewed by the Chan Division Leadership Team and approved by Chan Division Chair Grace Baranek, was constituted including representative faculty from both Tenure and Research-Teaching-Practice-Clinical tracks. All of the faculty on this new committee had previously served on the faculty committee that had drafted the Chan Classroom Teaching Observation Checklist and so were familiar with peer evaluation best practices. Additionally, CET Director Dr. Ginger Clark provided initial consultation to the committee regarding the specific requirements and desired outcomes of the teaching plan initiative.

Nov. 2018 – June 2019 *Review and Refinement of Chan Division Definition of Excellence in Teaching and Peer Review Evaluation Tools (Teaching Reflection Statements, Syllabus Review, Assessment Review)*

During monthly meetings, the Chan Teaching Plan Committee accomplished the following tasks:

- Customization of the USC Definition of Excellence in Teaching to reflect the discipline's best practices and classroom teaching within the Chan Division
- Customization of the CET peer review evaluation tools for teaching reflection statements, assessment review, and syllabus review
- Distribution of all drafted teaching-related documents to the entire faculty for feedback
- Integration of faculty input and finalization of materials

- Initial brainstorming regarding the peer review evaluation process to be implemented, including the composition of a Chan Division Teaching Peer Review Committee, training of the peer reviewers, piloting of the peer evaluation tools, and sequential rollout of evaluations

II. Chan Division Definition of Excellence in Teaching

As described in the Timeline and Process section, the Chan Division Teaching Plan Committee revised the USC Definition of Excellence in Teaching to align with the discipline's language and best practices. A preliminary Chan Definition was circulated to all faculty for input and feedback was integrated into a final draft, which was unanimously adopted by the Chan Division Leadership Team. Please see **Appendix A** for the final version of the Chan Division Definition of Excellence in Teaching.

III. Development

Development opportunities:

- The Chan Division holds an annual two-day curriculum review retreat at the end of spring semester for all faculty. The 2019 retreat included a presentation on principles of curriculum design and the development of program outcomes and student learning outcomes by the Associate Chair for Curriculum and Faculty and a presentation and dialogue on the Management of Difficult Conversations in the Classroom by the Chair of the Chan Diversity, Equity and Access Committee.
- As requested by the Provost's Office, the Chan Division selected two senior-level faculty to participate in the 2018-2019 CET Faculty Fellow Leadership Institute. The faculty selected are well-suited to provide future Chan faculty development opportunities for faculty who teach in both our undergraduate and graduate programs. Due to scheduling challenges, both faculty will complete remaining modules during the 2019-2020 academic year.
- Five full-time Chan Division faculty participated in the CET New Faculty Institute across the 2018-2019 academic year. Additionally several faculty have attended CET workshops/presentations as well as sought 1:1 consultation and syllabus review with CET instructional designers.
- Outside the Division, teaching faculty are also encouraged to participate in and deliver professional presentations at education-specific professional conferences. Last year, 11 faculty delivered either oral or poster presentations at the 2018 American Occupational Therapy Association (AOTA) Education Summit. For the 2019 AOTA Education Summit, 8 faculty presenters have been accepted. Two full-time Chan faculty member attended an outside conference on team-based learning. Typically, faculty are provided Division funding to support their travel and attendance.

Process needed for teaching development opportunities:

- Information on development opportunities related to teaching are distributed to all Division faculty as they become available. Typically this includes various workshops and institutes provided by the CET, as well as professional conferences related to teaching.
- Chan Division will develop and publish a "Chan Teaching Resources" link under Faculty/Staff Resources on the Chan Division webpage. The resources will include the following: Chan Division Plan for Excellence in Teaching, Chan Division Peer Evaluation Tools, information/updates on the Teaching Plan Committee, a link to the CET, and other helpful resources.
- Annual merit evaluation includes submission of a faculty professional development plan which includes report of progress on previous year's goals as well as establishment of new goals related to teaching/student-centered activities (along with scholarship and service). Teaching/student-centered goals may include development of teaching and engagement in peer evaluation processes.
- During 2019-2020, the Chan Division will work with the School of Dentistry to ensure that school policies include statements on how teaching development is tied to the values of the school, its evaluation processes and incentive structures.

IV. Evaluation

Tools:

The following peer-evaluation tools will be used for the development and evaluation of teaching. All have been tailored to reflect evidence-based pedagogical best practices for occupational therapy and occupational science and were circulated to all faculty in the Chan Division for input.

- Teaching Statement Template (**Appendix B**) and the Teaching Statement Evaluation Rubric (**Appendix C**)
- Classroom Teaching Observation Checklist (**Appendix D**)
- Course Design Syllabus Review Checklist (**Appendix E**)
- Assessment Practices Review (**Appendix F**)

Process:

2018-2019

- The Chan Division's implementation of the new peer-review evaluation tools commenced with the integration of the Chan Division Teaching Statement Template and Evaluation Guide into the 2018 performance evaluation and merit review process. All faculty members were required to submit written reflections related to their teaching experiences and mentoring activities, including examples of how their teaching practices aligned with and supported the USC Definition of Excellence in Teaching, integration of relevant feedback from student learning experience evaluations, and informal/formal feedback and accomplishments by mentees (see **Appendix B**).
- The teaching statements were assessed by the Associate Dean and Chair, the Chan Division Associate Chairs and the Chan Division Merit Review Committee using the Teaching Statement Evaluation Rubric (see **Appendix C**), and these ratings influenced the overall scores of the teaching/student-centered section of the annual performance evaluation.

2019-2020

- A Chan Division Peer Review Teaching Committee will be constituted, and the Classroom Teaching Observation Checklist, the Course Design Syllabus Review Checklist, and the Assessment Practices Review will be pilot tested.
- The Chan Division Peer Review Teaching Committee will be comprised of: a) faculty with experience in teaching and in the development of teaching, e.g. participation in CET workshop series, continuing education, etc.; b) representative of both classroom and clinical teaching/diverse teaching experiences; and c) appointed for three-year (staggered) terms, with possible reappointment.
- The Chan Peer Review Teaching Committee members will receive training by Associate Chair for Curriculum and Faculty, Julie McLaughlin Gray, on such topics as familiarization with the peer-evaluation tools, calibration of the tools, and recognition and awareness of potential bias.
- Faculty whose teaching practices will be reviewed during the pilot-testing of the peer-evaluation tools will be those who volunteer to participate as well as any faculty who may be eligible for promotion in 2019-2020.
- All faculty will be required to submit written reflections related to their teaching experiences which will be evaluated as part of the 2019 performance evaluation and merit review process.

2020-2023

- Over the next three academic years, the Chan Division will implement a staged roll-out of the peer evaluation tools.
- In addition to the Peer Review Teaching Committee, the Chan Teaching Plan Committee will continue to meet to develop the steps, sequence and timing of this staged roll-out with input from all faculty.
- Possible considerations for staging across multiple years include:
 - All faculty must do teaching statement + may volunteer to select one/more peer evaluation tool(s)
 - All faculty must do teaching statement + at least one peer evaluation tool

- Faculty peer evaluation is staggered across 3-year cycles in which all faculty complete a teaching statement annually, as part of merit evaluation, and roughly 1/3 of all Chan faculty engage in a peer evaluation process each year. The peer review process (to be completed with each teaching faculty member on an every-three-year cycle) will include a comprehensive peer evaluation incorporating all peer evaluation tools () along with an individual meeting with the faculty member and peer evaluator(s).

V. **Reward**

Incentive structure and process:

Development of teaching and teaching quality will be rewarded in the Chan Division through the existing annual merit review criteria and process. Engagement in the peer review process will be primarily formative in nature, which means that faculty will be evaluated during their annual merit review in the teaching/student-centered domain based upon their participation in the peer review process and their submission of a reflective teaching statement. Summative evaluation of activities in the teaching/student-centered domain, to be used in consideration for promotion, is based upon the following criteria:

- Teaching statement includes evidence of reflection on and integration of feedback from peer evaluation (formative) process as well as student learning experience evaluations.
- Annual engagement in peer evaluation and evidence of integration of feedback and improvement over time, as reflected in an overall decrease in items in the lower or “sub-standard” tier/evaluation categories and overall increase in items in higher tiers/evaluation categories.
- Evidence of commitment to, and overall impact of, student mentoring.

Note: The above are general guidelines to inform the annual merit review process for 2019 reviews (to be completed in early 2020). During the 2019-2020 academic year, the teaching plan committee, along with the Division Leadership Team, will revise the existing Merit Rating Criteria to reflect and integrate details related to the evaluation of teaching that are reflected in this plan.

USC Chan Definition of Excellence in Teaching

The Mrs. T.H. Chan Division of Occupational Science and Occupational Therapy is committed to excellence in teaching through the use of evidence-based, inclusive pedagogies that foster the knowledge, skills, relationships, and values necessary for students to succeed in a rapidly changing world. USC Chan embraces an inclusive spirit that values the enrichment diversity brings to students' understanding, leading to greater opportunities to improve the lives of all people. It fosters a convergent spirit, teaching students to see problems and solutions from multiple viewpoints, to move fluidly across disciplines, and to work comfortably in disparate teams. It empowers students to innovate and find creative approaches to solving complex problems. USC Chan prepares students to navigate ambiguity, critically evaluate evidence, reflect deeply, utilize intellectual curiosity to identify and realize opportunities, and evolve into visionary leaders who seek impactful and ethical solutions for the contemporary local, national, and global challenges to occupational participation.

1. Respectful and Professional

- a. Conveys commitment to learning through demonstrated effort in, and enthusiasm for, the teaching process
- b. Cultivates professionalism in students through modeling and expecting respectful, mindful, reflective, ethical, and responsible behavior
- c. Recognizes the power differential between professor and student, and acts with integrity toward students
- d. Fosters professional identity development through supporting student use of occupational therapy and occupational science terminology, frameworks and theories

2. Challenging and Supportive

- a. Creates learning objectives and experiences that are challenging yet attainable, incorporating the "just-right-challenge" principle
- b. Models and fosters critical, analytical, and creative thinking
- c. Encourages student curiosity, reflection, exploration, and self-directed learning through an environment that is conducive to intellectual risk-taking
- d. Cultivates a belief that mistakes and failed experiments further knowledge and understanding
- e. Fosters a mindset where growth is always possible, and ability is not fixed
- f. Provides encouragement, positive reinforcement, and support
- g. Guides students to university support services according to university policy

3. Inclusive and Accessible

- a. Creates an environment conducive to open dialogue on marginalization and power related to race, social class, gender, sexuality, religion, ethnicity, disability, immigration status, and/or other aspects of identity
- b. Includes all students' strengths, experiences, and identities in the learning process
- c. Provides materials, cases, or applications that examine diverse experiences, perspectives, and/or populations, as well as address equity and access
- d. Applies multiple techniques and strategies to reach all students in a culturally-responsive way

- e. Ensures equitable access to course materials, grades, and other feedback, utilizing educational technologies (e. g., LMS) as relevant
 - f. Follows guidelines of Universal Design for Learning and accessibility best practices
- 4. Relevant and Engaging**
- a. Uses content that is current, rigorous, and informed by theory, research, evidence, and context
 - b. Uses active learning strategies to promote development of mastery
 - c. Fosters transfer of learning and problem-solving skills to address real-world challenges
 - d. Models and incorporates use of multiple media and technologies aligned with learning objectives and experiences
 - e. Fosters student participation in academic discussions and fosters peer-to-peer collaboration, knowledge-sharing, and feedback
 - f. Facilitates student engagement in inquiry and research
- 5. Prepared and Purposeful**
- a. Uses instructional plan aligned with learning objectives that includes assessment of student prior knowledge, instruction followed by application, and shared reflection of what was learned
 - b. Fosters self-regulation to help students to assess their own learning and adjust their strategies
 - c. Manages learning effectively: plans activities, uses routines, and manages time, behavior, and participation
- 6. Fair and Equitable**
- a. Establishes clear expectations and learning objectives
 - b. Uses formative assessments to evaluate student progress and provide feedback, as well as summative assessments to evaluate mastery
 - c. Uses transparent assessment processes with clear criteria tied to learning objectives
 - d. Provides specific, regular, and timely feedback tied to performance criteria
 - e. Maintains reasonable course policies that are applied uniformly and fairly
- 7. Evidence-Based**
- a. Pursues continuous improvement of teaching and course design by applying research-based best practices
 - b. Uses results from formative and summative peer and student teaching evaluations to inform teaching practice
 - c. Demonstrates effectiveness of instruction through measures of student mastery of learning objectives

Appendix B

USC Chan Teaching Statement Guidelines

Please summarize your major accomplishments and impact in the teaching/student-centered domain that, using the “teaching statement template” provided below. This teaching statement is a written reflection on your teaching experiences and mentoring activities, including integration of relevant feedback from student learning experience evaluations, informal/formal feedback and accomplishments by mentees, as well as any relevant feedback or evaluations from peers/colleagues/mentors. Please respond only to applicable items, dependent upon your load and assignments, and indicate if a section is not applicable (N/A). You may explain anything else that is not explicit in the CV or the tables of courses and guest lectures/labs above. Limit response to two pages.

1 List your 2018 teaching/student-centered goals (as listed on faculty development plan), along with any other teaching/student-centered goals you addressed throughout the year.

2 Teaching Qualities

Discuss your perspective on the qualities of your teaching that matter most to students.

3 Teaching Practices and Outcomes

Provide specific examples of your teaching practices that support the goals identified above, along with clear and concise evidence of how these practices have led to improved student learning outcomes. Examples might include active-learning strategies, key assignments/assessments with corresponding learning objectives, and other course materials (readings, videos, podcasts, etc.).

4 Alignment with USC Definition of Excellence in Teaching

Give examples of how your teaching practices align with and support the USC Chan Definition of Excellence in Teaching.

5 Student Mentoring and Impact

State number of student mentees you have personally mentored in each academic program and describe any notable accomplishments by mentees or in collaboration with mentees.

6 Areas for Improvement

Articulate specific areas for future improvement or changes to teaching practices based on student outcomes, course evaluations, student feedback, peer/mentor/supervisor feedback or other data.

7 Teaching/Student-Centered Goals for 2019

Draft a clear and concise goal or goals for improving your teaching/student-centered activities, aligned with the above areas for improvement (to be finalized during 2019 merit review meeting).

8 Describe how the above activities contribute to excellence in teaching in the division and beyond.

9 Other comments regarding teaching activities/accomplishments (development activities, awards, teaching grants, etc.).

Appendix C

Teaching Statement Evaluation Guide

The Teaching Statement submitted in the 2018 self-evaluation will be evaluated using the following criteria and rubric:

Relationship to Merit Ratings:

Agree Fully (Exceptional/Outstanding)

Agree Mostly (Outstanding/Meritorious)

Agree Somewhat: Meritorious/Needs Improvement

Disagree: Needs Improvement/Unsatisfactory

Criteria	Evaluation				Comments to Support Rating
1. Teaching/Student-Centered Goals for 2018	<input type="checkbox"/> Goals included	<input type="checkbox"/> Goals not included			
	Agree Fully	Agree Mostly	Agree Somewhat	Disagree	
2. Teaching Qualities Provides a thoughtful discussion of teaching qualities with consideration of student feedback and personal reflections.					
3. Teaching Practices and Outcomes Provides a thorough and comprehensive description of teaching practices and outcomes. Teaching practices are innovative, evidence-based and/or theoretically informed. Teaching practices and outcomes align with goals.					
4. Alignment with Definition of Excellence in Teaching Examples of teaching practices explicitly align with the Definition of Excellent in Teaching in a meaningful way.					
5. Student Mentoring and Impact States number of student mentees in each academic program with description of notable accomplishments (impact) by mentees or collaboratively. Accomplishments reflect innovative, evidence-based or theoretically informed deliverables.					
6. Areas for Improvement Describes specific areas for future development in teaching/student-centered domain with evidence for selection(s).					
7. Teaching/Student-Centered Goals Includes a DRAFT of goal or goals for 2019 (to be finalized on faculty development plan at merit meeting).					
8. Provides evidence of development activities, awards or teaching grants, etc... which reflects a substantial contribution to excellence in teaching in the division and beyond.					

Classroom Teaching Observation Checklist

The Chan Classroom Teaching Observation Checklist provides performance descriptions for four tiers of classroom instructional practices. The first, second, and third tiers include a progression of recommended teaching practices. The substandard tier includes items that are contrary to best practices and/or USC policies. The checklist can be used for two purposes. It can be used as a developmental tool to provide faculty formative feedback to enhance their teaching, showing progression over multiple observations. It can also be used as an evaluative tool to document evidence of teaching performance for annual merit reviews, promotion, tenure, or continuing appointment.

Not Included in the Classroom Teaching Observation Checklist

- Evaluation of course design, which is addressed in a separate Chan Course Design Syllabus Review Checklist.
- Aspects of teaching that cannot be observed.

Checklist Conditions

- Effective use of the checklist requires that observer and observed have met prior to the observation and discussed class format and purpose, and will meet for a debrief after the observation.

Observer

- Visits one class session for each of the first- and second-tier evaluations. Two visits are recommended before an instructor is judged to be performing at the third-tier.
- Is familiar with the course learning objectives listed in the syllabus.
- Understands the content of the course well enough to evaluate effectiveness of instruction in that topic.
- Has been trained by CET or by a CET Faculty Fellow to use the checklist.

Checklist Items

- Are observable actions and behaviors of the instructor (observable during a single visited class session), not the behaviors of students.
- Describe practices that can be implemented within a wide variety of teaching models, both traditional and innovative.
- Reflect actions and behaviors that should be observable in *nearly* all classes, regardless of level, field, or student population. Some items in the Tier 3 column may not be applicable to certain educational contexts, which should be noted in the comments sections.
- Are rated in such a way that achieving mastery in one tier implies mastery of the previous tier(s), as well. Satisfaction of Tier 2 requires achievement of items in Tiers 1 and 2. Satisfaction of Tier 3 requires achievement of items in Tiers 1, 2, and 3.
- Were developed to include best teaching practices relevant to occupational science and occupational therapy as identified by Chan faculty in alignment with the Chan Definition of Excellence in Teaching and resources from the USC Center for Excellence in Teaching (CET).

Each dimension in the checklist measures one or more criteria in the Chan Definition of Excellence in Teaching and those criteria are noted next to the dimension name. The practices in Tiers 1, 2, and 3 are supported through training provided by Chan Faculty Fellows and CET's faculty institutes.

DIMENSION	SUBSTANDARD TIER	TIER 1	TIER 2	TIER 3
*USC Definition of Excellence in Teaching criteria measured by each dimension are noted.	Performing Below Minimum USC Teaching Policy Standard	Performing at Minimum USC Teaching Policy Standard	Performing at Proficient Level of Teaching Standard at USC <i>(Includes Tier 1 Minimum criteria)</i>	Performing at Excellence Level of Teaching Standard at USC <i>(Includes Tier 1 Minimum + Tier 2 Proficient criteria)</i>
CLASS ORGANIZATION				
Instructional plan 5a, 5b*	<input type="checkbox"/> Instructor changes the established class session plan without prior notification to students.	<input type="checkbox"/> The class session demonstrates clear signs of planning and organization, and follows a logical flow.	<input type="checkbox"/> The class session includes instruction and formative assessment ¹ to assess student learning for that class session.	<input type="checkbox"/> The class session includes instruction, formative assessment, and reflection components. <input type="checkbox"/> The class session includes opportunities to ask and answer questions to facilitate learning.
Communication of clear learning goals for the class session 6a*	<input type="checkbox"/> Instructor communicates no learning goals for the class session and/or each lesson activity. <input type="checkbox"/> Instructor communicates inappropriate or unrealistic learning goals for the class session and/or each lesson activity.	<input type="checkbox"/> Instructor clearly identifies realistic learning goals for the class session.	<input type="checkbox"/> Instructor clearly connects the learning goals for the class session to the course learning objectives. <input type="checkbox"/> Instructor emphasizes/summarizes main points of class session.	<input type="checkbox"/> Instructor clearly identifies the learning goals for each instructional activity, and connects them to the course learning objectives ² .

¹ Assignments intended to help students evaluate their mastery of a skill or learning objective and provide information to the instructor on student progress.

² See the CET resource [A Clear Guide to Writing Learning Objectives](#).

Time management 3e, 5c*	<input type="checkbox"/> Room and/or technology issues occur during class that could have been addressed before the start of class.	<input type="checkbox"/> The class session starts and ends on time. <input type="checkbox"/> Planned sections of the class session are well-timed. <input type="checkbox"/> Little or no time spent on non-instructional activities. <input type="checkbox"/> Instructor prepares the room and relevant technology before the start of class.	<input type="checkbox"/> Instructor utilizes and references educational technology for passive learning activities ³ outside of class to support effective use of in-class time (for example, using Blackboard to post articles and videos).	<input type="checkbox"/> Instructor maximizes in-class time, using active learning or applications ⁴ rather than passive learning. <input type="checkbox"/> Instructor clearly indicates time limits for all student activities.
Comments:				

³ When students receive information from the instructor.

⁴ Activities in which students practice course concepts during class.

LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

Classroom climate 1b, 2e, 2f, 3a, 4e*	<input type="checkbox"/> Instructor raises students' stress or anxiety by using discriminatory, dismissive, or other abusive language. <input type="checkbox"/> Instructor minimizes students' struggle with material. <input type="checkbox"/> Instructor discourages student input. <input type="checkbox"/> Instructor violates confidentiality by publicly revealing students with accommodations. <input type="checkbox"/> Instructor ignores disruptive student behaviors.	<input type="checkbox"/> Instructor consistently uses verbal and body language that is responsive to students' stress or anxiety. <input type="checkbox"/> Instructor encourages student participation. <input type="checkbox"/> Instructor treats all students equitably. <input type="checkbox"/> Instructor is responsive to students' different educational backgrounds and learning needs by providing a variety of instructional strategies.	<input type="checkbox"/> Instructor establishes and consistently upholds classroom norms that foster a positive and inclusive environment. ⁵ <input type="checkbox"/> Instructor encourages interaction between students. <input type="checkbox"/> Instructor addresses disruptive student behaviors.	<input type="checkbox"/> Instructor uses practices that increase students' motivation and foster a growth mindset. ⁶
Presentation form 1a, 1b*	<input type="checkbox"/> Instructor uses inappropriate or offensive gestures and/or speech. <input type="checkbox"/> Instructor displays a negative attitude in tone and/or content.	<input type="checkbox"/> Instructor volume, pace, and diction allow observer to follow the class session. <input type="checkbox"/> Instructor faces students when speaking. <input type="checkbox"/> Instructor avoids prolonged reading from notes or slides.	<input type="checkbox"/> Instructor incorporates appropriate eye contact and effective non-verbal communication (e.g., hand gestures). <input type="checkbox"/> Instructor avoids distracting mannerisms or speech patterns, such as filler words and nervous habits.	<input type="checkbox"/> Instructor is engaging, responsive, and constructive in both tone and content of their speech.
Presentation substance 4a, 4d, 3f*	<input type="checkbox"/> Instructor does not use, or uses inappropriate, visual support for presentation and/or examples/illustrations.	<input type="checkbox"/> Instructor provides visual support for verbal presentation and uses concrete examples/illustrations to clarify content.	<input type="checkbox"/> Instructor cites sources for content discussed.	<input type="checkbox"/> Instructor follows accessibility best practices by verbally describing and/or captioning any images used in presentation.
Comments:				

INSTRUCTIONAL CONTENT				
Knowledge of subject 4a*	<input type="checkbox"/> Instructor does not appear to understand course content.	<input type="checkbox"/> Instructor's factual statements are consistent with current knowledge in the field. <input type="checkbox"/> Instructor correctly answers questions about course-level content.	<input type="checkbox"/> Instructor answers questions confidently, clearly, and simply. <input type="checkbox"/> Instructor distinguishes facts and opinions, as well as observations and interpretations.	<input type="checkbox"/> Instructor ties current content to topics or knowledge from the profession and/or more advanced courses.
Discipline-specific language 1d*	<input type="checkbox"/> Instructor does not use, or incorrectly uses, discipline-specific and/or academic language.	<input type="checkbox"/> Instructor uses discipline-specific and academic language.	<input type="checkbox"/> Instructor explains use of discipline-specific terms.	<input type="checkbox"/> Instructor facilitates the use of discipline-specific language by students.
Contextual relevance and transferability 3b, 3c, 4c*	<input type="checkbox"/> Instructor teaches content devoid of real-world scenarios and/or examples. <input type="checkbox"/> Instructor assumes unrealistic skill level of students in the class.	<input type="checkbox"/> Instructor provides real-world applications of class session content. <input type="checkbox"/> Instructor explicitly builds on prior student knowledge and experience.	<input type="checkbox"/> Instructor has students provide real-world examples of class content or apply content to real-world scenarios.	<input type="checkbox"/> Where appropriate, instructor uses examples where their discipline converges with other disciplines in addressing challenges. <input type="checkbox"/> Where appropriate, instructor addresses " <u>wicked problems</u> "/public policy identified by USC on a local, national, or global level.
Comments:				

Classroom Teaching Observation Checklist

CONTEXT Record pertinent characteristics of the course, student population, and physical environment. Examples: enrollment, student demographics, classroom type (stadium, small conference room, etc.), class meeting time, and general education status.	Context:
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Course Design Syllabus Review Checklist

The **Chan Division Course Design Syllabus Review Checklist** provides standards for course design through syllabus review. The first, second, and third tiers include a progression of recommended course design practices. The substandard tier includes items that are contrary to best practices and/or USC policies. The checklist can be used for three purposes. It can be used as a developmental tool in two ways, for faculty to complete self-study of a course syllabus and as a tool for peers to provide faculty formative feedback to enhance their teaching, showing progression over time. It can also be used as an evaluative tool to document evidence of one aspect of teaching performance for promotion, tenure, or continuing appointment. Each dimension in the checklist measures one or more criteria in the Chan Definition of Excellence in Teaching, and those criteria are noted next to the dimension name. The practices in Tiers 1, 2, and 3 are supported through training provided by CET's faculty institutes.

Not Included in the Course Design Syllabus Review Checklist

- Evaluation of classroom teaching practice, which is addressed in a separate Classroom Teaching Observation Checklist

Peer Reviewer Characteristics:

- Is a member of the Chan Division Teaching Peer Review Committee.*
- Is (when possible) the same person who completes the Course Design Syllabus Review Checklist, Assessment Practices Review and Classroom Teaching Observation Checklist.
- Has been trained by CET or by a CET Faculty Fellow to use the checklist.

Suggested Instructions for Use

- Faculty will complete a self-review using the Course Design Syllabus Review Checklist.
- Peer reviewer(s) will independently mark as present all checklist items observed in the course syllabus and/or other course documents.
- Ideally, course design syllabus review will be accompanied by an in-person dialogue between faculty and peer reviewer(s), and followed by an Assessment Practices Review and Classroom Teaching Observation Checklist.

*Chan Division Peer Review Teaching Committee: faculty with experience in teaching and development of teaching, e.g. participation in CET workshop series, continuing education, etc.; representative of both classroom and clinical teaching/diverse teaching experiences; and appointed for three-year (staggered) terms, with possible reappointment.

CET Course Design Syllabus Review Checklist

Check as many as apply; checkmarks can be placed in any of the four tiers.

DIMENSION	SUBSTANDARD TIER	TIER 1	TIER 2	TIER 3
* <u>Chan Definition of Excellence in Teaching</u> criteria measured by each dimension are noted.	Performing Below Minimum USC Teaching Policy Standard	Performing at Minimum USC Teaching Policy Standard	Performing at Proficient Level of Teaching Standard at USC	Performing at Excellence Level of Teaching Standard at USC
Syllabus format (includes policies) 1b, 2g, 6e*	<input type="checkbox"/> Syllabus contradicts university-policy statements on Academic Conduct and Support Systems. <input type="checkbox"/> Syllabus does not specify policy regarding absences.	<input type="checkbox"/> Syllabus contains the Statement on Academic Conduct and Support Systems provided in the Curriculum Coordination Office syllabus template. ⁷ <input type="checkbox"/> Syllabus specifies policy regarding absences <input type="checkbox"/> Syllabus includes a policy on use of electronic devices during class. <input type="checkbox"/> Technology requirements are clearly stated and instructions provided. <input type="checkbox"/> Minimum technical skills required are clearly stated.	<input type="checkbox"/> Syllabus contains all components of the Curriculum Coordination Office template. <input type="checkbox"/> Policy on electronic devices encourages applications for educational purposes when relevant.	<input type="checkbox"/> Course description section includes aspirational goals that frame why the skills in the learning objective section are important. <input type="checkbox"/> Syllabus mirrors that of other sections of the same course (same prefix and course number, within the same academic year) taught on-ground, online, or off-campus (if applicable ⁸).

⁷ See Curriculum Coordination Office Syllabus Template <https://arr.usc.edu/services/curriculum/resources.html>

⁸ This may not be feasible if the course has only one section or if mirroring is not possible for other reasons, e.g. differences between entry- and post-professional course sections.

DIMENSION	SUBSTANDARD TIER	TIER 1	TIER 2	TIER 3
Comments:				
Communication 1b, 1c, 5b, 6e*	<input type="checkbox"/> Preferred method of contact is inappropriate or not feasible for all students.	<input type="checkbox"/> Syllabus provides contact information for all those involved in course instruction, as well as preferred method of contact.	<input type="checkbox"/> Syllabus indicates how long students should wait for a response from all those involved in instruction.	<input type="checkbox"/> Syllabus encourages students to contact instructor outside of class. <input type="checkbox"/> Syllabus encourages students to provide feedback to the instructor.
Comments:				
Learning objectives 2a, 5b, 6a, 6c*	<input type="checkbox"/> Aspirational statements ⁹ are listed as learning objectives. ¹⁰	<input type="checkbox"/> Learning objectives are listed in the syllabus and identify specific, measurable outcomes. ¹¹ <input type="checkbox"/> Every learning objective is measured by at least one graded assignment.	<input type="checkbox"/> The learning objective being measured is noted in the assignment.	<input type="checkbox"/> Learning objectives are explicitly cited in the syllabus as related to standards/goals set by program (curriculum design), university, profession, and/or accrediting body.
Comments:				

⁹ Examples of aspirational statements are “Students will appreciate X,” or “value X,” or “develop creativity,” etc.

¹⁰ See the CET resource [A Clear Guide to Writing Learning Objectives](#).

¹¹ Use of the verbs “know,” “understand,” “learn” or other outcomes that cannot be measured are avoided. See the CET resource [A Clear Guide to Writing Learning Objectives](#).

DIMENSION	SUBSTANDARD TIER	TIER 1	TIER 2	TIER 3
Assignments, Assessments and Grading 2a, 2b, 2d, 4e, 5b, 6a, 6b, 6c, 6d, 6e*	<input type="checkbox"/> Course credit is awarded solely for attendance. <input type="checkbox"/> An inaccurate or incomplete grade scale is provided. <input type="checkbox"/> Assignments are mis-weighted (don't add up to 100%). <input type="checkbox"/> The method of grading/scoring for assignments and assessments is unclear, inappropriate, or unfair. <input type="checkbox"/> There are no specified methods for student assessment/evaluation in the syllabus. <input type="checkbox"/> Syllabus does not outline policy regarding late/missing assignments or assessments.	<input type="checkbox"/> A grading scale includes points or percentages, and the corresponding letter grade. <input type="checkbox"/> The syllabus displays the weight of each assignment/assessment toward the overall course grade. <input type="checkbox"/> Due dates for all assignments are specified. <input type="checkbox"/> Information is provided for when graded assignments/assessments will be returned. <input type="checkbox"/> If credit is awarded for participation, it is no more than 15% of the grade, and the method for grading participation is specified. <input type="checkbox"/> The method of grading/scoring for each assignment or assessment is specified in the syllabus. <input type="checkbox"/> Syllabus outlines policy regarding late/missing assignments or assessments	<input type="checkbox"/> Each assessment or assignment has its own specific description, with reference to additional guidelines and rubric as relevant. <input type="checkbox"/> Student grades are based on their performance against clear grading criteria aligned with course learning objectives. <input type="checkbox"/> Group work has a method of measuring individual student's contribution to the project, e.g. peer review/evaluation. <input type="checkbox"/> The majority of the student's grade is determined by individual (vs. group) performance. <input type="checkbox"/> Extra credit is not offered. <input type="checkbox"/> Assessment is done using a variety of methods (e.g., exams, projects, presentations, etc.) <input type="checkbox"/> Syllabus includes student self-and/or peer-evaluation	<input type="checkbox"/> Course includes multiple low-stakes assignments distributed across the course to prepare for larger assignments. <input type="checkbox"/> Grading rubrics are provided for all major assignments along with the assignment description. Syllabus indicates that a grading rubric will be provided, if not included therein. <input type="checkbox"/> Grading rubric requirements align to the assignment description. <input type="checkbox"/> Participation credit is awarded only for in-class work.
Comments:				

DIMENSION	SUBSTANDARD TIER	TIER 1	TIER 2	TIER 3
Course materials (can include readings, videos, audio recordings, etc.) 1c, 4a*	<input type="checkbox"/> There is no reference to or evidence of course materials.	<input type="checkbox"/> Required and optional (if any) course materials are specified separately in the syllabus.	<input type="checkbox"/> Course materials are related to current local, national, and/or global events, when pertinent to course learning objectives. ¹²	<input type="checkbox"/> Course readings include influential and current peer-reviewed journal articles (or discipline equivalent) when pertinent to course learning objectives.
Comments:				
Inclusive Teaching Practices 3d, 3e, 3f*	<input type="checkbox"/> Required resources are not equitably available to all students. <input type="checkbox"/> Consequences for late assignment submission and missed classes unduly burden certain populations.	<input type="checkbox"/> Syllabus is available on the LMS ¹³ as a downloadable document. <input type="checkbox"/> Grades are maintained on a secure online system for students to access, such as a LMS. <input type="checkbox"/> Syllabus specifies which	<input type="checkbox"/> Assignment due dates are not scheduled on religious days of obligation. <input type="checkbox"/> Syllabus outlines expectations for inclusive behavior in the course.	<input type="checkbox"/> Linked content follows recommended best practices for accessibility. ¹⁴ <input type="checkbox"/> Course content is presented in multiple formats (e.g., video, text).

¹² See the CET resource [A Clear Guide to Writing Learning Objectives](#).

¹³ Learning Management Systems such as Blackboard, Moodle, or Canvas.

¹⁴ Images are described, videos are captioned and transcripts provided, documents are .pdf or .doc, documents use headings rather than individually-styled text, etc.

DIMENSION	SUBSTANDARD TIER	TIER 1	TIER 2	TIER 3
	<input type="checkbox"/> Policy on use of electronic devices during class unduly burdens certain populations who may be required to use it (i.e., due to an accommodation).	<p>resources must be purchased and where/how other resources are available.</p> <input type="checkbox"/> Technology is equitably attainable/accessible to students.		
		<input type="checkbox"/> Assessments are not scheduled on religious days of obligation		
Comments:				
Representation of Diverse Perspectives 3a, 3b, 3c*	<input type="checkbox"/> Course materials reflect a bias toward one perspective on course topics	<input type="checkbox"/> Course materials or topics include diverse perspectives, authors, or applications.	<input type="checkbox"/> Course materials include examination of underrepresented perspectives or populations	<input type="checkbox"/> Learning objectives include development of skills relevant to living and working in a diverse world. <input type="checkbox"/> When aligned with/relevant to course content and learning objectives, course includes community engagement
Comments:				

DIMENSION	SUBSTANDARD TIER	TIER 1	TIER 2	TIER 3
Course outline 4b, 5a, 5b, 5c, 6a*	<input type="checkbox"/> The weekly plan indicates cancelled classes and/or changes to the official listed class meeting time or duration/contact hours.	<input type="checkbox"/> A weekly plan for the semester is provided and includes class topics, readings, and assignment due dates.	<input type="checkbox"/> The weekly plan for the semester includes description of in-class work and active learning.	<input type="checkbox"/> The weekly plan for the semester includes specific instructional plans for each class meeting with a lesson objective tied to the course learning objectives.
Comments:				
Student participation and engagement in course 1b, 1c, 1d, 2a, 2b, 2c, 2d, 2g, 3a, 3b, 4a, 4b, 4c, 4d, 4e, 4f, 5b, 5c, 6e*	<input type="checkbox"/> Syllabus has no reference to expectations for classroom behavior.	<input type="checkbox"/> Syllabus establishes expectations that students' communication, behavior, and participation are respectful, professional, and relevant. <input type="checkbox"/> Syllabus incorporates professional codes of ethics, USC student code of conduct, ¹⁵ and/or USC code of ethics. ¹⁶	<input type="checkbox"/> Syllabus provides other classroom norms relevant to course learning objectives, or indicates that the class will work together to compose classroom norms. <input type="checkbox"/> Syllabus establishes expectations that students assume responsibility for their learning through active learning or experiential learning.	<input type="checkbox"/> Syllabus indicates students' statements of fact should be based on course materials or other credible sources, and appropriately cited during class discussions. <input type="checkbox"/> Syllabus outlines opportunities for students to share their own perspectives and to take leadership roles in the class or profession. <input type="checkbox"/> Syllabus includes opportunities for students to add unique, discipline-based content to the course.
Comments:				

¹⁵ See [SCampus Part B](#)

¹⁶ See [USC Code of Ethics](#).

DIMENSION	SUBSTANDARD TIER	TIER 1	TIER 2	TIER 3
Course and Instructor Evaluation 1a, 1c, 2b, 2c, 2e, 3a, 3b, 5b, 7a, 7b*	<input type="checkbox"/> Syllabus indicates inappropriate consequences or rewards for completing the end-of-semester university student learning experience evaluation.	<input type="checkbox"/> Syllabus explains end-of-semester university student learning experience evaluation process.	<input type="checkbox"/> Syllabus explains end-of-semester university student learning experience evaluation purpose and the importance of student engagement with the process. <input type="checkbox"/> Syllabus indicates plan for mid-semester course evaluation	<input type="checkbox"/> Syllabus explains use of feedback from mid-semester course evaluation ¹⁷
Comments:				

¹⁷ See the CET resource [Mid-Semester Evaluations](#).

Assessment Practices Review:

WHAT IS THIS RESOURCE?

The Assessment Practices Review is intended to evaluate how an instructor assesses student learning through a course assignment. This is a guide for both the instructor submitting student work samples, and the reviewer evaluating the instructor's graded student work samples.

FOR THE INSTRUCTOR

Please prepare and submit all materials described below, along with three examples of student work, related to a major course assignment. The examples should represent the work of high-, medium-, and low-performing students within a specific course/semester.

1. Information students received:
 - a. The assignment description that was provided to students (Resource: [CET Assignment Description Template](#))
 - b. Grading criteria that were provided to students (i. e., rubrics) (Resource: [CET Tips for Designing Grading Rubrics](#))
 - c. The learning objective(s) the assignment intended to measure
 - d. Feedback returned to students to aid in their achieving mastery of the learning objective(s)
2. Written reflection on the following:
 - a. How does the assignment provide opportunities for student learning?
 - b. How does the assignment description convey the purpose and relevance of the assignment to the students?
 - c. How does the assignment map onto the identified course learning objective(s)?
 - d. How do the grading criteria evaluate each part of the assignment?
 - e. How do the grading criteria determine varying levels of mastery for each part of the assignment?
 - f. In what ways do the grading criteria meet the level of rigor appropriate for the course (not too hard or too easy)? Explain.
 - g. How does each student work sample (high-, medium-, and low-performing) demonstrate/not demonstrate mastery of the relevant learning objective(s)?

FOR THE REVIEWER

Please provide the following feedback on the instructor's materials.

Criteria	Evaluation				Comments to Support Rating
	Agree Fully	Agree Mostly	Agree Somewhat	Disagree	
1. The assignment description is clear.					
2. The assignment description conveys the purpose and relevance of the assignment to the students.					
3. The assignment provides opportunities for student learning.					
4. The assignment maps onto the identified learning objective(s).					
5. The grading criteria map onto the assignment description.					
6. The grading criteria meet the level of rigor appropriate for the course (not too hard or too easy).					
7. The feedback provided is constructive, thorough, and conducive to promoting mastery.					
8. The grading and instructor feedback across the three samples differentiate levels of mastery across the work of low-, mid- and high-performing students.					
9. Overall, this assignment helped students achieve mastery of the stated learning objective(s).					