



**Graduate School of Nursing  
Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences  
Bethesda, Maryland**

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**TITLE OF POLICY:** Peer Review

**ORIGINAL APPROVAL DATE:** 2 April 2008

**LAST REVIEW/REVISION DATE:** 2 April 2008

**POLICY:**

- A. **Purpose:** This document establishes the policy for peer review of teaching for the Graduate School of Nursing (GSN). A peer-review policy supports faculty teaching in two principal areas: formative assessment and summative assessment. Formative peer review provides faculty with peer assistance in developing effective instructional strategies and honing content delivery style. Summative peer review is one of the ways a faculty member can document “Scholarship of Teaching Contributions” for promotion and/or tenure.
- B. **References:** USUHS Instruction 1100, Enclosure 4, 08/2004
- C. **Applicability:** This policy applies to all GSN faculty members. Documentation of the scholarship of teaching is the responsibility of the department chair and the individual faculty member. Peer review, by design, is a flexible process. Formative peer review is voluntary and should be an integrated part of the evaluation of and feedback to GSN faculty. Summative peer review is one way that a faculty member can document Scholarship of Teaching for the Department Chair and the Committee on Appointment, Promotion & Tenure (CAPT).
- D. **Policy:**
- a. **Peer review plays a critical role in promotion, tenure, and professional development.** Peer review is endemic in academic careers. Faculty should regularly seek feedback from peers on their course topics, teaching methods, and instructional outcomes. Requests for Summative peer review are voluntary decisions on the part of a faculty member that can be reached at any time during an academic career. For example, when a faculty member applies for appointment/reappointment/ promotion and/or tenure; it may be in the interest of the candidate to receive peer reviews to document teaching performance to enhance their portfolio. “No recommendation will be forwarded to the **Committee for Appointment, Promotion and Tenure (CAPT)** unless it is approved by the Department Chair” (USUHS Instruction 1100, Enclosure 4). Department chairs are charged with documenting that candidates for promotion and/or tenure

meet the requirements outlined in the USUHS Instruction. Faculty members who choose to have their Department Chair consider peer reviews as part of their assessment of Scholarship of Teaching Contributions, should coordinate the pre-CAPT summative peer review with their chair. The GSN Peer Review Process is a voluntary faculty-driven program, transparent to the leadership, unless a faculty member chooses to use the process as a tool to provide leadership information about this area of academic development.

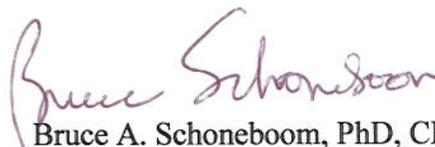
- b. **Peer review should be available to those who ask for it, with special consideration for faculty in their first teaching year and candidates going before the CAPT.** Peer review is helpful to all who teach. It is especially useful for new faculty. Peer review is most productive when this process starts early in a teaching career. For this reason, formative peer review is recommended within the first year of a faculty member's teaching career. Classroom performance and course materials are reviewed and feedback is provided based on the peer reviewer's opinion. By starting the process in the first year, the faculty member has an opportunity to evaluate personal performance early, establish a teaching improvement plan if needed, and request a second-year evaluation if warranted. When a faculty member requests a peer review, they are confidential and the property of the faculty member unless the faculty member wishes to share them with the department for his/her annual review or other similar purposes.
- c. **The School supports and encourages peer review of faculty for the purposes of self-development and for promotion and tenure. The reviewer selected by the faculty member should be an expert in the content or method being evaluated and be of similar academic rank or higher.** It is important that the GSN Evaluation Committee be informed of ongoing peer reviews so that reviewers can be identified and mentored and the process documented in Evaluation Committee minutes for accreditation purposes. The GSN Peer Review process simply provides a mechanism under the control of each faculty member to improve their skills and document growth in their academic careers.

**E. Duties and Responsibilities:**

- a. **Evaluation Committee:** Reviews peer review policy and documents annually and recommends changes to the All Faculty for approval. Maintain a data base documenting GSN faculty peer review.
- b. **Department Chairs:** Encourage faculty members to use peer review as a tool to develop effective teaching skills and in preparation for promotion and/or tenure.
- c. **Faculty Members:** Use the peer review process to develop instructional skills. Actively participate as reviewers when needed to improve and maintain a quality baseline for teaching in the GSN.

**F. Procedures:**

- a. Attachment 1 outlines the peer review process for instructors and reviewers.
- b. Attachment 2 is a form to be used to document the classroom visit.

 4-14-08  
Bruce A. Schoneboom, PhD, CRNA  
Colonel, Army Nurse Corps  
Acting Dean, Graduate School of Nursing

Approved by GSN All Faculty:  
Revised and Approved by GSN All Faculty:  
Reviewed by GSN Evaluation Committee:

Reviewed:

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Signature) (Date)

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(Signature) (Date)

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(Signature) (Date)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Signature) (Date)



## Peer Review Process for GSN

- A. The instructor selects at least one typical class for review.
- B. An invitation will be sent to the proposed reviewer. The Chair, Evaluation Committee will be notified by email that a review will occur so that the Peer Review Data Base can be maintained for accreditation purposes.
- C. The instructor and appointed reviewer(s) will agree upon the time for the visit and the time for the reviewer to deliver the critique.
- D. Prior to the review, the instructor and reviewer(s) discuss goals and behaviors to be assessed.
- E. At least one week prior to the classroom visit, the instructor provides the reviewer(s) with the course syllabus and any other appropriate materials, including an outline of the goals and objectives to be covered in the observed class or classes. The reviewer(s) thoroughly examines these materials prior to the classroom visit(s).
- F. Reviewer(s) should adopt a supportive and professional manner throughout the process of scheduling, observing, critiquing, and reporting the results. In general, reviewers should:
  - 1. Evaluate behaviors associated with stated objectives;
  - 2. Identify areas for improvement;
  - 3. Take the initiative in planning pre and post-visit conferences; and
  - 4. Remain in the classroom throughout the entire encounter. Partial observations are not adequate.
- G. Within 7 days of the final classroom visit, the reviewer(s) and the instructor should meet in a private, comfortable location to discuss the review.
- H. When delivering the critique and providing feedback, reviewer(s) should describe clearly and directly what they saw in relation to established goals and objectives for that class. Statements should be specific, concrete, and accompanied by examples.
- I. Instructors are advised to take an active role in the review process. Faculty should perform a self-evaluation, consider possibilities for change, resist the temptation to act defensively, and explore problem areas in their teaching.
- J. The reviewer(s) will put his/her observations in writing and submit them to the instructor. The observation report shall be based upon the specifics of the Peer Review: Classroom Visit Form (attached). In fact, the completed form may serve as the observation report.

- K. A copy of the classroom visit form should be completed and signed by the reviewer(s). This completed and signed form may be shared at the request of the faculty member with appropriate individuals as needed for annual review or promotion/tenure.
- L. Please submit the summary information below to the Chair, Evaluation Committee when your Peer Review is complete.

**Notification for Peer Review to Evaluation Committee.**

Classroom Instructor: \_\_\_\_\_

Course/Course #: \_\_\_\_\_

Class Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Time: \_\_\_\_\_ Location: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Reviewer: \_\_\_\_\_

Date/Time of Reviewer Critique: \_\_\_\_\_

Purpose for review: (Used for Evaluation Committee filing purposes)

\_\_\_\_\_ Tenure/Promotion

\_\_\_\_\_ First year (new) Faculty

\_\_\_\_\_ Ongoing improvement

\_\_\_\_\_ Other

Accepted Evaluation Committee 28 Jan 2008



**Scholarship of Teaching: Peer Review  
Classroom Visit Form**

Classroom Instructor: \_\_\_\_\_

Course/Course #: \_\_\_\_\_

Class Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Time: \_\_\_\_\_ Location: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Reviewer: \_\_\_\_\_

Date/Time of Reviewer Critique: \_\_\_\_\_

**Classroom Teaching Observation**

Rating scale (1 = very poor, 2 = weak, 3 = average, 4 = good, 5 = excellent, NA = not applicable)

**CONTENT and Organization**

Main ideas presented and discussed are specific with adequate supporting information	1	2	3	4	5	NA
Instructional Competencies are clearly Identified and reflected in content	1	2	3	4	5	NA
Content for each session was linked to the overall course objectives	1	2	3	4	5	NA
Content is relevant	1	2	3	4	5	NA
Critical thinking was encouraged through presentations and was evidenced by student discussion and questions	1	2	3	4	5	NA
Lecture content was linked to previous lectures and prior knowledge (i.e. effective transitions)	1	2	3	4	5	NA
Syllabus outlined a clear organizational plan for the course and each session	1	2	3	4	5	NA
Concluded by summarizing main ideas	1	2	3	4	5	NA
Reviewed by connecting to previous classes	1	2	3	4	5	NA
Previewed by connecting to future classes	1	2	3	4	5	NA

**INTERACTION**

Instructor was on time and prepared for class	1	2	3	4	5	NA
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Instructor utilized questions to stimulate student participation	1	2	3	4	5	NA
Sufficient wait time allowed for answers	1	2	3	4	5	NA
Instructor feedback was informative to student asked questions	1	2	3	4	5	NA
Instructor incorporated student responses	1	2	3	4	5	NA
<b><u>VERBAL/NON-VERBAL</u></b>						
Language was understandable	1	2	3	4	5	NA
Articulation and pronunciation clear	1	2	3	4	5	NA
Instructor spoke extemporaneously	1	2	3	4	5	NA
Voice volume and quality	1	2	3	4	5	NA
Rate of delivery was appropriate (guided by the students' level of comprehension)	1	2	3	4	5	NA
Confident & enthusiastic	1	2	3	4	5	NA
<b><u>USE OF MEDIA</u></b>						
Overheads/chalkboard content clear & organized	1	2	3	4	5	NA
Visual aids can be easily read	1	2	3	4	5	NA
Instructor provided an outline/handouts	1	2	3	4	5	NA
Computerized instruction effective	1	2	3	4	5	NA

**SPECIAL CLASSIFICATION NOTES:**

**Things I thought you did well (Strengths):** (e.g. metacurriculum, use of comparisons & contrasts, positive feedback, opportunity provided for student questions)

**Things that you could improve (Weaknesses):** (e.g. unable to answer student questions, overall topic knowledge, relevance of examples, etc.)

**OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS RATING** 1 2 3 4 5

Date of Conference \_\_\_\_\_ Observer Signature \_\_\_\_\_