

Having your Remote Teaching Observed by Faculty Colleagues

Your department may have faculty colleagues observe your teaching this fall semester. In-person observation will be done in the customary way. Peer observation of remote teaching introduces some new challenges: 1) there are student educational record privacy issues that don't apply during in-person observation; and 2) you may be facing additional stresses because of the unfamiliar technology and mode of instruction. Remember that all departments have been urged to focus on providing constructive feedback. We are all aware that this is an unusual situation in which to be teaching! Peer observers have been encouraged to reach out to you both before and after teaching observations, to learn more about how you communicate with students, to reinforce teaching strategies that are working well, and to share any recommendations.

Here are the processes for different types of courses:

For live remote (Zoom or similar) courses (remote scheduled):

- Your department chair will designate peer observers. You will then invite those individuals to attend one or more class sessions, according to your department's practices.
- Any remote class brings up student privacy concerns distinct from in-person classes. It's best if you introduce the observers at the beginning of class and assure students that the observers are UNM faculty who, like the instructor, are under the same obligation to respect privacy of student information. Once they've been introduced, the observers have been advised to remain muted and with camera off – out of sight, out of mind!
- Your department has been asked to avoid recording Zoom classes, for the purposes of peer observation, because doing so creates a student record covered by FERPA.
- If you must record a Zoom class for later evaluation, the recording should be stored in your Learn course shell. Then you should contact Learn Support and ask that they add your designated observers as “students” in your class so they can access the recordings.

For asynchronous remote courses (remote arranged, hybrid, or OnlineMAX):

- Your department chair will designate peer observers.
- You should then contact Learn Support and ask that they add your designated observers as “students” in your class.
- If your peer observers are not adept at navigating in Learn, or if your course includes “adaptive release” features that limit what students can see until they pass various quizzes, it may be best to schedule a live Zoom session with your peer observers, share your screen, and give them a tour of the course. If in doubt, talk to your chair about the best way to give your colleagues access.