Classroom Observation Protocol for Undergraduate STEM – COPUS

This protocol allows observers, after a short 1.5 hour training period, to reliably characterize how faculty and students are spending their time in the STEM classroom.[†] For further information, see: www.cwsei.ubc.ca/resources/COPUS.htm

Observation codes

1. Students are Doing

L	Listening to instructor/taking notes, etc.
Ind	Individual thinking/problem solving. Only mark when an instructor explicitly asks students to think about a clicker question or another question/problem on their own.
CG	Discuss clicker question in groups of 2 or more students
WG	Working in groups on worksheet activity
OG	Other assigned group activity, such as responding to instructor question
AnQ	Student answering a question posed by the instructor with rest of class listening
SQ	Student asks question
WC	Engaged in whole class discussion by offering explanations, opinion, judgment, etc. to whole class, often facilitated by instructor
Prd	Making a prediction about the outcome of demo or experiment
SP	Presentation by student(s)
TQ	Test or quiz
W	Waiting (instructor late, working on fixing AV problems, instructor otherwise occupied, etc.)
O	Other – explain in comments

2. Instructor is Doing

Lec	Lecturing (presenting content, deriving mathematical results, presenting a problem solution, etc.)
RtW	Real-time writing on board, doc. projector, etc. (often checked off along with Lec)
FUp	Follow-up/feedback on clicker question or activity to entire class
PQ	Posing non-clicker question to students (non-rhetorical)
CQ	Asking a clicker question (mark the entire time the instructor is using a clicker question, not just when first asked)
AnQ	Listening to and answering student questions with entire class listening
MG	Moving through class guiding ongoing student work during active learning task
1o1	One-on-one extended discussion with one or a few individuals, not paying attention to the rest of the class (can be along with MG or AnQ)
D/V	Showing or conducting a demo, experiment, simulation, video, or animation
Adm	Administration (assign homework, return tests, etc.)
W	Waiting when there is an opportunity for an instructor to be interacting with or observing/listening to student or group activities and the instructor is not doing so
O	Other – explain in comments

3. Student Engagement (optional)

L	Small fraction (10-20%) obviously engaged.
M	Substantial fractions both clearly engaged and clearly not engaged.
H	Large fraction of students (80+%) clearly engaged in class activity or listening to instructor.

Student engagement alternatives:

(1) Just mark when engagement is obviously high or obviously low.

(2) Count "N" students near you (~10) and assess how many appear engaged at every 2 minute interval. Enter value for all engaged instead of L/M/H. NOTE what your value of N was.

Suggestions regarding codes and comments:

- Clarify code choices with comments.
- Consider indicating your confidence regarding coding, especially when you aren't sure about choice of codes.

HOW TO USE OBSERVATION MATRIX: Put a check under all codes that happen anytime in each 2 minute time period (check multiple codes where appropriate). If no codes fit, choose "O" (other) and explain in comments. Put in comments when you feel something extra should be noted or explained.

[†] *This protocol was adapted from: Hora MT, Oleson A, Ferrare JJ. Teaching Dimensions Observation Protocol (TDOP) User's Manual. Madison: Wisconsin Center for Education Research, University of Wisconsin–Madison; 2013.*

Date: _____ **Class:** _____ **Instructor:** _____ **No. students** _____ **Observer Name:** _____

Classroom arranged how? _____

1. **L**-Listening; **Ind**-Individual thinking; **CG**-Clicker Q discussion; **WG**-Worksheet group work; **OG**-Other group work; **AnQ**-Answer Q; **SQ**-Student Q; **WC**-Whole class discuss; **Prd**-Predicting; **SP**-Student present; **TQ**-Test/quiz; **W**-Waiting; **O**-Other

2. **Lec**-Lecturing; **RtW**-Writing; **FUp**-Follow-up; **PQ**-Pose Q; **CQ**-Clicker Q; **AnQ**-Answer Q; **MG**-Moving/Guiding; **1o1**-One-on-one; **D/V**-Demo+; **Adm**-Admin; **W**-Waiting; **O**-Other
For each 2 minute interval, check columns to show what's happening in each category (or draw vertical line to indicate continuation of activity). OK to check multiple columns.

COPUS																													Comments:
				1. Students doing											2. instructor doing										3. Engagement			EG: explain difficult coding choices, flag key points for <u>feedback for the instructor</u>, identify good
min	L	Ind	CG	WG	OG	AnQ	SQ	WC	Prd	SP	T/Q	W	O	Lec	RtW	Fup	PQ	CQ	AnQ	MG	1o1	D/V	Adm	W	O	L	M	H	analogies, etc.
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2																													
4																													
6																													
8 - 10																													
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28 - 30																													

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40 - 42																													
42																													
44																													
46																													
48 - 50																													

Further comments:

Smith MK, Jones FHM, Gilbert SL, and Wieman CE. 2013. The Classroom Observation Protocol for Undergraduate STEM (COPUS): a New Instrument to Characterize University STEM Classroom Practices. CBE-Life Sciences Education Vol 12(4), pp. 618-627
A protocol sheet in Excel format is available at: www.cwsei.ubc.ca/resources/COPUS.htm.