Ekstrom Library Information Literacy Program
Peer Teaching Observation and Reflection

**Purpose/Rationale**
The peer observation program is designed to:

- Improve the quality of information literacy instruction through sustained critical reflection on teaching practices in context;
- Foster dialogue and idea sharing among instruction librarians within a community of practice;
- Provide individual instructors with evaluative information that they can incorporate into performance reviews and promotion files.

**Expected Timeline**
Observations will take place at any time within a given semester, at the discretion of the observer and instructor. Part 1 discussions will typically take place shortly before the observation. Upon completion of Part 2, Part 3 will be completed within an agreed upon time frame, usually not exceeding 3 weeks.

**Part 1: Pre-Observation Discussion**
The librarian and the observer should meet in person prior to the session to discuss the type of class, learning objectives and lesson plans, level of collaboration with the professor (including the professor’s stated goals for the session), specific areas the librarian would like feedback on, any areas of concern or sensitivity about the observation, and anything of note regarding the librarian’s teaching style or preferred methods.

**Part 2: Observation**
The observer should review the areas of focus listed below in Part 3 and takes notes accordingly during the observation.

**Part 3: Post-Observation Reflective Discussion and Letter**
The observer and instructor will meet in person to discuss the observation. This balanced discussion is intended to be a two-way conversation, where both parties are encouraged to not only consider the observed instruction session but also engage in dialogue about teaching practice in general. It is also an opportunity for instructors to reflect thoughtfully about pedagogical choices made during the instruction session, and for observers to glean more insight into how those choices could affect their own future instruction. Areas to focus on (where applicable) include the following:

- **Content and Learning Objectives**
  - What information literacy concepts or learning objectives were the focus of the session? How were these concepts/objectives emphasized during the session?
  - In what ways did the librarian tailor the session to the course, assignment, and/or class level?
What resources (databases, etc.) were covered during the session? How did the librarian explain their role or value? How did the librarian go about demonstrating searches?
Were there any active learning components? If so, how did these components relate to the learning objectives?

- **Organization and Clarity**
  - How was the session structured? How did the librarian manage the flow of content and/or activities?
  - Did the librarian clearly communicate the learning objectives to the students?

- **Interaction and Engagement**
  - What strategies did the librarian use to engage the students? Consider both verbal and non-verbal (body language, movement, etc.) strategies. Consider class activities as well.
  - How did students respond throughout the session? What kinds of interaction occurred?
  - How did the librarian manage the classroom space and the technology?

- **Overall Evaluation and Recommendations for Improvement**
  - What is your overall evaluation of the session? Consider the relationship between the pre-observation discussion and the actual session.
  - What do you see as the particular strengths of the librarian?
  - What areas for improvement can you identify?

Following the conversation, the observer will write a short (1-2 page) letter to the instructor that may include comments on the instructor’s intent and preparation, notes from the observation as they pertain to the areas of focus, and any takeaways or themes that came up in the post-observation discussion. This letter is intended to document the peer review experience and may serve as a reference for the instructor in future teaching.

*Letters documenting teaching observations will be submitted to the Coordinator of Information Literacy after the process is complete.*