

**Problem:**

Higher education units supply annual review and tenure promotion guidelines. While these guidelines may be helpful, they can be vague in the necessary required documentation to portray teaching effectiveness. Peer or administrative support for collecting data and artifacts and/or guidance on how the artifacts will be assessed may be limited. This process can cause anxiety and affect confidence of instructors regarding their submission.

**Solution:**

Peer-supported review (PS-R) of teaching is a method that promotes reciprocal learning through discussions and reflections to address the problem (Sachs & Parsell, 2014). This non-judgmental method allows faculty to reflect on their pedagogical skills while examining how other teachers approach their instruction. Just as peer-review is advantageous for producing quality research, peer-supported review of teaching can potentially help with one's professional development (Gosling, 2014). By creating an outlet for PS-R using the faculty learning communities (FLC) model, peer feedback can assist faculty in building confidence during the evaluation submission process.

An FLC is an ideal venue for this exchange of ideas as it is a proven model of professional development helps faculty enhance knowledge and social support around a common theme (Cox, 2004).

**Peer-Supported Review Process: PS-R**

1. FLC member reflects on own teaching evidence (artifacts), identifying areas for feedback.
2. Colleagues pair up to perform reviews.
3. A pre-review meeting occurs to discuss the review criteria.
4. The peer review happens with formative, constructive feedback.
5. Post-review to discuss feedback.
6. Reviewee reflects on feedback and makes changes as desired.

**Artifact selection**

**Partners**

**Pre-meetings**

**Peer reviews**

**Debrief**

**Changes & submission**

**References:**

Cox, M. D. (2004). Introduction to faculty learning communities. *New Directions for Teaching and Learning*, 97, 5-23.  
 Gosling, D. (2014). Collaborative peer-supported review of teaching. In J. Sachs, & M. Parsell, (Eds.), *Peer review of learning and teaching in higher education*. Springer Publishing.  
 Sachs, J., & Parsell, M. (2014). *Peer review of learning and teaching in higher education*. Springer Publishing

**Faculty Learning Community structure**

We have conducted two FLC cohorts over the past year with a total of 20 participants. Each meeting contained a theme related to high-stakes evaluations. The discussion meetings focus on a particular topic and include a journal article to read. Participants share their reactions to the article as well as give personal accounts as it relates to the topic. During the work sessions, members conduct PS-R of desired documents. Each member is recommended to peer review at least two different artifacts. Example artifacts reviewed include syllabi, teaching philosophy, online course organization, and teaching performance goals. Peers provide feedback using guides and rubrics. This peer commentary then can be submitted as an external review artifact.

**Preliminary Indications**

While is this an ongoing research study to evaluate if PS-R in an FLC is a helpful professional development program, survey results showed:  
 Prior to FLC

- 19 out of 20 participants indicated they were unsure or somewhat confident in what they uploaded represented their teaching ability.
- After FLC completion, all participants agreed or strongly agreed:
- They felt supported by FLC members
  - Gained insight to other pedagogical methods
  - PS-R provided a more comprehensive picture of teaching
  - PS-R created more detailed artifacts
  - Increased confidence that submission represents teaching ability.

*Participant quotes: "This FLC helped me realize the teaching methods I use which are supported by research to be best practices, thus giving me more confidence to highlight them in my artifacts." "It emphasized for me it's still a good idea to have external comments in there...so it's not just your own voice saying your story better." "We made a concerted effort to improve specific parts of our portfolio."*