

## Sample Questions Prior to Classroom Observation

It is not necessary to ask every question; in fact, you will want to pick and choose among them, depending on the needs and concerns of the faculty member being interviewed. We have found that an extended initial interview can be of value both to you and to the faculty member. When asked to examine and clarify their values, attitudes, and approaches to teaching, faculty often report that they find the task both enjoyable and beneficial.

### Questions about the course:

1. What course do you want to talk about? How does it fit in the curriculum? Does it count toward general education? As an elective? A requirement for the major? Are there prerequisites?
2. What do you hope students will learn in the course? What topics are included? What should students be able to do with their knowledge of those topics?
3. What do you expect students to do as preparation for the class? Do students generally come to class prepared in the way you expect?
4. What about evaluation procedures? How do you measure their learning? What are tests, quizzes, papers, and other assignments like? What counts toward their final grades? How much?

### Questions about students:

1. What can you tell me about the students who enroll in this course? What about their backgrounds, preparation, majors, motivations? Do students who take this course seem fairly similar in their learning styles or are they widely different?
2. If we could eavesdrop on students describing this course, what might we hear? How do you think they'd describe the course goals and your expectations? What would they say about class meetings and assignments? What would they say about evaluation procedures?
3. Is there anything about the course that students find especially challenging? Interesting?
4. What kind of relationship with students do you try to establish? How satisfied are you with your relationships with students?
5. Have you modified your teaching in any way because of the needs of students coming here?

### Questions about the instructor:

1. How long have you been teaching? What's one of the best teaching experiences you can remember? What's one of the worst?
2. How long have you taught this course? How have you changed the course since the first time you taught it? Any recent changes?
3. What do you think are your teaching strengths?
4. What would you like to improve or change in your teaching?
5. What would you like us to focus on this semester?

Questions adapted from Erickson B. L. and Sorcinelli, M. D., "The First Meeting With the Client." *Practically Speaking: A Sourcebook for Instructional Consultants in Higher Education*, Chapter 4, pages 25-28.