THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

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Dear Tutor Observer

This process arises from our attempt to reconcile the need for formative evaluation and good feedback to the tutors with the tutors' need for a record for their teaching dossiers and a faculty policy to move toward greater accountability in teaching performance and valuing of educational activities.

Please read the instructions carefully. The emphasis is on narrative identification and description of specific behaviours leading to constructive formative feedback.

The *TUTOR OBSERVATION FORM* should be given to the tutor, not copied and not returned to this office.

Please return the *OBSERVER RECORD* as soon as possible to the address on the form. This will be a record of your completed observation. This has four purposes: 1. to document this educational activity (your department head will receive a summary note to recognize your important contribution), 2. to identify tutors who are OK (meet or exceed expectations), 3. to identify tutors who are candidates for faculty development activity (e.g., as observers), and 4. to prompt appropriate follow up of tutors who may be having difficulty.

Some tips you may find useful, from other observers and students:
• Make a 'map' of the tutorial group and keep a tally of significant contributions for a while - it will reveal the pattern of interaction and contribution.
• Offer to give some feedback to the whole group before the tutorial breaks. The students, tongue-in-cheek, refer to us as "the learning police"! - but they would like our feedback on how they are doing.
• Keep scratch notes on a separate pad of paper for the first hour or more of the tutorial, and then transfer your most useful comments to the Tutor Observation Form.
• Begin your feedback to the tutor by finding out what was typical and unusual in this tutorial.

Thank you very much. This is an important part of colleagues helping colleagues in educational enterprise. I would like comments on your good, bad and indifferent experiences with the process. Please contact me if you have questions about it - and pass along your favourite tips; I'll add them to my list.

Sincerely,

Nora Houlahan PBL Program Manager Tel: (604) 875-4111 x67223 Fax: (604) 875-5611 Email: nora.houlahan@ubc.ca

TUTOR OBSERVATION FORM Tutorial observations exist primarily to give the tutor good constructive feedback. This form helps observers to be systematic in their assessment of a tutor's effectiveness during a PBL session. It includes 3 broad categories of tasks and behaviours described in detail at the bottom of this page.

The purposes of the ***OBSERVER RECORD*** are: to maintain our records of who has observed whom, to alert us when follow up may be required and to identify tutors who may be candidates for faculty development involvement.

INSTRUCTIONS TO OBSERVERS

1. Introduce yourself to the tutor and group and explain your reason for being there. The tutor should have been notified.

2. Observe and make Notes of specific behaviours/incidents on the *TUTOR OBSERVATION FORM*. The check boxes are a device to help identify notable behaviours; they are **not** a "check list" for accounting. Some observers find that the best method is to make preliminary jottings on a separate sheet of paper for the first half of the tutorial, and then begin to fill in this form as patterns and examples become clearer.

3. Under **Context** note any atypical characteristics of the group, case or environment that help or hinder the tutor. Some cases may require extraordinary intervention or very little, some groups are particularly lively or have entrenched interpersonal problems, some rooms inhibit interaction.

4. Under **Comments** note your overall impressions and under **Strengths** and **Suggestions** be specific.

5. The tutorial group will probably like some feedback from you about group process - please offer to do so.

6. Discuss your observations with the tutor as soon as possible. Complete the **Strengths** and **Suggestions** to also reflect their opinions.

7. Agree to some **Goals** with the tutor and if follow up is appropriate make explicit and clear arrangements.

8. Sign and give the ***TUTOR OBSERVATION FORM*** to the tutor (who may wish to include it in a teaching dossier and it will be useful if follow up is to be sought). The tutors may, of course, wish to direct it to someone else's attention -they are welcome to do so. Complete the ***OBSERVER RECORD*** and show it to the tutor.

9. Seek the tutor's feedback on your observation and comments.

10. Promptly return the ***OBSERVER RECORD*** to: **Nora Houlahan, PBL Program Manager, Dean's Office, Undergraduate Education, GLDHCC, 2775 Laurel Street, 11th Floor, Vancouver, B.C., V5Z 1M9**

TASKS AND BEHAVIOURS THAT DESCRIBE EFFECTIVE TUTORING

I. The tutor ensures a safe environment and encourages critical thought This concerns a tutor's activities directed to manage the learning environment so it is safe and stimulating. Elements of a safe **learning environment** include: established ground rules to which all participants adhere, well established tutor's role, nonjudgmental and not overly critical attitude to students' input. Encouragement of **critical thought** includes: use of open-ended questions, prompting students' input, requiring clarifications, modeling critical evaluation of hypotheses and information, assisting and encouraging students' critical consideration of hypotheses and information.

II. The tutor promotes active and responsible communication. This pertains to the quality of communication content and presentation of information. A tutor who promotes **active and responsible communication** may: assist students to recognize the need for additional information, ask for summaries, insist on checking the accuracy of information and correct understanding and use of terms, prompt the reformulation and refinement of learning issues, encourage students to use the board to illustrate and organize their ideas.

III. Non-directive facilitation and team work in group context A tutor who is **non-directive** may: elicit questions, prompt contributions instead of contributing her/himself, waits and listens effectively. To **facilitate team work** a tutor may: have a differential approach to students according to their roles in the group, handle conflicts in a non-intrusive manner, assist the evaluation process, encourage everyone to participate and discourage side conversations. Good team work requires good time management - something a tutor can help with.

TUTOR OBSERVATION FORM　　　　　　　**Tutor:**

Observer:

　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　Time/Date:

Observer Signature:

Block/Theme:　　　　　　　　　　　　**Place:**

Instructions: Note specific tutor facilitation behaviours on this form. The check boxes are a device to help identify these behaviours, they are **not** an 'accounting' list. Some items may not be applicable or important in every tutorial. The notes are a basis for your feedback to the tutor after the observation. *Sign and give THIS form to the tutor;* **promptly return the Observer Record (attached) to Nora Houlahan, PBL Program Manager, UBC MD Undergrad Program, 2775 Laurel St, V5Z 1M9.**

　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　<u>Notes of specific behaviours/incidents</u>

Ensures safe environment & encourages critical thought:

Is courteous and considerate. □

Helps students establish and adhere to ground rules. □

Models nonjudgmental and constructive
　　communication and behaviour. □

Encourages critical thought by use of open-ended
　　questions. □

Encourages critical evaluation of evidence to support
　　hypotheses. □

Promotes active & responsible communication:

Helps students recognize when they need additional
　　external information. □

Encourages students to be accountable for the
　　accuracy of information presented in tutorials. □

Encourages students to check their understanding of
　　terms and concepts used in tutorial discussion. □

Helps students refine learning issues. □

Guides students to resources when appropriate. □

Encourages use of the board for diagrams and
　　charts. □

Facilitates team work:

Is not overly directive. □

Helps students learn from their mistakes. □

Helps students identify and deal with problems in
　　tutorial functioning. □

Encourages participation by all group members. □

Promotes evaluation by providing and inviting
　　constructive feedback. □

Keeps group activity flowing; helps with time
　　management. □

Context: Atypical features of group, case or environment that help or hinder the tutor:

Comments: Overall impressions and salient observations:

The following items should be discussed in the post-tutorial conference with the tutor.

Strengths:

Suggestions and goals for improvement or follow up:

This observation is for:

□　New tutor　　　　　　□　Experienced tutor for promotion and tenure

Tutor:

□　Meets or exceeds expectations　□　Repeat observation suggested

TUTOR OBSERVATION FORM   **Tutor:**

Observer:

                                         Time/Date:

Observer Signature:

Block/Theme: **Place:**

Instructions: Check the appropriate box(es) and add notes as suggested below. **Promptly return this Observer Record to:**

Nora Houlahan, PBL Program Manager, MD Undergrad Office, 11th Floor 2775 Laurel St, V5Z 1M9.

This form is confidential and only available for the purposes of: keeping a record of tutors who have been observed and by whom, identifying tutors who may be candidates to contribute to 'the cause' of faculty development and 'teachers helping teachers', and ensuring that if follow up has been requested that it happens.

☐ Tutor meets or exceeds expectations   ☐ Tutor potential for faculty development activity   ☐ Follow up is requested

Notes: These may include particular strengths, involvement, interests of the tutor; or particular concerns with which they would like help; or some detail of the follow up suggested e.g., another observation, consultation with a 'tutor helper', feed-forward about the group or students. Please indicate the agreed arrangements (what, why, who, when) that have been made if follow up is requested.