

*“A practitioner’s reflection can serve as a corrective to over-learning. Through reflection, (s)he can surface and criticize the tacit understandings that have grown up around the repetitive experiences of a specialized practice, and can make new sense of the situations of uncertainty or uniqueness which (s)he may allow (her)himself to experience.”*

Schön, D.A. (1983). *The Reflective Practitioner: How Professionals Think in Action*. NY: Basic Books.

## Teaching Triangles

The **Teaching Triangles**<sup>1</sup> program provide faculty an opportunity to gain new insight into their teaching and students’ learning through a non-evaluative, formative process of reciprocal classroom visits and reflection. The three teachers in a triangle agree to visit one another’s classes over the course of a semester and meet to discuss what they learn from their visits. The goal is to create a respectful, reciprocal, reflective dialogue on teaching and learning.

### How is this a “non-evaluative” process?

Teaching Triangles are convened to stimulate reflection on teaching and learning, not evaluation. Participants focus their conversations on the evidence about student learning they observed and what they are learning about their own teaching from the classroom visit process. No direct commentary on a colleagues’ performance is part of this process, unless requested by a colleague.

### How are triangles formed?

Faculty may create a triangle or submit a request to engage in a triangle to the Center for Learning and Teaching (CLT). Faculty may request colleagues who are teaching similar courses (Intro, Seminar, Lab, etc.), similar students (first years, senior majors, etc.), topics that cohere or align (education, quantitative literacy, or Russia, etc.), or who utilize similar pedagogical or assessment tools (clickers, service learning, group presentations, etc.).



### What happens in a teaching triangle?

Each teaching triangle consists of three faculty members. After an initial meeting early in the semester to discuss logistics and establish expectations, each triangle member commits to visiting the other members’ classes at least once. Following all the class visits, the triangle reconvenes to reflect on teaching utilizing some of the questions below.

1. What have you learned about your teaching philosophy from your classroom visits (it could be something new or something that has been affirmed)? What personal values do you bring to your teaching?
2. How has the experience of again being in the “learner” role impacted your teaching practice?
3. What have you learned is one of your strengths as an educator?
4. What aspect of your teaching do you wish to improve? How are you going to do this?
5. What surprised you during this experience? What assumptions about teaching were challenged by what you observed?
6. What is one thing you learned that will make your teaching more effective?
7. What is one thing you learned that you are going to apply next semester in your classroom?

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<sup>1</sup> Teaching Triangles is based on a Teaching Squares model developed by Anne Wesley at St. Louis University and modeled on similar programs Amherst College, Stonehill College, and Tufts University.