The Motorcycle Ohio Peer Observation Program is a professional development resource provided for Motorcycle Ohio instructors.

**Goals of the Peer Observation Program**

The overall goal of the Peer Observer Program is to help ensure Motorcycle Ohio instructors provide a high quality experience for students taking the Basic RiderCourse and other basic motorcycle safety courses in Ohio. More specific goals of the program are to: (1) identify the instructor's teaching strengths and encourage their continued use to benefit students; (2) identify areas needing improvement so instructors can enhance their capabilities and provide a better experience for the students; (3) provide instructors and observers with opportunities for professional growth, and (4) to improve the instructors, peer observers, and the Motorcycle Ohio program through shared experiences and constructive feedback.

**Instructor Eligibility**

All instructors are eligible to be observed each year. Higher priority is given to those instructors who have not been observed on the range for three or more years. Typically, instructors are observed after they have taught their first course of the year, but instructors may be observed during their first course if they teach less than five courses per year, are located in an area of the state in which it is difficult to schedule observations, or if other extenuating circumstances are present.

For efficiency and cost-effectiveness, if a peer observer is conducting an observation on one instructor, the other instructor may also be observed on the same day at that site, even though an observation on the other instructor was conducted previously in the year. Approval to observe the second instructor must come from MO prior to the observation.

**Confidentiality**

Peer observers agree to maintain confidentiality regarding each observation conducted; all subsequent follow-up discussions for each observation; any feedback exchanged as part of each observation; and feedback received from the observed instructor regarding the observer or the process. Observers will discuss the specifics of the observation and/or report with MO program staff. Observers agree to refrain from discussion of observation specific information with other instructors, students, and parties not associated with the MO program.

**Peer Observer Certification**

Instructors are invited to apply on a yearly basis for selection as a peer observer. The minimum requirement is to be a Motorcycle Ohio certified instructor for at least three years. Observers are chosen by MO in conjunction with the chief instructors based on the instructor's application, prior observations or reports, and general region of the state.

Motorcycle Ohio has the right to remove any instructor from peer observer status, or to deny any current observers application for re-certification.

In addition, peer observers must abide by the following requirements:

1. Attend any scheduled peer observer updates.
2. Assist with any Instructor Preparation Course if asked.
3. Commit to performing at least 6 observations during the motorcycle training season.
4. Realize committing to at least 6 observations may decrease the time available to conduct classes.
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5. Have regular access to e-mail.
6. Can receive and will send Word documents as attachments to e-mail.
8. Can electronically submit completed peer observation reports in Word 2003 compatible format within 7 (seven) calendar days of the observation.

Observation Times and Segments

An instructor may be observed in the lead and/or co-instructor role on the range or in the classroom. Observations will cover approximately 2 to 2.5 hours of teaching time. Below are examples of course sections that may be observed.

Classroom
   Units 2, 3, and the beginning of Unit 4; last half of Unit 3 and all of Unit 4
Range
   Level 1 exercises 1-4; 2-6; 3-7; 4-8; 5-9;
   Level 2 exercises 10-13; 11-15; 12-16; 13-17

Note that observations are not limited to those blocks of time.

General Observation Process

A peer observation has various phases outlined below.

1. Observation scheduling
2. Observation confirmation
3. Observation is conducted
4. Observation debriefing
5. Peer observer completes observation report and sends it to MO
6. MO sends report to Chief Instructor
7. Chief Instructor reviews report, includes comments, and returns report to MO
8. MO sends the report and CI comments to the instructor, peer observer, and site sponsor
9. Instructor confirms receipt of report and responds to MO
10. Follow up activities as needed / requested with instructor, mentor/s, chief instructor/s

Observation Scheduling

All communication with instructors must be documented in case there are scheduling conflicts that must be resolved by Motorcycle Ohio.

The preferred method for peer observers to initially schedule observations is as follows:

1. Using resources Motorcycle Ohio provides, determine the dates a specific instructor is teaching.
2. Contact the instructor (via email or phone) to arrange an observation, ensure the instructor is not already scheduled for an observation, and verify the instructor is actually scheduled to conduct a Basic RiderCourse or equivalent on that date.
3. Confirm an observation with the instructor for the date. The block of time and/or exercises or classroom units do not need to be specified.
4. Email Motorcycle Ohio (mogen@dps.state.oh.us) with the instructor’s name, confirmed date, and location of the scheduled observation.
5. Motorcycle Ohio will notify other peer observers and modify its resources to reflect the scheduled observation.
Motorcycle Ohio will notify the peer observer of any specific items that should be observed for an instructor. Peer observers are expected to make every effort to include those items in the scope of the observation.

INSTRUCTORS are responsible for:
1. Informing the peer observer of any areas of specific interest so targeted feedback can be provided that will be most useful
2. Notifying the peer observer if their teaching responsibilities change and they are no longer conducting the class for which an observation has been scheduled.

Observation Confirmation

Approximately two weeks before a scheduled observation, the peer observer is expected to:

1. Contact the scheduled instructor to re-confirm s/he will be teaching on the scheduled observation date. Verify the general course time (e.g., morning or afternoon if two classes are running the same weekend) and location. Specific times, exercises, or classroom sessions need not be discussed.
   - First, review with the instructor the fact that this observation is for their benefit and will provide them with feedback regarding teaching strengths as well as suggestions for enhancing their abilities.
   - Second, let them know that the significant information observed will be recorded. They will receive the observation notes as well as a cover letter from the MO program reviewing this material and providing appropriate suggestions.
   - Finally, ask if the instructor would like to receive a verbal summary of the observation immediately after the observation has been completed at the course site.

2. If the location is a private provider site, notify the site coordinator, as a courtesy, that an observation will be occurring on the scheduled date.

3. If the scheduled instructor is no longer teaching on the given date, the replacement instructor and/or scheduled co-instructor may be observed in the original instructor’s place.

INSTRUCTORS are responsible for:

1. Reviewing the Peer Observation Program information to understand their role and responsibilities; and the role, guidelines, and responsibilities of the peer observer.
2. Reviewing any other materials necessary to help ensure they are prepared to conduct a quality course. These materials include the Instructor Guide, range cards (including any sticky notes), BRC DVD (or videotape), the Rider Handbook, and the Motorcycle Ohio Policy and Procedure Manual.

Guidelines for Conduct of the Peer Observation

INSTRUCTOR RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Inform your students they are not the focus of the observation but that you are being observed for your professional development. Introduce the Peer Observer to help minimize stress and guess work among your students. Motorcycle Ohio has received very positive feedback from students regarding the Peer Observation Program. They are pleased and impressed there is a system in place to facilitate instructor professionalism and quality.
2. Do not request advice pertaining to instruction in the classroom or on the range while the observation is in progress. (If this occurs, the peer observer has been directed to decline to comment.)

3. During the observation, communicate to the observer any position adjustments or behavior changes that could be made by the observer to reduce distractions during the observation.

PEER OBSERVER RESPONSIBILITIES

1. The Peer Observer’s responsibility is to observe and record the classroom and range teaching activities.

2. The Peer Observer will make every effort to be inconspicuous during the observation. This involves positioning and personal appearance. In the classroom, the Peer Observer will sit quietly in the back of the classroom. On the range, the Peer Observer must be able to see and hear the instructor without “breathing down their neck.” The observer must be aware of the students and avoid distracting them or attracting their attention. The observer will present a professional appearance by wearing “instructor” attire. In any event, avoid over- or under-dressing. The observer’s presence should have little to no effect on students and minimal effect on the instructors. Other suggestions are as follows:

   - Before beginning the observation, invite the instructor to provide suggestions that will minimize their stress during the observation.
   - Stand behind the group of students when the instructor is reviewing the directions.
   - Turn range card pages and observation form pages quietly.
   - Take care to avoid clicking pens or doing other noise-making activities during the observation.
   - Monitor the instructor and students for any non-verbal cues that might indicate there is a distraction. Adjust position and/or behavior if possible to correct the situation.
   - Jot brief notes during the observation and fill in the details at a later time. Record information that includes positive aspects of the instruction, areas for improvement, and examples of events during the classroom and range observation.

3. The Peer Observer will not bring other individuals to the course site during an observation session. This includes other instructors, friends, relatives, etc. There is a degree of stress and discomfort involved without additional, unnecessary variables.

4. The Peer Observer will not intervene with the conduct of the course, with coaching or evaluation of the students, or with either instructor. The Peer Observer’s role is observation only ... not correction, coaching, or evaluation of students or instructors. The Peer Observer does not have the authority to intervene in a lesson or terminate a class. Only MO chief instructors (regarding curriculum issues) or MO program staff (regarding equipment, facility, schedule or program issues) have that authority.

   - Do not intervene with weak or poor demonstrations or instruction or in cases of incorrect range management. The Observed Instructor must be able to retain the trust and respect of the students through completion of the course. The Observer must never do anything to diminish the instructor’s credibility.
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- When the lead instructor is being observed, the co-instructor is not the focus of the observation. Comments regarding the co-instructor will be limited to those affecting the performance of the “observed” or lead instructor. Remember, the lead instructor is responsible for the successful completion of the lesson. If the co-instructor is being observed, the lead instructor comments are limited to those affecting the performance of the co-instructor.

- If the Peer Observer believes that a student or students is in imminent danger and is likely to be injured if the conditions continue, the Peer Observer has a responsibility to notify the Lead Instructor of the dangerous activity or condition. This must be done in a professional, non-threatening manner and without interfering with the students or drawing undue attention. Be brief and speak quietly.

- People with equivalent training have a legal responsibility to each other and to the students to provide information regarding unsafe conditions. The peer observer must notify the lead instructor; however, the lead instructor is not obligated to incorporate or take action if they believe they are correctly and adequately handling the situation. The Peer Observer is expected to report the notification to the MO Office.

5. **The Peer Observer is not a range aide or co-instructor.** If it does not interfere with the observation, the observer may assist with range set-up, motorcycle maintenance, or other range aide duties.

6. **The Peer Observer is not an advisor.** In normal circumstances, let the instructor teach. Do not interrupt or interfere.

7. **The Peer Observer may provide advice or assistance before or after the observation, but not during instructional time... and then only if asked.** A request for advice should not involve asking the observer to provide instruction during a lesson or exercise. The observed instructor should not request advice pertaining to instruction in the classroom or the range while the observation is in progress. If this situation occurs, the observer is to decline to comment.

**Accident during the Observation**

1. The Peer Observer will provide necessary assistance in the event of an accident, as directed by the lead instructor for that exercise. **The lead instructor for that exercise is in charge at the course site. Do not usurp their authority.** In an emergency situation, the Peer Observer will be prepared to render First Aid, assist when needed, and fill obvious needs. The Peer Observation Written Report will not include reference to the accident or the First Aid that was administered. This information will be recorded on the Accident Report Form.

2. The observation will be resumed as soon as possible after the accident.

3. The peer observer will contact the MO coordinator by telephone, email or in person as soon as possible after the observation to review the facts regarding the accident. The MO coordinator will follow-up via telephone, email or in person with the site coordinator and/or Instructor regarding instructional changes that may be necessary to avoid a similar situation in future courses.
Observation Debrief

INSTRUCTOR RESPONSIBILITIES

Inform the peer observer how you want to debrief the observation experience. Options include at the course site, over the telephone at a later time, or not at all. It is your choice and you need to inform the Peer Observer of your wishes. If you opt to have a debriefing with the Observer, please be respectful of their time. A maximum of 15 minutes should be provided at the course site. If the Observer agrees to spend additional time, it must be done after class or at a later date that is agreeable to both parties.

Tips for Accepting Feedback with Grace:

1. Listen very carefully and without judgment. While you may not agree with all of the feedback, you are likely to find something with which to agree.

2. Agree with as much as you can. Try to find something to agree with in every statement. Agreeing often builds rapport. You'll appear flexible and open-minded, and not rigidly stuck to one narrow point of view.

3. Resist the urge to defend your actions. Don’t argue with the observer, even though this is normal impulse. Instead, try to paraphrase the observer to make sure you understand the feedback.

4. Resist making excuses. Sometimes we have a bad day, or we may have misinterpreted a requirement or some of the material. Ask questions for clarification. The goal here is to learn from the experience and fine tune your skills for the next time.

5. Express your thanks for the feedback. Identify the feedback that you believe can help you as an instructor in future courses.

6. Understand the following:
   - The observation represents an exchange of information about your performance during a short period of time.
   - It may not reflect your overall abilities or your best effort. That is understood by the MO staff.
   - You will not be fired or disciplined as a result of a peer observation. You may be asked to complete some review work prior to teaching your next course.
   - You can request a follow-up if you are not satisfied or wish to document better performance.
   - You will be given opportunities to demonstrate improvement and/or correction if any of your performance does not meet expectations.
   - Perfection is not expected. Improvement over time is respected.

PEER OBSERVER RESPONSIBILITIES

1. The information sharing session must be conducted privately with the instructor. Select an area away from the students and other instructor(s) over the lunch hour or after the class. If acceptable to the observed instructor, the co-instructor may sit in on the debriefing. It is the observed instructor’s option to approve the co-instructor’s participation in the debriefing.

2. The Information Sharing Session can be more stressful than the written report. Point out particularly effective techniques as well as any deviations from the curriculum.
3. The procedure used when sharing information with the instructor is important. There usually isn't much time on-site to complete the debriefing. Be organized and prepared to cover the significant points. Avoid lengthy discussions that interfere with the course schedule. Do not get involved in debating points with the instructor. The purpose of the debriefing is to present information.

- Debriefing on the same day is helpful.
- Identify time available for the debriefing (15 minutes).
- Reassure the instructor that an observation is considered a Continuing Education experience and learning opportunity. It is not a pass/fail situation.
- Present the most significant 3-5 points to remember based on the items listed below. Do not argue if the instructor disagrees with your observation(s). Just present the information.

Classroom Priority Categories for Debriefing
1. Use of Small Groups
2. Key Points Reinforced
3. Met Objectives
4. Use of Time

Range Priority Categories for Debriefing
1. Demonstrated Exercise Correctly
2. Conducted Coaching Appropriate to each Student
3. Maintained Safe Learning Environment
4. Met Exercise Objective
5. Use of Time

- Start at the top of the form (time management) and move through to the bottom of the form.
- Cover specific items that the instructor requested feedback on first.
- Avoid using terms such as good/bad, right/wrong, or correct/incorrect.
- Show the instructor your notes from the beginning to enhance credibility and dispel any misunderstandings of the process and reporting.
- Give them some positive feedback before giving the constructive observations.
- Identify anything that you learned from their teaching.
- Ask if there is anything they would like you to help with or if they would like to know how you do certain things. Do not offer if not asked.

Written Observation Report

After the Peer Observer sends the report to the MO office, it will be logged and sent to one of the Chiefs for review. When the Chief Instructor returns the completed report to the MO office, MO reviews the material and provides a cover letter outlining strengths, areas for improvement, and recommendations for achieving those improvements. Occasionally, remedial activities are identified. Instructors are encouraged to communicate with the MO office/staff to determine activities that will best meet individual needs.

INSTRUCTOR RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Expect feedback on those things you did well, and on variations from the curriculum that occurred during your performance.
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2. Instructors will receive (1) a copy of the complete written report submitted to the program by the peer observer with the Chief Instructor’s comments, and (2) a cover letter from the MO Coordinator.

3. Each instructor is encouraged to respond to the written report. Instructors will be provided an opportunity to correct any deficiencies and/or request a follow-up observation session.

4. If for any reason you are not satisfied with the observation, you may request a follow-up observation from another Peer Observer or from MO Chief Instructors.

5. MO encourages each instructor to submit feedback regarding their Observation to improve or enhance the experience for future observations. Any and all comments or suggestions from instructors are welcome and encouraged. The goal is to continuously evaluate and improve the Peer Observation Program.

PEER OBSERVER RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Use the check sheets and forms provided by the MO office. The forms and standards are based on the curriculum, evaluation standards, and processes used during Instructor Preparation Courses.

2. Report the facts only. Do not provide opinions or conclusions.

3. If something was said or done either correctly, or incorrectly, report it.

4. Emphasize the positive aspects and strengths of the instructor; report the errors or weaknesses.

5. The focus of this activity is a “continuing education” experience that can be beneficial for all parties … the instructor, the observer, and the program.

6. The Peer Observer has a responsibility to report any deviations from the curriculum. However, it is the MO coordinator or Chief Instructor's responsibility to provide appropriate feedback and corrective information to the instructor and to determine if there is a need for instructor remediation.

Instructor Remediation

The goal of instructor remediation is to develop more qualified Instructors through shared learning, constructive coaching, skill evaluations and observation.

Motorcycle Ohio and the chief instructors will determine if remediation is necessary. In extreme cases where the site sponsor, chief instructor and/or program coordinator feel an instructor poses a risk to students and/or instructors, they can suspend the teaching assignments of that instructor until remediation has been arranged.

There are three stages of instructor remediation, and MO in conjunction with the chief instructors is responsible for determining at which stage an instructor needing remediation starts. Ideally, instructors needing remediation will start at the first stage and be able to correct deficiencies and conduct quality courses at the completion of that stage. If necessary, however, instructors may be required to complete additional stages.
The stages of instructor remediation are:

1. **Mentor Program**
   Instructors needing remediation work with Mentor instructors to help develop the Instructor’s observation, analysis, coaching, and reinforcement skills on the range and facilitation skills in the classroom. Mentor instructors need not be peer observers; they may be selected by the site sponsor, MO coordinator, or chief instructor. Instructors and Mentors work as a team to assess and improve skills, and feedback is provided in both directions and is also provided to MO, the site sponsor, and the chief instructors.

2. **Chief Intervention**
   Instructors still needing remediation work directly with a chief instructor to help develop the instructor’s observation, analysis, coaching, and reinforcement skills on the range and/or facilitation skills in the classroom. This may include instruction or direction by the chief instructor; chief observations with verbal or written feedback, analysis, and recommendations; or other activities that may be needed to help an instructor improve his/her skills.

3. **Recertification through the Instructor Prep Course (IPC)**
   Recertification through an IPC is the last resort for those instructors who want to teach but who are unwilling and/or unable to meet the goals and objectives set forth by peer observation program, mentor program, and chief intervention. The ultimate goal in having an instructor recertify through an IPC is to develop and reinforce the basic skills, knowledge, and understanding of curriculum foundation that are necessary to conduct quality motorcycle safety courses.

   If for any reason an instructor recommended for recertification through the IPC refuses to attend the IPC, Motorcycle Ohio may revoke the certification of the instructor pursuant to the Administrative Rules and Policy and Procedure manual.