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DEGLI STUDI
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Dipartimento
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ATEE
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BOOK OF ABSTRACTS

ATEE Spring Conference 2024

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Edited by Nicole Bianquin and Francesco Magni

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COLLABORATIVE PEER OBSERVATION OF TEACHING AS A TOOL TO IMPROVE TEACHING COMPETENCIES AND PRACTICES

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Improving the quality of learning and teaching is a primary task and, equally, a challenge for university institutions, which can be addressed through the perspective of faculty development (Frenay & Saroyan, 2010; Chester, 2012). Peer Observation of Teaching (POT) can serve as an effective tool for this purpose, promoting aspects within the faculty such as personal reflection on teaching practices, identification of professional development needs, and the sharing and dissemination of best practices (Sullivan et al., 2012; Yiend et al., 2014; Fletcher, 2017; Hendry et al., 2021). The literature identifies three main models of POT: evaluative, developmental, and collaborative (Gosling, 2005). These models vary depending on who conducts the teaching observation and the purpose of the observation.

This study aims to describe the implementation of a collaborative POT model within two Italian university contexts, with a sample of voluntary faculty members organized into pairs. The group of teachers is characterized by heterogeneity in terms of their scientific-disciplinary background and academic position.

The peer observation program consists of four phases: pre-observation, peer observation, post-observation, and reflection (Martin & Double, 1998; Bell, 2001). The goal is to identify and examine the elements activated in this observational process, both at the individual and relational levels, and their implications in terms of learning and professional development. The methodology involves the collection and qualitative analysis of lecturers' perceptions through the administration of semi-structured interviews in two distinct phases: before participating in the program to understand needs and expectations, and at the end to investigate reflections on the experience and any changes in teaching approach. Thematic analysis of interview content (Braun & Clarke, 2006) will help identify the most significant elements in generating a process of reflection and learning, providing insights into the development of a POT program that can concretely impact teaching practices.

Keywords: peer observation of teaching; learning and teaching practices; professional development.

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