

ST. OLAF COLLEGE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT
OBSERVATION GUIDE FOR THE BEGINNING OF STUDENT TEACHING

1. Get acquainted with the class

- a. Observe the students
 - i. Learn names, faces, and distinguishing characteristics of the students
 - ii. Observe the students' adjustment to the classroom situation; do they appear "at home"?
 - iii. In what ways are they participating?
 - iv. What is the attitude of the class as a whole?
 - v. What social observations can you make? Behavioral?
- b. Observe physical conditions and equipment
 - i. Note the satisfactory conditions of the classroom.
 - ii. Note the unsatisfactory conditions of the classroom (size of the room, acoustics, ventilation, heat, light, type of windows, shades, colors, exits.)
 - iii. List materials available for teaching such as maps, work tables, storage space, bookcases, reference books, files, dictionaries, etc.
- c. Observation of classroom routine
 - i. Seating arrangement. By groups? Alphabetical? Formal or informal?
 - ii. The way students enter the classroom
 - iii. The activity between bells – within the room itself and in the halls
 - iv. Requirement for recitation or group participation
 - v. Methods of holding attention and motivating students
 - vi. Methods of students attracting the teacher's attention during work periods
 - vii. Class discipline policies and class rules
 - viii. Procedure for passing and collecting papers
 - ix. Procedure for dismissal
- d. Observation of classroom method and activities
 - i. Note methods used, such as self-directed study, supervised study, question-answer, lectures, oral drill, panel projects, written drill, demonstration, laboratory techniques.
 - ii. Note the "launching of the year's work." How is interest obtained?
 - iii. Note examples of questions asked by students
 - iv. Provision for individual differences

2. Get acquainted with the school itself

- a. Try to discover the practices unique to this particular school
- b. Find out the things with which the school might be experimenting
- c. Where are its outstanding successes? Its major problems?
- d. Familiarize yourself with the bus schedules and policies relative to students who take the bus
- e. Read the Teacher's Manual and familiarize yourself with school policies and procedures
- f. Join in "teacher talks" to note the trends and the problems in education
- g. Find out about professional organization and activities of the teachers, new teacher orientation
- h. Note the policies relative to the extra-curricular activities
- i. Note student participation in class and in the overall program of the school (student government)
- j. Kinds of activities carried on in homeroom; how are study halls conducted?
- k. Get acquainted with the media center, computer labs, administrative and counseling services

3. Get acquainted with the community

- a. Study a map and demographics of the school district and school.
- b. Is there a PTA? Relationship to school?
- c. Kinds of industry, business, etc. and school partnerships

4. Setting up your own schedule for the period of student teaching

- a. Class hours and free periods
- b. Build a resource unit