



RIGOROUS TRAINING OF OBSERVERS

St. Petersburg College (SPC) rigorous training of observers pays two-fold dividends: candidates receive rich and substantive feedback to accelerate their development and the program benefits from accurate data to inform their own continuous improvement.

Since implementing this training model, they have achieved over 80% inter-rater agreement (co-scores within one point) and have noted improvements in observers providing candidates with more specific, rich and targeted feedback to help candidates improve their practice.

SPC's initial training is thorough and explicitly focuses on each part of the observation cycle:

STAGE ONE: PRE-CONFERENCE (BETWEEN THE CLASSROOM COOPERATING TEACHER, FIELD SUPERVISOR, AND CANDIDATE)

Supervisors learn how to facilitate a conversation that takes a candidate's past performance needs and the cooperating teacher's input into account when discussing the upcoming lesson and that identifies 2-4 indicators from the observation rubric for targeted feedback.

STAGE TWO: CANDIDATE OBSERVATION:

Supervisors learn aspects of high-quality feedback including how to craft specific feedback aligned to the chosen indicators. Training also addresses key "look fors" in each indicator and uses videos of instruction to calibrate inter-rater reliability.

STAGE THREE: POST-CONFERENCE:

Supervisors learn how to use specific evidence to make concrete recommendations to help propel candidates' ability to make targeted improvements.

SPC identifies topics for on-going training and support to classroom cooperating teachers and program supervisors including:

- Revisiting initial training topics (e.g. how to provide specific feedback and concrete recommendations.
- Providing opportunities for field supervisors to observe expert models who deliver high-quality oral feedback to candidates.

- Holding inter-rater scoring sessions with videos of instruction.
- Examining the instructional shifts required by new standards through Manzano's training.
- Cross walking the SPC evaluation instrument and the local district's Marzano observation instrument.

SPC has carefully crafted a close partnership and alignment with the local school district:

This alignment ensures that all stakeholders (cooperating teachers, supervisors, candidates, SPC faculty) have a common language for talking about classroom instruction. Further, candidates graduate from SPC familiar with the tool and process used by the local district which helps them more seamlessly transition to working in the district. Remaining questions: SPC continues to examine how to help faculty and field supervisors to consider the observation process as a growth model where students improve their skills with each field experience. SPC noticed that supervisors tended to rate the pre-service teacher at the top rating levels without providing enough evidence or feedback to support that rating. They are addressing this through ongoing training focused on inter-rater reliability that includes extensive discussion about the scores and evidence needed to rate the pre-service teacher at each rubric level. SPC also continues to train all stakeholders on how to complete the observation in their online assessment management system.

For more information:

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AS A RESULT OF TRAININGS, THE PRE-SERVICE TEACHER RECEIVED SPECIFIC FEEDBACK THAT LED TO GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT THROUGHOUT THEIR PROGRAM OF STUDY.

– ST. PETERSBURG COLLEGE