Guidelines for
Reciprocal Observations
Spring 2001

The purpose of the Spring Reciprocal Observations is to provide opportunities for STEP students to
➢ become more familiar with the teaching context (content area, classes, department, school) of other STEP students,
➢ become familiar with the process of collegial observation and feedback,
➢ enrich their curricular and pedagogical repertoire through collegial interactions.

Each University Supervisor will be assigned to a group of two reciprocal observation partners. These groups will meet to debrief on May 2\textsuperscript{nd}, during Practicum.

The Spring Reciprocal Observation will count as one of the nine observation cycles of the 2000-2001 academic year. The difference from a regular observation is that another STEP student, not the University Supervisor, will meet with you for a pre-observation conference, visit the classroom, take notes, and debrief. As with all of the regular observations by University Supervisors, each STEP student will write a reflective response. This write-up should be returned to the student’s own University Supervisor for review, suggestions for improvement and rewriting (as necessary), and signature before final submission to Yvette Sarnowski.

Procedures for the Spring Reciprocal Observations follow on the next page.
Procedures for the Spring Reciprocal Observations

1. Choose a reciprocal observation partner from among STEP students in a different school and content area. Please give information about your observation partner(s) on the sign up sheets outside Yvette’s office by April 18th so a Supervisor can be assigned to the group.

2. A day or two before the scheduled observation, meet to discuss the context (school, department, class), what is being studied, the written lesson plan, and what (if anything) would the STEP teacher like the observer to focus on.

3. Carry out the observation.
   - Attend the class.
   - Take notes, using the format of one of the observation notes forms or another format of your own choosing.
   - Fill out an observation summary form and attach the lesson plan and the notes to it. The supervisor facilitating each reciprocal observation group will collect them at the end of the debriefing session on and put them in Yvette’s box.

4. Meet within one day of the observation to discuss what happened, the summary form, and make a plan for the presentation to the rest of the group at the debriefing on May 2nd, 2001.

5. For the Reciprocal Observation Debriefing on May 2nd: The total discussion time will be divided so that each reciprocal observation will have about twenty minutes to debrief. The following are some suggestions for use of time:
   - 5 minutes for the person who was observed to describe the district, school, department, and class contexts and what he or she was trying to accomplish in the lesson for the day. Bring copies of the written lesson for everybody.
   - 3 minutes for the observer to describe what happened.
   - 8 minutes for the group to ask questions and discuss. For this observation, it might be interesting to discuss how context affects the work of the teacher: What is different about teaching mathematics, science, English, foreign language, social studies? Compare the different departments, high schools, and districts. How do they impact the work of a classroom teacher? What kinds of contexts will you be seeking for your first year of teaching?
   - 4 minutes for each group member to write a note to the person observed -- what you learned from this experience and the discussion, including ideas that you will try to use in your own teaching. These notes will go directly to the person observed at the end of each presentation. Take time to make note of these to use as part of the reflection you will write in response to this observation.

6. Supervisors collect the observation summaries (with attached notes and lesson plans) at the end of each presentation. They will put these in Yvette’s box.

7. Turn in your write-up to your University Supervisor for the regular procedure.