

The Alton Framework for Teaching: Observation Rubric for Counselors/Therapists

Directions: Evaluators will use the Observation Rubric when observing and providing written feedback following any observation. Evaluators will note any evidence collected in the “Evidence” rows underneath each component description.

DOMAIN 1: PREPARATION AND PLANNING				
	Unsatisfactory <input type="radio"/>	Needs Improvement <input type="radio"/>	Proficient <input type="radio"/>	Excellent <input type="radio"/>
1a: Demonstrating knowledge of counseling/ therapy theory and techniques	Counselor/therapist demonstrates little understanding of counseling/therapy theory and techniques.	Counselor/therapist demonstrates basic understanding of counseling/therapy theory and techniques.	Counselor/therapist demonstrates understanding of counseling/therapy theory and techniques.	Counselor/therapist demonstrates a thorough understanding of counseling/therapy theory and techniques.
Strengths				
Areas of Improvement				
Evidence				
	Unsatisfactory <input type="radio"/>	Needs Improvement <input type="radio"/>	Proficient <input type="radio"/>	Excellent <input type="radio"/>
1b: Demonstrating knowledge of child development	Counselor/therapist displays little or no knowledge of child development.	Counselor/therapist displays knowledge of child development.	Counselor/therapist displays accurate understanding of the typical developmental characteristics of the age group, as well as exceptions to the general pattern.	In addition to accurate knowledge of the typical developmental characteristics of the age group and exceptions to the general patterns, counselor/therapist displays knowledge of the extent to which individual students follow the general patterns.
Strengths				
Areas of Improvement				
Evidence				

	Unsatisfactory ○	Needs Improvement ○	Proficient ○	Excellent ○
1c: Establishing goals for the counseling/therapy services	Counselor/therapist has no clear goals for the counseling/therapy services, or they are inappropriate to either the situation or the age of the students.	Counselor's/therapist's goals for the counseling/therapy services are rudimentary and are partially suitable to the situation and the age of the students.	Counselor's/therapist's goals for the counseling/therapy services are clear and appropriate to the situation in the school and to the age of the students.	Counselor's/therapist's goals for the counseling/therapy services are highly appropriate to the situation in the school and to the age of the students and have been developed following consultations with students, parents, and colleagues.
Strengths				
Areas of Improvement				
Evidence				
	Unsatisfactory ○	Needs Improvement ○	Proficient ○	Excellent ○
1d: Demonstrating knowledge of regulations and of resources	Counselor/therapist demonstrates little or no knowledge of governmental regulations and of resources for students available through the school or district.	Counselor/therapist displays awareness of governmental regulations and of resources for students available through the school or district, but no knowledge of resources more broadly.	Counselor/therapist displays awareness of governmental regulations and of resources for students available through the school or district, and some familiarity with resources external to the school.	Counselor's/therapist's knowledge of governmental regulations and resources for students is extensive, including those available through the school or district and in the community.
Strengths				
Areas of Improvement				
Evidence				

	Unsatisfactory ○	Needs Improvement ○	Proficient ○	Excellent ○
1e: Planning the counseling/therapy services	Counseling/therapy services consists of a random collection of unrelated activities, lacking coherence or an overall structure.	Counselor's/therapist's plan has a guiding principle and includes a number of worthwhile activities, but some of them don't fit with the broader goals.	Counselor/therapist has developed a plan that includes the important aspects of counseling in the setting.	Counselor's/therapist's plan is highly coherent and serves to support not only the students individually and in groups, but also the broader educational program.
Strengths				
Areas of Improvement				
Evidence				
	Unsatisfactory ○	Needs Improvement ○	Proficient ○	Excellent ○
1f: Developing an evaluation plan	Counselor/therapist has no plan to evaluate the services or resists suggestions that such an evaluation is important.	Counselor/therapist has a rudimentary plan to evaluate the counseling/therapy services.	Counselor's/therapist's plan to evaluate the services is organized around clear goals and the collection of evidence to indicate the degree to which the goals have been met.	Counselor's/therapist's evaluation plan is highly refined, with creative sources of evidence and a clear path toward improving the services on an ongoing basis.
Strengths				
Areas of Improvement				
Evidence				

DOMAIN 2: THE ENVIRONMENT

	Unsatisfactory ○	Needs Improvement ○	Proficient ○	Excellent ○
2a: Creating an environment of respect and rapport	Counselor's/therapist's interactions with students are negative or inappropriate, and the counselor/therapist does not promote positive interactions among students.	Counselor's/therapist's interactions are a mix of positive and negative; the counselor's/therapist's efforts at encouraging positive interactions among students are partially successful.	Counselor's/therapist's interactions with students are positive and respectful, and the counselor/therapist actively promotes positive student-student interactions.	Counselor's/therapist's interactions with students reflect a high degree of comfort and trust and are appropriate, positive and respectful.
Strengths				
Areas of Improvement				
Evidence				
	Unsatisfactory ○	Needs Improvement ○	Proficient ○	Excellent ○
2b: Establishing a culture for productive communication	Counselor/therapist makes no attempt to establish a culture for productive communication in the school as a whole, either among students or among teachers, or between students and teachers.	Counselor's/therapist's attempts to promote culture throughout the school for productive and respectful communication between and among students and teachers are partially successful.	Counselor/therapist promotes a culture throughout the school for productive and respectful communication between and among students and teachers.	The culture in the school for productive and respectful communication between and among students and teachers, while guided by the counselor/therapist, is maintained by both teachers and students.
Strengths				
Areas of Improvement				
Evidence				

	Unsatisfactory ○	Needs Improvement ○	Proficient ○	Excellent ○
2c: Managing routines and procedures	Counselor's/therapist's routines for the counseling/therapy center are nonexistent or in disarray.	Counselor/therapist has rudimentary and partially successful routines for the counseling/therapy center.	Counselor's/therapist's routines for the counseling/therapy center work effectively.	Counselor's/therapist's routines for the counseling/therapy center are seamless, and students assist in maintaining them.
Strengths				
Areas of Improvement				
Evidence				
	Unsatisfactory ○	Needs Improvement ○	Proficient ○	Excellent ○
2d: Establishing standards of conduct	Counselor/therapist has established no standards of conduct for students during counseling/therapy sessions and makes no contribution to maintaining an environment of civility in the school.	Counselors'/therapist's efforts to establish standards of conduct for counseling/therapy sessions are partially successful. Counselor/therapist attempts, with limited success, to contribute to the level of civility in the school as a whole.	Counselor/therapist has established clear standards of conduct for counseling/therapy sessions and makes a significant contribution to the environment of civility in the school.	Counselor/therapist has established clear standards of conduct for counseling/therapy sessions, and students contribute to maintaining them. Counselor/therapist takes a leadership role in maintaining the environment of civility in the school.
Strengths				
Areas of Improvement				
Evidence				

	Unsatisfactory ○	Needs Improvement ○	Proficient ○	Excellent ○
2e: Organizing physical space	The physical environment is in disarray or is inappropriate to the planned activities.	Counselor's/therapist's attempts to create an inviting and well-organized physical environment are partially successful.	Counseling/therapy center arrangements are inviting and conducive to the planned activities.	Counseling/therapy center arrangements are inviting and conducive to the planned activities. Students have contributed ideas to the physical arrangement.
Strengths				
Areas of Improvement				
Evidence				

DOMAIN 3: DELIVERY OF SERVICES

	Unsatisfactory ○	Needs Improvement ○	Proficient ○	Excellent ○
3a: Assessing student needs	Counselor/therapist does not assess student needs, or the assessments result in inaccurate conclusions.	Counselor's/therapist's assessments of student needs are not thoroughly completed.	Counselor/therapist assesses student needs and knows the range of student needs in the school.	Counselor/therapist conducts detailed and individualized assessments of student needs to contribute to the planning for services.
Strengths				
Areas of Improvement				
Evidence				
	Unsatisfactory ○	Needs Improvement ○	Proficient ○	Excellent ○
3b: Assisting students and teachers in formulating career plans/creating treatment plans	Counselor's/therapist's services are independent of identified student needs.	Counselor's/therapist's attempts to help students and teachers formulate academic, personal/social, and career/treatment plans are partially successful.	Counselor/therapist helps students and teachers formulate academic, personal/social, and career/treatment plans for groups of students.	Counselor/therapist helps individual students and teachers formulate academic, personal/social, and career/treatment plans.
Strengths				
Areas of Improvement				
Evidence				

	Unsatisfactory ○	Needs Improvement ○	Proficient ○	Excellent ○
3c: Using counseling/therapy techniques in programs	Counselor/therapist has few counseling/therapy techniques to help students acquire skills in decision making and problem solving for both interactions with other students and future planning.	Counselor/therapist displays a narrow range of counseling/therapy techniques to help students acquire skills in decision making and problem solving for both interactions with other students and future planning.	Counselor/therapist uses a range of counseling/therapy techniques to help students acquire skills in decision making and problem solving for both students and future planning.	Counselor/therapist uses an extensive range of counseling/therapy techniques to help students acquire skills in decision making and problem solving for both interactions with other students and future planning.
Strengths				
Areas of Improvement				
Evidence				
	Unsatisfactory ○	Needs Improvement ○	Proficient ○	Excellent ○
3d: Sharing resources to meet needs and maintain data	Counselor/therapist does not make connections with other programs in order to meet student needs.	Counselor's/therapist's efforts to share/offer services to other programs in the school are partially successful.	Counselor/therapist shares/offers services to other programs within the school or district to meet student needs.	Counselor/therapist shares/offers services to other programs and agencies both within and beyond the school or district to meet individual student needs
Strengths				
Areas of Improvement				
Evidence				

	Unsatisfactory	Needs Improvement	Proficient	Excellent
3e: Demonstrating flexibility and responsiveness	Counselor/therapist adheres to the plan for services, in spite of evidence of its inadequacy.	Counselor/therapist makes modest changes in the counseling/therapy services when confronted with evidence of the need for change.	Counselor/therapist makes revisions in the counseling/therapy services when they are needed.	Counselor/therapist is continually seeking ways to improve the counseling/therapy services and makes changes as needed in response to student, parent, or teacher input.
Strengths				
Areas of Improvement				
Evidence				

DOMAIN 4: PROFESSIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES

	Unsatisfactory ○	Needs Improvement ○	Proficient ○	Excellent ○
4a: Reflecting on practice	Counselor/therapist does not reflect on practice, or the reflections are inaccurate or self-serving.	Counselor's/therapist's reflection on practice is moderately accurate and objective without citing specific examples and with global suggestions as to how it might be improved.	Counselor's/therapist's reflection provides an accurate and objective description of practice, citing specific positive and negative characteristics. Counselor/therapist makes some specific suggestions as to how the counseling/therapy services might be improved.	Counselor's/therapist's reflection is highly accurate and perceptive, citing specific examples that were not fully successful for at least some students. Counselor/therapist draws on an extensive repertoire to suggest alternative strategies.
Strengths				
Areas of Improvement				
Evidence				
	Unsatisfactory ○	Needs Improvement ○	Proficient ○	Excellent ○
4b: Maintaining and submitting records	Counselor's/therapist's reports, records, and documentation are missing, late, or inaccurate, resulting in confusion.	Counselor's/therapist's reports, records, and documentation are generally accurate but are occasionally late.	Counselor's/therapist's reports, records, and documentation are accurate and are submitted in a timely manner.	Counselor's/therapist's approach to record keeping is highly systematic and efficient.
Strengths				
Areas of Improvement				
Evidence				

	Unsatisfactory ○	Needs Improvement ○	Proficient ○	Excellent ○
4c: Communicating with families/ district staff	Counselor/therapist provides no information to families, either about the counseling/therapy services as a whole or about individual students.	Counselor/therapist provides limited though accurate information to families about the counseling/therapy services as a whole and about individual students.	Counselor/therapist provides thorough and accurate information to families about the counseling/therapy services as a whole and about individual students.	Counselor/therapist is proactive in providing information to families about the counseling/therapy services and about individual students through a variety of means.
Strengths				
Areas of Improvement				
Evidence				
	Unsatisfactory ○	Needs Improvement ○	Proficient ○	Excellent ○
4d: Participating in a professional community	Counselor's/therapist's relationships with colleagues are negative or self-serving, and counselor/therapist avoids being involved in school and district events and projects.	Counselor's/therapist's relationships with colleagues are cordial, and counselor/therapist participates in school and district events and projects when specifically requested.	Counselor/therapist participates actively in school and district events and projects and maintains positive and productive relationships with colleagues.	Counselor/therapist makes a substantial contribution to school and district events and projects and assumes leadership with colleagues.
Strengths				
Areas of Improvement				
Evidence				

	Unsatisfactory ○	Needs Improvement ○	Proficient ○	Excellent ○
4e: Engaging in professional development	Counselor/therapist does not participate in professional development activities even when such activities are clearly needed for the development of counseling/therapy skills.	Counselor's/therapist's participation in professional development activities is limited to those that are convenient or are required.	Counselor/therapist seeks out opportunities for professional development based on individual assessment of need.	Counselor/therapist actively pursues professional development opportunities and makes a substantial contribution to the profession through such activities as offering workshops to colleagues.
Strengths				
Areas of Improvement				
Evidence				
	Unsatisfactory ○	Needs Improvement ○	Proficient ○	Excellent ○
4f: Showing professionalism	Counselor/therapist is dishonest in interactions with colleagues, students, and the public; violates principles of confidentiality.	Counselor/therapist is honest in interactions with colleagues, students, and the public; does not violate confidentiality.	Counselor/therapist displays high standards of honesty, integrity, and confidentiality in interactions with colleagues, students, and the public; advocates for students when needed.	Counselor/therapist can be counted on to hold the highest standards of honesty, integrity, and confidentiality and to advocate for students, taking a leadership role with colleagues.
Strengths				
Areas of Improvement				
Evidence				