

Bowdoin

Teacher Scholars

Practicum Handbook



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I. Conceptual Framework

The education department embraces Bowdoin College's commitment to the common good by connecting the history of schooling, educational theories, and pedagogical approaches to the dilemmas facing schools and teachers today. The curriculum broadens and deepens students' understanding of contemporary issues in education, educational foundations, and teaching and learning. Courses at all levels include a variety of field experiences that involve students in schools and classrooms.

The Bowdoin Teacher Scholars program engages student teachers in the complex practice of translating content knowledge into curriculum and developing pedagogical practices suitable for the diverse learners and teaching environments they will encounter. We are privileged to have students who arrive at Bowdoin as high achievers and who receive an exceptional undergraduate education.

The education department seeks to provide opportunities for both undergraduates and postgraduates to become teachers through a rigorous scholarly and classroom-based preparation. The program's components reflect the education department's commitment to preparing teacher scholars who are:

- Experts in their disciplinary majors and fields of specialization
- Experienced in curriculum development
- Well-versed in pedagogical approaches
- Reflective practitioners
- Aware of and attentive to the diversity of learners in their classrooms

At each level of the curriculum—from introductory classes to seminars in curriculum and teaching—students are exposed to the three tenets that guide Bowdoin's education department:

- **Be aware of the big picture.** The study of education sheds light on one of the United States' fundamental public institutions and on the humanistic dimensions of teaching and learning that are vital to constructing a meaningful life. Responsible teaching depends upon a solid background in the social foundations of education.
- **Embrace theory and practice.** Effective teaching builds on a strong foundation of content knowledge and thoughtful application of curricular and pedagogical theory to practice. Teachers gain expertise by reading, writing, thinking, speaking, listening, and doing.

- **Model and live in the spirit of inquiry.** Excellent teachers position themselves as learners of their students and their communities and adjust their pedagogy and curriculum to meet the needs of individuals. Teachers cannot assume that others will learn as they do and cannot teach simply as they were taught. Teaching is an intellectually challenging practice that requires ongoing learning, self-assessment, collaboration, and research.

The Bowdoin Teacher Scholars program is the manifestation of this conceptual framework. Our courses, field work, and position within a liberal arts institution all contribute to the cultivation of successful teacher candidates.

II. Bowdoin Teacher Scholars: Preparation

Integrating the Theoretical with the Practical

At Bowdoin College, the study of education is grounded in the liberal arts curriculum. Work in the education department is an integral part of the College curriculum and not a separate program of studies designed solely for prospective classroom teachers. Bowdoin students interested in teaching in some capacity complete the requirements for a minor in Teaching and may go on to fulfill the requirements for Maine teacher certification in grades 7-12. In order to be certified, Bowdoin students combine studies in their major with seven required courses in education to fulfill the state competencies for initial certification. In addition, students complete a semester of student teaching under the supervision of College faculty and cooperating teachers in local schools. Finally, students must earn a passing score on national teachers' examinations.

Course Work

As they develop academic breadth through distribution requirements and depth in their major, Bowdoin Teacher Scholars begin a gradual and sequential preparation for professional practice. Integrating theory, research, and practice, courses begin at the 100-level with an introduction to the central issues in contemporary American education. These issues are examined through an interdisciplinary lens, bringing to bear the perspectives of sociology, anthropology, economics, psychology, and history. In intermediate, 200-level courses, the focus shifts to schooling on the local and individual level. Students take Education 203, Educating All Students, which fulfills the exceptionality requirement for certification and provides experience in analyzing the needs of individual students. Education 215, Adolescents in Schools, examines adolescent development within the context of teaching and learning in schools. Finally, in the advanced 300-level courses, students focus on the classroom, particularly through observation and their own teaching in the classroom.

Required courses for teacher certification:

- A major in a subject area of certification offered by Bowdoin College with state of Maine endorsement: mathematics, life science, physical science, English, foreign language, or social studies (government, history, economics, and anthropology). Additional requirements for social studies candidates include two courses in United States history, two courses in world history, one course in economics, and one course in government. AP courses do not fulfill this requirement.

- Seven courses offered by the education department:
 - Education 101: Contemporary American Education
 - Education 203: Educating All Students
 - Education 215: Adolescents in Schools
 - Education 301: Teaching
 - Education 303: Curriculum
 - Education 302: Student Teaching Practicum
 - Education 304: Seminar—Analysis of Teaching and Learning

Field Work

The structured role transition—from being a student to becoming a teacher—is achieved in the Bowdoin Teacher Scholars program through a gradual, sequential process as students take on increasingly open-ended and complex teaching tasks.

Observation to Participation

In introductory courses, students are introduced to the field-work skills of ethnographic research and field observation. They use those skills in connection with course projects such as a written portrait of a local classroom following a half day of observation at a school. At the 200-level, students utilize these research skills to interpret the educational experience of a focus student in their field placement classroom and write an in-depth case study of that student's learning. Intermediate level courses also allow students to take on more responsibility for planning and teaching lessons through group projects. Students in Education 215: Adolescents in Schools explore adolescent development through one-on-one interactions with a student in an area school. In advanced-level Education 301: Teaching, and Education 303: Curriculum, students' skills are extended through weekly participant observation in local secondary classrooms. Students also begin teaching lessons in the subject matter in which they will seek certification and are supervised and assessed by the course instructor on their knowledge of learning characteristics, teaching methodology, and curriculum planning. Students themselves negotiate the interplay among learning, teaching, and curriculum planning as they prepare and teach lessons to varied groups.

Student Teaching

The student teaching practicum may take place in the spring semester of students' junior or senior year, or during a spring semester within two years of their graduation. Bowdoin Teacher Scholars spend the full day at their field placement under the supervision of a cooperating teacher and College supervisor. Bowdoin Teacher Scholars follow the local schools' calendars, working full-time in the schools for fourteen weeks, from early January to late April.

III. Bowdoin Teacher Scholars: Practicum Experience

Bowdoin Teacher Scholars begin their practicum experience during the first or second week of January, and continue for fourteen weeks, generally concluding in late April. During this time, student teachers are expected to be full-time professional members of the school community, assuming responsibility not only in the classroom of the cooperating teacher but in the larger community as well. Student teachers are expected to attend all professional meetings (department, faculty, IEP, etc.) as appropriate, and maintain communications with students and their families in a manner consistent to that of a full-time teacher.

A. Guidelines for the Student Teacher

Student teachers begin their teaching experience as observers and planners. Cooperating teachers, student teachers, and the College supervisor decide together the exact nature and timeline for the student teacher's responsibilities, but the expectation is that the student teacher will assume responsibility for two classes as soon as possible, and that a third class will be added by the end of February.

The education department expects that student teachers will:

- Arrive at school each day prepared and dressed professionally
- Be familiar with the school calendar, professional days, holidays, etc., and plan accordingly
- Share in the performance of duties as assigned by the cooperating teacher
- Prepare and discuss lesson plans with the cooperating teacher for approval in advance of teaching those lessons
- Confer with the cooperating teacher and College supervisor on a regular basis

B. Guidelines for the Cooperating Teacher

We ask that the cooperating teacher be willing to serve as a guide and resource for his or her student teacher, maintaining professional supervision of the educational process at all times, and modeling a variety of effective teaching strategies and methods in an atmosphere conducive to learning, experimentation, and risk taking.

Specifically, we ask that the cooperating teacher to:

- Welcome the student teacher to the school and classroom and provide essential teaching materials and curriculum guides
- Orient the student teacher to the school administration and physical layout of the school
- Provide the student teacher with a desk or other work space
- Identify special-needs students for the student teacher and share those students' Individualized Education Plans where appropriate
- Encourage the student teacher to observe in other classrooms in the school
- State expectations clearly and plan for inclusion of the student teacher into the daily activities, routines, and culture of the class
- Give the student teacher responsibility for two sections as soon as possible and add a third by the end of February
- Meet with the student teacher regularly to provide constructive feedback on all aspects of the student teacher's work
- Meet with the College supervisor and student teacher for two formal assessments—at midpoint in the practicum and again at the end of the practicum
- Inform and confer with the College supervisor and student teacher should any problem or difficulty arise during the student teaching practicum
- Write a professional letter of recommendation
- Permit the student teacher to be the sole classroom teacher during the last weeks of the practicum

Cooperating teachers will be given a \$400 honorarium for their service at the conclusion of the student teaching practicum.

C. Guidelines for the College Supervisor

- Meet with the student teacher and cooperating teacher to discuss mutual expectations for the student teaching experience
- Regularly observe the student teacher and provide clear, specific feedback following the observation
- Make constructive, useful suggestions for specific ways in which the student teacher can improve his or her teaching practice and communicate these suggestions to the student teacher in a timely, supportive, and straightforward manner
- Use the midpoint assessment as a checkpoint to review certification standards and to ask the cooperating teacher if he or she feels there are any areas in which the student teacher is not progressing in a fashion likely to meet a performance standard

D. Assessment

The student teacher, College supervisor, and cooperating teacher will discuss expectations, goals, and assessment of the practicum experience and will confer informally throughout the practicum. The student teacher will be informed as soon as possible if the cooperating teacher or College supervisor has serious concerns about some aspect of his or her performance and will be given sufficient time and specific expectations for improvement.

There will be a formal three-way conference at the practicum midpoint, during which the student teacher's performance will be assessed using Maine's Initial Teacher Certification Standards. If a student teacher is not adequately progressing in his/her development as a teacher, this assessment may trigger interventions and/or departmental action. At the conclusion of the practicum, a similar assessment will take place, taking measure of the progress since the mid-semester assessment.

IV. Analysis of Teaching and Learning Seminar

Concurrent to the student teaching practicum, all Bowdoin Teacher Scholars enroll in a seminar that helps them consider the theoretical and practical issues related to effective classroom instruction. Students will employ peer and self-critique and reflection to analyze their own practice, and devise ways to adjust their pedagogical approach appropriately. As a culminating project for the seminar, students compile a portfolio of work that demonstrates their development as an educator over time. At the conclusion of the semester, Bowdoin Teacher Scholars are required to present their practicum portfolio to education department faculty and other invited guests in a formal defense.

V. Certification

Following the successful completion of all requirements for the Bowdoin Teacher Scholars program, students may apply for Maine state teacher certification. Students must submit passing scores on national teachers' examinations as well as their final Bowdoin transcript and proof of fingerprinting. The Bowdoin Teacher Scholars program meets the requirements for secondary school teaching in the state of Maine, and Maine certification is recognized in all other states. Some states may require additional teachers' examinations or course work before granting full certification.

Appendix I: Performance Standards for Beginning Teachers

Standard one:

Demonstrates knowledge of the central concepts, tools of inquiry, and structures of the discipline(s) s/he teaches and can create learning experiences that make these aspects of subject matter meaningful to students. Candidate performance demonstrating the following capabilities informs this standard.

The ability to:

Use multiple representations and explanations of disciplinary concepts that capture key ideas and link them to students' prior learning.

Evaluate teaching resources and curriculum materials for comprehensiveness, accuracy, usefulness and for representing particular ideas and concepts in clear and meaningful ways.

Engage students in generating knowledge and testing hypotheses according to the methods of inquiry and standards of evidence used in the discipline.

Model the use of the tools of the discipline through the inclusion of technology and create opportunities for students to practice the use of these tools.

Incorporate knowledge of students' experiences in the planning, execution, and evaluation of learning experiences.

Explain important principles and concepts delineated within their discipline and link them with professional, state and unit standards.

Standard two:

Demonstrates the ability to integrate the concepts, tools of inquiry, and structures among the disciplines. Candidate performance demonstrating the following capabilities informs this standard.

The ability to:

Create learning experiences in which students are required to construct knowledge and test hypotheses using the methods of inquiry and standards of evidence of multiple disciplines.

Encourage students to recognize and respect the interdependence of all knowledge and ideas by combining and integrating knowledge of different disciplines.

Pursue and acquire material and human resources in various disciplines for classroom use.

Standard three:

Demonstrates knowledge of the diverse ways in which students develop and learn by providing learning opportunities that support students' intellectual, physical, emotional, and social development. Candidate performance demonstrating the following capabilities informs this standard.

The ability to:

Discern individual student and group differences (e.g., intellectual, cultural, social).

Support individual student's physical, social, emotional, cognitive, and moral development.

Observe how students learn and thus ascertain different learning styles.

Identify when and how to access appropriate services or resources to meet learner's needs.

Identify and design instruction appropriate to students' stages of development, learning styles, strengths, and needs.

Make appropriate provisions and adaptations for individual students who have particular learning differences or needs.

Understand and make connections to students' experiences and backgrounds in planning and implementing curriculum.

Demonstrate understanding of and sensitivity to issues of diversity and equity during the design and assessment of instruction.

Standard four:

Plans instruction based upon knowledge of subject matter, students, and curriculum goals. Candidate performance demonstrating the following capabilities informs this standard.

The ability to:

Plan for learning opportunities that recognize and address variation in developmental level, learning styles, performance modes, and individual needs.

Develop daily, weekly, and long-range lesson plans that are linked to student needs and performance, and adapt them to ensure that the plans capitalize on student progress and motivation.

Demonstrate originality in lesson development within the parameters of the existing school curriculum.

Articulate lesson goals and provide educationally and ethically defensible rationales for those goals.

Plan collaboratively with colleagues on curriculum goals and frameworks both for the classroom and for schools.

Standard five:

Understands and uses a variety of instructional strategies and appropriate technologies. Candidate performance demonstrating the following capabilities informs this standard.

The ability to:

Choose effective teaching strategies and materials to meet different learning goals and student needs.

Use multiple teaching and learning strategies to engage students in active learning opportunities and to help students take responsibility for their own learning.

Monitor and adjust strategies in response to learner feedback.

Vary her or his role in the instructional process depending on the content, purposes, and student needs.

Develop a variety of clear, accurate presentations and representations of concepts, using alternative explanations to assist students' understanding and providing diverse perspectives to encourage critical thinking.

Employ a wide range of questioning and discussion techniques that elicit responses at a variety of affective and cognitive levels.

Use educational technology to broaden student knowledge about technology as well as to deliver instruction.

Encourage all students to use technology and help them to access that technology.

Provide students with strategies for evaluating the content encountered via technology (i.e., Internet, listservs).

Standard six:

Creates and maintains a classroom environment which supports and encourages learning. Candidate performance demonstrating the following capabilities informs this standard.

The ability to:

Create a comfortable, well-organized physical environment.

Establish a classroom climate of openness, mutual respect, support, and inquiry.

Work with students to manage their own behaviors and assume responsibility for their own learning.

Use principles of effective classroom organization.

Use a variety of strategies to increase students' desire and opportunity to learn.

Create an environment in which students work both cooperatively and independently.

Standard seven:

Demonstrates the ability to support students' learning and well being by engaging students, home, school, colleagues, and community.

Candidate performance demonstrating the following capabilities informs this standard.

The ability to:

Advocate for students while respecting their privacy and right to confidentiality.

Identify strategies to link school, home, and community to enhance student performance and well being.

Describe ways to proactively develop partnerships with parents and guardians in support of students' learning and well being.

Recognize when it is appropriate to consult with other school professionals concerning a student's learning or health.

Describe ways to work with community agencies to foster student growth.

Work with other school personnel, representatives of community agencies, and representatives of other professional and education organizations with the goal of supporting student learning and well being.

Standard eight:

Understands and uses a variety of formal and informal assessment strategies to evaluate and support the development of the learner.

Candidate performance demonstrating the following capabilities informs this standard.

The ability to:

Describe the purposes of assessment.

Use a variety of formal and informal strategies to assess student outcomes.

Match assessment strategies and instruments to Learning Results and program objectives.

Use concepts of reliability, validity, and generalizability to design and improve high quality assessments.

Employ a variety of assessment techniques to collect knowledge of learners, student learning progress, and program effectiveness.

Use assessments and evaluation to modify teaching and learning strategies and for diagnostic purposes.

Communicate responsibly and knowledgeably to students, parents, communities, and agencies about student achievement and program outcomes.

Involve learners in self-assessment and goal setting for learning.

Document learning using a variety of methods such as portfolios, school records, and other long-term indices of the multiple abilities of students.

Standard nine:

Demonstrates an awareness of and commitment to ethical and legal responsibilities of a teacher. Candidate performance demonstrating the following capabilities informs this standard.

The ability to:

Maintain confidentiality concerning all dealings with students, parents, teachers, and school personnel.

Adhere to a code of ethics that demonstrates an understanding of the laws that govern students' rights and teacher responsibilities.

Demonstrate knowledge of situations which make one vulnerable to liability actions. Demonstrate awareness of professional liability insurance and follow appropriate school and district procedures to avoid liability.

Comply with school policies related to health and safety issues, such as administration of medication and reporting concerns of physical and sexual abuse.

Adhere to affirmative action policies pertaining to school and classroom settings, interact with all students in an equitable manner. He/she does not discriminate in employment, housing, or access to public accommodations on account of race, color, sex, physical or mental disability, religion, ancestry or national origin; and, in employment, does not discriminate on account of age or because of the previous assertion of a claim or right under former Title 39 or Title 39-A; and, in education, does not discriminate on account of sex, or physical or mental disability.

Understand how beliefs, values, traditions and requirements of various religious groups interact with school life (e.g., dietary restrictions, fasting, mandatory observance or non-observance of

holidays, activities which are forbidden, expectations regarding gender relations, issues of deference); take religious diversity into account when planning and implementing lessons and activities.

Understand the meaning of sexual harassment and how it impacts students and staff, and assist students in understanding the meaning of sexual harassment, how to avoid harassing others, and what to do if they feel harassed.

Treat others with respect, and honor the dignity of all people.

Document incidents which may have legal or ethical implications.

Take appropriate steps to obtain and maintain professional certification/licensure.

Recognize and demonstrate appropriate use of language in the classroom (i.e., avoid profanity, name-calling, racial slurs, etc).

Standard ten:

Demonstrates a strong professional ethic and a desire to contribute to the education profession. Candidate performance demonstrating the following capabilities informs this standard.

The ability to:

Be an active, contributing member of work teams and committees.

Participate in staff development opportunities and training sessions and apply information and strategies gained as a result of those experiences to his/her own teaching.

Utilize information gained from reading professional journals.

Apply information gathered during attendance at professional conferences.

Develop associations with organizations dedicated to learning.

Reflect upon and strengthens his/her teaching by evaluating (alone and with colleagues) lessons taught and making appropriate improvements.

Stay abreast of and employ new teaching strategies and technologies.

Develop and implement a personal development plan to enhance his/her professional growth.

Maintain a professional demeanor and recognize the teacher's role as a model for students.

Work with colleagues to achieve school and district goals and to address problems in the school.



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SCHOLARS**

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