

CLASS Connections

Collaborative Learning and School Success—Professional Development School

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“The CLASS program provides everything you need to be an exceptional teacher leader. What you do with that knowledge is up to you.”

“Make no mistake. The CLASS program is a vigorous program that develops exceptional teachers and leaders. There is nothing ordinary about this program.”



UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN MAINE

Lewiston-Auburn College

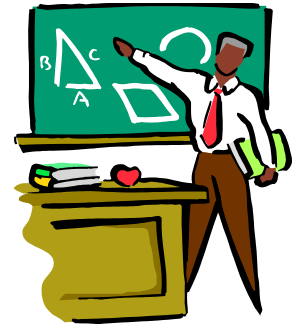
CLASS PDS Hitting the Mark by Iris Guillemette

Who would you hire to hit the apple on your head: the archer who has been reading about archery for four years, but who has never actually practiced shooting with a bow and arrow; or the archer who has not only been reading about archery, but has also been practicing shooting for the past four-and-a-half years? Admit it, you and I would both pick the archer who has been practicing. The “well-read” archer might know where to send the arrow, but the practicing archer knows how to get it there.

When it comes to choosing and hiring teachers, schools are looking for people with both theoretical and practical experience. They want instructors who understand not only the subjects and information children need to

learn, but also how children learn. Schools are looking for people who have been practicing in the classroom because they know that experienced instructors make more confident, competent and satisfied teachers who can engage and manage a classroom and will stay in the teaching field longer. That’s why graduates of the CLASS program are in such great demand in schools throughout Maine.

The CLASS program partners student teachers with professional teachers with local elementary and middle school students to collaboratively study and practice teaching for four-and-a-half years. What CLASS students learn in the college classroom is practiced and improved and strengthened in the public school class-



room, making them some of the best teachers in their schools. With teaching as their target, CLASS teachers know how to “hit their mark.”

To learn more about the CLASS program please feel free to contact me.

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What to Expect in Your First Year by Karen Erdmann

In your first year you can expect to take basic courses such as English and Math as well as core courses. You will also take Developmental Psychology (Human Growth and Development) and Literacy Acquisition.

In addition to the course work, CLASS students will spend 2.5 hours a week at

one of the partner schools with an assigned mentor teacher. The partner schools are Sherwood Heights Elementary School and Auburn Middle School. In conjunction with these site visits, you will have a seminar for 1.5 hours every week. This working seminar is a chance to talk to your Cohort and discuss the program require-

ments or issues that arise. It is a one credit course with a syllabus.

You can expect to work hard and have fun and interesting experiences. This is a rigorous program and organization and commitment are necessary.

Praxis, and It's Importance to Your Success in CLASS by Cheryl Robert

The Praxis exams are required by the State of Maine and must be passed prior to the CLASS student's Candidacy Review in the 5th Semester. The exams are in Reading, Mathematics, and Writing. The Writing exam includes an essay section. You may NOT use calculators on the Mathematics exam. The exams will take approximately 3 1/2 hours to complete.

It is highly recommended that you take the Praxis as soon as possible. If you fail any portion of exam, you can keep retaking that portion.

Registration booklets and sample exam booklets are available in the Administration Office at Lewiston-Auburn College. Financial aid assistance is also available to qualified students to help offset the cost of the exams. See

Jim Bradley for more information. You may also contact Praxis directly by visiting their website at <http://www.ets.org/praxis>, by email praxis@ets.org, or call them at (609) 771-7395



Understanding Candidacy by Linda Bernier

Candidacy is a process students go through during the fifth semester of the CLASS program. Students go through the process to show that they have met all of the requirements necessary before moving on to the last two years of the program, to show that they are committed to the teaching profession, and ready to assume greater teaching responsibilities in the partner schools. The specific requirements are successful completion of specific coursework,

completion of required paperwork, passing the State required PRAXIS exam, a portfolio, and a presentation before a panel during which the student demonstrates evidence of meeting six required outcomes. These outcomes are Knowledge of Child/Adolescent Development and Principles of Learning, Knowledge of Subject Matter and Inquiry; Technology, Diversity, Beliefs About Teaching and Learning and Collaboration and Professionalism.

“Candidacy is a process students go through during the fifth semester of the CLASS program.”

How To Thrive in CLASS by Ernie Gagne

I've been asked to jot some thoughts on my CLASS experience in college so I offer these suggestions based on my sophomore knowledge.

College life may cause some strife
And hardships may arise
Set a plan for all your days
Prepare for a "life" surprise

Get to know your cohort
On each other you'll depend
Expand your range of tolerance
They'll become your new best friend

Get to classes early
Complete each and every task
Simply do what's expected of you
And if you have questions...ask

Learn to be responsible
Get your assignments in on time
If you do what's expected of you
Don't worry...you'll be fine

Leave any negative attitude at home
Make this a daily rule
Children need a positive role model
When they look up to you in school

Speak up while you're in classes
Yet disagree with respect
Let Bumper and Paul know how you feel
(No one's been thrown out yet)

Be proud you'll be a teacher,
A children's advocate, a voice
Wake up and make a difference!
After all, you made this choice

To summarize I leave you this
A trivial piece of advice
Be open, respectful, communicate
Be courteous, be nice.

Life After CLASS—Becoming a Teacher by Sue Herrick

Yes...there is life after CLASS...and for me that day had finally arrived. It was May 2002, and graduation day had come at last. What seemed like a long time dream - - finishing my college education and earning my teaching certificate was no longer a mere personal desire - - but a wish come true. Although I still had two courses to complete for my Social and Behavioral Science degree, I knew that the longest portion of my educational journey was over. Indeed, there was "light at the end of the tunnel".

After such a rigorous excursion, my energy level was low, but it was time to begin searching for a teaching position. I updated my resume and completed numerous applications, gathered references, sent packets to 14 school departments, and I began the necessary procedure with the Maine Department of Education. Because I had not officially completed my formal education, the negative responses to my paperwork outweighed the positive. I had had a team interview with the Auburn School Department for various positions, but to no avail. Hence, I decided to focus on officially completing my course work - - believing that there is a season for everything and that things would fall into place at the appropriate time.

Then it all began - - I vividly remember that week in Mid-July, 2002.

What a relief when I finally e-mailed that last paper to my anthropology professor! The next day I received my teaching certificate from the Department of Education, and that very week I received a call from Katy Grondin (Principal of Sherwood Heights Elementary School), asking if I would be interested in teaching sixth grade. I could hardly believe what had transpired within such a short period. As I stood in my kitchen, I quickly sorted through my many thoughts, stumbled over my words, and graciously accepted the position.

In addition to teaching a classroom of 25 sixth graders, I now find more time for things I once enjoyed. My husband, my strongest supporter through this CLASS trailblazer's journey, and I recently celebrated our 25th anniversary by doing some traveling. Throughout the summer, (the first of five that neither my husband nor I took a course) I actually found time to work in our perennial gardens, help paint our home, and relax a bit before starting to get my classroom ready for a new school year. I am involved in AVCO (a community orchestra) and have performed several times with Community Little Theater and in other musical productions. Although I am still busy, my present schedule permits me to spend more time with my husband, grown children (ages 18, 21, 22, and 24) and

my dog. Further, I am involved in my church, and yes, I even got involved in doing seamstress work for others - which was something I said wasn't going to happen again. Clearly, life remains busy and I face new obstacles regularly. However, because of my life experiences and completion of the LAC: CLASS program, I feel better prepared to face the new challenges and opportunities that accompany this stage of my life.

As I continue to embark on my life journey, I look forward to spending more time with my friends and family, participating in activities/hobbies, and doing the one thing I thoroughly enjoy ... teaching. I believe that every student has the capability to achieve if given the right opportunities. It is my desire to provide those opportunities for children within a nurturing and caring learning environment, and I hope to create a love for life-long learning in my students. It is up to me to make a positive difference in the lives of my students.



Helpful Advice from Current Students by Linda Bernier

- Seek out students from other cohorts. They can be a great resource of support. Often they've already experienced some of the things you may be struggling with.
- Don't look too far ahead. Be aware of what is next, but focus on getting through the day and current semester.
- Take a lot of pictures while doing field work. You will be glad when you put your portfolio together.
- Don't fall behind. If it can't be helped, get caught up as quickly as possible. If you don't, it only gets more difficult.
- Have a support system that's involved and interested in your goals in the program—people that add positive reinforcement to your life inside and out of school.
- If you need help, ask for it!



Creating Teacher Leaders for the 21st Century

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www.usm.maine.edu/lac/class

What is a "Portfolio"?

A portfolio is an organized presentation of your best work. The goal is to show evidence for each professional outcome required in the CLASS program.

Try to make it creative and unique as possible. Remember, the goal is to show evidence that you've done work in each outcome.



CLASS students make presentations during End of Semester Seminar last December. This year's ESS will be December 16, 2003.

Cohort News

COHORT 2

Cohort 2 are finishing their second semester of internship and will graduate from CLASS PDS in December. Cohort 2 students are Jolaine Galibois-Barss and Melissa Goding.

COHORT 3

Cohort 3 are busy finishing up work for their majors and getting a taste for the Auburn Middle School subculture. Our LTT Reading and LTT Social Studies courses are in full swing. We can finally see the light at the end of the tunnel and look forward to the new careers waiting for us. Cohort 3 students are Christina Gardner, Cherie Lanier, Julie Laplante, Jennifer Meagher, and Angie Crooker.

COHORT 4

On October 16th we successfully completed our candidacy and portfolio presentations. This semester we are not in a partner school, but we are continuing to take classes. We are looking forward to the spring semester when we will begin our Learning To Teach classes. Cohort 4 students are Katie Bunker, Cyndi Polisky, Karen Erdmann, and Linda Bernier.

COHORT 5

Cohort 5 are very busy in their 3rd semester. They are at the Auburn Middle School working with the multi-aged Team 7. They are taking US Studies and must relate that class to their experiences at the middle school. Cohort 5 are eagerly awaiting preparation for Candidacy. Cohort 5 students are Tricia Alexander, Bobbi Cook, Ernie Gagne, Nicole Doucette, and Cheryl Robert.

COHORT 6

The newest cohort have connected very well and are supportive of each other. It is great to know that there are people that you see in other classes, in the partner schools, and at our cohort meetings, that are going through the same experiences and whom you can ask questions and give and obtain reassurance. Cohort 6 students are Alicia Grandmaison, Sean Moore, Vicki Lemieux, Bridget Fitzgerald, Paulla Billings, Laurie Potter, Tamara Watson, and Beth Chamberlain.



Cohort 5



Cohort 3



Cohort 6



Cohort 4

