

CLASS Connections

Collaborative Learning And School Success—Professional Development School

Consider Joining CLASS by Jim Bradley

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If you are interested in learning more about becoming a teacher, please join us for our next

CLASS PDS OPEN HOUSE

Tuesday
February 8, 2005
6:00 pm—7:30 pm

Room 170
Lewiston-Auburn College

Call 753-6618 FMI



UNIVERSITY OF
SOUTHERN MAINE
Lewiston-Auburn College

Does this sound familiar?

For as long as you can remember you've always wanted to be a teacher. Perhaps this yearning comes from having had a teacher who inspired you to try to make a difference in the lives of others. Maybe you've volunteered at youth camps and realized that you can make a difference in a child's life.

Every person is unique and as such their reasons for wanting to be a teacher are as well. At this point they all have the same dilemma—how to make their dreams of becoming teachers a reality.

There are two options available to people seeking teacher certification in the state of Maine. The first is to complete a bachelor's degree and then to go through "Transcript Analysis." If a person chooses to go this route, they essentially are on their own and need to work closely with the state to make sure they have the required academic and professional requirements for the area for which they are seeking certification. This can be a long and arduous process which is complicated by several factors including limited availability of some required courses, as well as fulfilling the student teaching requirement which must be com-

pleted with an approved university.

The other option, and the most traditional, is to complete a state-approved college program. The University of Southern Maine has a graduate program called ETEP, Extended Teacher Education Program, for those students who have already earned a bachelor's degree. USM also has two undergraduate programs, TEAMS in Gorham and CLASS at Lewiston-Auburn College.

The CLASS (Collaborative Learning And School Success) PDS (Professional Development School) program is a rigorous, 4.5 year non-traditional teaching program for students looking to become educators. This program is ideal for those students who have a strong interest in teaching at the elementary or middle school level.

Among the benefits of being part of CLASS is being able to participate in our partner schools starting with your very first semester. Those partner schools, Sherwood Heights Elementary and Auburn Middle School, will help you experience what it's like to be a teacher at the start of your education.



Photos above show CLASS PDS students working in the classroom.

The CLASS program, although rigorous by nature, also provides a supportive environment. Students entering each fall join a cohort of fellow students and they stay with that cohort throughout the entire program. One of the first things current students mention as being important to their success in the program is being part of their cohort. Having fellow students who are going through the same things you are and can understand the pitfalls as well as the benefits, can help you achieve success in the program.

Continued on next page...

Consider Joining CLASS continued from page 1.

Each semester you will take courses toward your major as well as completing the education requirements of CLASS. In addition to seminars which take place in the partner schools, you also complete field work there. Every semester the amount of time you spend at the schools will vary, usually increasing, until you reach the final year of the program. This is your internship year where you will be required to work at the schools full-time.

Following completion of the program you will have earned a bachelor's degree, state certification to teach K-8, as well as over 30 credits toward a graduate degree.

For more information on the CLASS program, call Jim Bradley at 753-6618.

“As a member of the CLASS program, I feel fortunate that I am able to be part of such a curriculum that has allowed me to observe and participate in the everyday occurrences of an elementary and middle school. There is no doubt in my mind that I will be a better prepared teacher/leader when I am responsible for my own students in my own classroom three years from now.”

From a 2nd year CLASS student.



CLASS PDS student working in classroom.

Service Learning by Karen Erdmann

As part of the CLASS program, all students are required to complete a community based service-learning project during their second year, as well as design a service-learning project that is classroom based.

Students in Cohort 4 designed their project with the Abused Women's Advocacy Program and adopted a family for the 2002 holiday season. Together with Sue Herrick's 6th grade class at Sherwood Heights Elementary, students in Cohort 4 shopped for presents to give to their adopted family. Cohort 4 received a grant to fund the project from Lewiston-Auburn College.

Student involvement began when Cohort 4 CLASS students entered the 6th grade classroom and read the book, The Hundred Dresses. The book tells the story of Wanda Petrowski, who is different from others in the school. She lives in a poor neighborhood and has a strange last name. The other children don't talk to Wanda except to tease her about the hundred dresses

Wanda says she has in her closet. They don't believe she truly has them in her closet.

The students participated in several activities that centered on the book such as designing a dress or a pair of shoes, writing a letter, brainstorming what a family may need to start over, budgeting and check writing. After shopping for gifts for the family, students came back to the classroom and shared what they had bought before they wrapped the presents. The presents were then brought to the Abused Women's Advocacy Program center and delivered to the family in plenty of time for the holiday.



Cohort 4 students pose with gifts purchased for AWAP.

Action Research

by Tammy Watson

Action Research is one of the required assignments in CLASS. It involves working in one of the partner schools with approval of a teacher and the superintendent.

The first step is to decide what you would like to research and to come up with a question that will help define that research. After you have set up a timeline for conducting the research, you calculate the results and decide if your hypothesis was correct. If you're successful you can use this in your classroom. Even if the results are not what you expected you will find the process worthwhile.

Paula Billings and I are working on our project together with Jane Stone in the Literacy Workshop Center at AMS. Our question is: "Do students score higher on the SRI after attending classes in the Literacy Workshop Center?" Our hypothesis is that students, who are exposed to reading strategies in the Literacy Workshop Center, will have their SRI scores improve. We are comparing scores of students when they first began the Literacy Workshop Center and again after about six weeks.

The skills we learn by doing this research will help us tremendously when we have our own classrooms.

The Election Connection by Karen Erdmann

Recently students from Cohort 4 held a mock election at Auburn Middle School. The election served as the final piece in a social studies unit that Cohort 4 students created and taught to students on Team 7 at AMS.

AMS students researched presidential candidates and the candidates' views on hot issues for the November 2004 election. Students used the information they gathered to debate and give reasons why their candidate should be elected. When mock election day came, Team 7 students acted as poll workers and hosted all teams at AMS while they voted for the candidate of their choice. After the votes were tallied, John Kerry won the students' vote.

Students on Team 7 also had the opportunity to visit Augusta and participate in activities that centered on tallying votes from mock elections held at different schools throughout the state. They listened to many political speakers including Governor John Baldacci.



Pictured here are Governor Baldacci, students from Team 7, CLASS students Karen Erdmann and Cyndi Polisky.

CLASS Orientation Day by Ken Mashke

I decided to enter the CLASS program after a successful career in the military and a stint with the US Postal Service. In the five months leading up to orientation I wondered what I could possibly learn because of a variety of reasoning that included my non-traditional student status versus a younger traditional student. I was also transferring to USM from UMA and did not believe I needed any guidance as to what is expected of a college student.

After many months of stress, excitement and high expectations, orientation day finally arrived. The morning began at the Auburn Land Lab with my cohort leader Bumper White, CLASS Site Coordinator Carol Miller, a Land Lab facilitator, and the members of my cohort who I will be with for the next four and a half years. The orientation schedule included many activities that introduced me to my fellow cohort members.

Later that morning we moved outside for some field events that would not only help us bond as a group but also create a

sense of trust and teamwork. One of these events was the "Telephone Shuffle" where we had to stand on a telephone pole that was lying on the ground and we then had to shuffle ourselves on the log so that we were in sequential order according to our age. Our cohort ranges in age from 19 to 45 and it was quite comical to watch as we attempted to shuffle ourselves without falling off.

Another event was the "Trust Fall" that consisted of a large tree with a platform about six feet above the ground. We were required to gracefully lean backwards and fall off the platform. The jumper was hoping and praying that their cohort would catch them. I will never forget the experience and feelings of panic, trust and confidence as I fell down to my network of companions.

Following our activities at the Land Lab we met up with all of the other cohorts, CLASS faculty and mentor teachers at Carol Miller's house to become more familiar with the program and to listen to the other cohorts share their experiences.

Be Career Wise.. Subscribe to Career Services Listserv!

The Career Services and Professional Life Development Office has GREAT NEWS for all enrolled USM students, the introduction of a "Careers Listserv." Information available include:

- Resume and cover letter writing
- Jobs data base and resource center
- Myers-Briggs Type Indicator
- Strong Interest Inventory
- Upcoming workshops and special events designed to assist you.

To Subscribe:

1. Go to <http://mailman.usm.maine.edu>
2. Under the heading of "to subscribe to a list" enter listserv name as "Careers-Info"
3. On the next screen, provide your name and email address, choose a password, reconfirm it, and click on subscribe.
4. You will receive a confirmation email.

These exchanges provided a wealth of information that comes from people that have "been there, done that" and are willing to help or guide new students in any way to produce success.

In review, orientation is a great time and experience. The characteristics of effective communication, friendship, teamwork, and trust, are all instilled and keep multiplying from semester to semester.



Cohort 7 students participate in an activity at Auburn Land Lab. The goal is to work as a team to lift boards they are standing on in unison and walk so that they can cross the finish line first.

Cohort News

2004 CLASS PDS High School Scholarship Recipient

Each year, CLASS awards scholarships to qualifying, newly accepted CLASS PDS students from local area high schools to help support them during their first year in the program.

This year's recipient is Sheena Roy who joined Cohort VII this fall.

2004 CLASS Achievements:

Students Completing Program

Cherie Poole
Jennifer White

CLASS Candidates

Bobbi Cook
Ernie Gagne
Cheryl Robert



Cohort 3



Cohort 4



Cohort 5

COHORT 3

Cohort 3 members Jennifer White and Cherie Poole have successfully completed the CLASS PDS program and will start their teaching careers soon. Julie LaPlante, another Cohort 3 member, will be completing her final internship in the spring.

COHORT 4

We have been very busy finishing work in our LTT Social Studies and LTT Math classes. Each of us has spent many hours preparing math and social studies units. We each taught some of these lessons on our teams at Auburn Middle School. Lesson planning has become a very big part of our world. We've begun work on individual goals to help us discover how to show evidence to meet the CLASS PDS professional outcomes. The semester has been very intense, but we all feel it has prepared us well to move into our first internship in January. Cohort 4 students are Linda Bernier, Katie Bunker, Karen Erdmann and Cyndi Polisky.

COHORT 5

We are now officially Candidates! This semester we worked on our core requirements and did not work in the partner schools. We begin our Learning to Teach seminars in the spring. Cohort 5 students are Bobbi Cook, Ernie Gagne and Cheryl Robert.

COHORT 6

This semester we have been working on our Action Research projects and are looking forward to putting them in action next semester at Auburn Middle School. We are also beginning to plan our Service Learning project and working on multicultural education. We will join Cohort V in taking Theoretical Foundations of Learning next semester. Cohort VI students are Paulla Billings, Bridget Fitzgerald, Sean Moore, Stacey Potvin, Stacey Varney and Tamara Watson.

COHORT 7

We are continuing to develop a very strong bond both on and off campus, as well as at the partner schools. Two of the biggest lessons we learned this semester are that due dates are a necessity, and food makes every cohort meeting "delicious." Cohort 7 students are Michelle Buck, Tracie Giambra, Ken Mashke, Stephanie Patterson, Betty Pelletier, Chris Peterson, Laurie Potter, Rochelle Riordan, Sheena Roy and Kimberly Stuart.



Cohort 6



Cohort 7

Current CLASS Students, Consider Joining SEAM!

SEAM is a pre-professional program sponsored by the MEA and the NEA. It is designed to give pre-professionals a voice in state and national activities affecting the teaching profession. In addition, SEAM provides professional development opportunities, access to MEA and NEA member benefits and networking with students on other campuses and with experienced educators. More specifically, student members have access to professional publications, opportunities to attend state and national conferences, and \$1,000,000 in liability insurance coverage to protect you while working with school children.

In 2004-5 SEAM will have several regional training programs that may be of interest. For example, there will be a four-hour

workshop in the spring entitled *Praxis Makes Perfect* to help new teachers and teacher education students pass the Praxis I exam. In the spring and summer of 2005 there will be a series of workshops to assist members who need to pass Praxis II exams in order to become fully certified. There will also be a *Student Teachers Can Do It!* Workshop which focuses on classroom management.

It's not too late to join. The fee is minimal (you can get up to a \$40 rebate during your first years of teaching). For more information go to www.maine.nea.org/dir5/welcome5.htm or contact Linda Bernier at lgbernier@adelphia.net

Faculty Profile by Jim Bradley

Carol Miller, Site-Coordinator

Carol Miller is an integral part of CLASS, serving as Site Coordinator at both of our partner schools; Sherwood Heights Elementary and Auburn Middle School. She shares in the responsibilities for the day to day operation of the program and acts as a liaison between students, staff, faculty and administrators at Lewiston-Auburn College and the Auburn School District.

I recently sat down with Mrs. Miller and asked her to share with me a little information about herself and her role in the CLASS PDS Program.

What educational background and work experience do you bring to the program?

I have an AA degree in Early Childhood Education as well as a BS in Elementary Education with a minor in Math/Computer Science. Additionally, I have a Master's degree in Technology Education and completed a 2-year graduate studies program with the Maine School Leadership Network. I began my career as a teaching assistant in 1974, eventually teaching grades 1-3 as well as Kindergarten before taking my current position in 1998.

Tell us something about yourself that people may not know?

My husband, Jim, is the principal of Edward Little High School. I have two grown children. My daughter Mauri Du-four is a 4th grade teacher at Montello School in Lewiston. My son James, or "Joey" as we call him, is a senior at Plymouth State University in New Hampshire. For many years I worked for the United State Gymnastics Federation as their State Director in Maine.



You have now seen three cohorts complete the CLASS program. What would you say has been one of the most beneficial aspects of the program that has helped these students pursue teaching careers?

The fact that they have spent 4.5 years in the classrooms including a full-year internship. The CLASS program is unique in that students are required to complete three student-teaching "internships" placements; primary elementary (K-2), intermediate elementary (3-6), and middle school (7-8). These experiences make for an easy transition to classroom teaching.

Why do you think someone should consider joining CLASS?

The time spent in classroom settings over the 4.5 years is extremely valuable in preparing students to be successful teachers. Also the fact that when a student completes the CLASS program they have earned a bachelor's degree in liberal arts, state certification to teach K-8, as well as graduate credits towards a Master's Degree.

CLASS PDS End of Semester Seminar



Jennifer White and Cherie Poole were recognized for successfully completing the CLASS PDS program this year. Picture with them is Dr. Bumper White, CLASS Program Coordinator.



CLASS students, faculty and staff at this year's End of Semester Seminar which was held on December 14, 2004.



Bobbi Cook and Cheryl Robert were recognized for successfully achieving Candidacy this year. Ernie Gagne also achieved Candidacy. Pictured with Bobbi and Cheryl is Carol Miller, CLASS Site Coordinator.



Dr. Paul Caron, "Master of Ceremonies," welcomes everyone to the 2004 End of Semester Seminar.

Creating Teacher Leaders for the 21st Century

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Newsletter Committee Members:

Linda Bernier Karen Erdmann
Kenneth Mashke Tammy Watson
Kimberly Stuart Jim Bradley

www.usm.maine.edu/lac/class

Now Accepting Applications For Fall 2005!

To apply to the CLASS PDS program, you should call Jim Bradley at 753-6618 to set-up an appointment with an advisor.

To learn more about the program as well as to download an application, visit our website at:

www.usm.maine.edu/lac/class

The CLASS PDS program is designed specifically for undergraduate students. Anyone interested in teaching who already holds a bachelor's degree is encouraged to consider ETEP, a post-baccalaureate teacher education program offered through USM's College of Education and Human Development. FMI on ETEP, call 780-5306.