

CLASS Connections

Collaborative Learning And School Success—Professional Development School

CLASS PDS Launches “Modified Program”

Inside this issue:

Educational Resources on the Internet	2
Cohort News	2
“Lighting A Fire”	3
Faculty Profile: Dr. Christy Hammer	3
Profile of Kathi Cutler,	4
My First Semester in CLASS	4
CLASS PDS “Library” of Education Related Articles	5
CLASS PDS Students Making A Difference	5
CLASS PDS End of Semester Seminar	6
Record Enrollment at USM:L/A	7
Frequently Asked Questions Regarding CLASS	7

Over the course of the last 2-3 years the CLASS PDS faculty have been engaged in a process to investigate how best to better meet the needs of non-traditional students who wish to obtain K-8 teacher certification at USM/LA when they already have a significant number of college credits.

The CLASS program’s developmental, field-based, PDS structure is such that these students may be discouraged from enrolling in the program due to its required nine semester course and fieldwork scope and sequence curriculum. For these students the other choices are few with regards to gaining certification: complete their undergraduate degree and enter a post-bachelor certification program (ETEP) or apply for alternative certification through the State’s Department of Education.

Starting in Fall 2005, the CLASS PDS program piloted a modified scope and sequence for selected transfer students who already have a significant number of college credits which would qualify them for “Special Student Status” and allow them to complete the program in less than the four and one half years if accepted into the program.

Due to the tremendous variety in the number and types of college credits that prospective candidates would bring into the college, it is impossible to predict the length of each student’s individualized program. Therefore, each student will develop an individualized program with the CLASS PDS academic advisor after he/she had been accepted into the program.

Initial results of this new option for students have been very positive. Not only have we seen an increase in those students entering the program in Fall 05, as compared to previous years, but we have also more than doubled the number of applicants for Fall 06. If the current trend holds, we can conservatively estimate a doubling of the overall number of students in the program within two years.

It’s important to note that although the new “modified program” is increasing opportunities for students to pursue teaching careers, we are not sacrificing the quality of education they receive for the sake of increasing those numbers. Our goal has always been to provide the best teacher educational experience for students in Maine and our mission continues to be “to create teacher-leaders for the 21st century.”

If you are interested in becoming a teacher, but already have a significant number of college credits, you are encouraged to contact the CLASS PDS administrative assistant, Jim Bradley, to discuss your options.



Following Successful Completion of CLASS, Students Earn:

Bachelor’s Degree & K-8 Teacher Certification & more than 30 credits toward graduate degree.

Now Accepting Applications for Fall 2006



UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN MAINE
Lewiston-Auburn College

Educational Resources on the Internet

- [National Education Association](http://www.nea.org)
www.nea.org
- [Education Week](http://www.edweek.org)
www.edweek.org
- [National Council for History Education](http://www.history.org/nche/)
www.history.org/nche/
- [The Children's Literature Web Guide](http://www.acs.ucalgary.ca/~dkbrown/index.html)
www.acs.ucalgary.ca/~dkbrown/index.html
- [PBS/Sesame Street](http://www.pbs.org/kids/sesame)
www.pbs.org/kids/sesame
- [Time for Kids](http://www.timeforkids.com)
www.timeforkids.com
- [NY Times Education Page](http://www.nytimes.com/pages/education/index.html)
www.nytimes.com/pages/education/index.html
- [Education World](http://www.educationworld.com)
www.educationworld.com



English as a Second Language
An English as a Second Language and Bilingual Education
Toolkit—A working document to support Pre-K-12 students
in achieving Maine's Learning Results.

www.state.me.us/education/esl/toolkit/toc.htm

Cohort News



COHORT 4 Well, we did it! Cohort 4 students successfully completed the final residency. Each of us spent at least six weeks lead teaching in our mentor classrooms. While lead teaching, we were fully responsible for all aspects of the students, the classroom and the day to day lesson planning. We presented our final portfolios and goal evidence at the exit conference in December. We look forward to the future and successful teaching careers. Cohort 4 students are (l-r) Katie Bunker, Cyndi Polisky, Karen Erdmann and Linda Bernier.



COHORT 5 We are starting internship in January and we are also each taking three classes at night! Cheryl is at Sherwood Heights in first grade for placement A, and at AMS in 8th grade for Placement B. Ernie is at AMS in 8th grade for placement A and will be at Sherwood for placement B in first grade. We are very happy to finally be near the end of a long and challenging journey. Cohort 5 students are (l-r) Bobbi Cook, Ernie Gagne and Cheryl Robert.



COHORT 6 We all successfully presented for Candidacy on October 13th. We presented our portfolios and the work we had done the previous year and one-half in the CLASS program and at the partner schools, to a panel for their approval. We all received our apple pin when we were approved for candidacy. We are looking forward to being back in Sherwood Heights School and our Learning to Teach Graduate Level Classes, along with Applied Problem Solving during the spring semester. Members of Cohort 6 are (l-r) Tammy Watson, Paula Billings, Sean Moore, Stacey Potvin and Bridget Fitzgerald.



COHORT 7 We completed semester 3 of 9 in an exemplary fashion. We absorbed and tackled all assignments with zeal and enthusiasm. This semester focused on the Auburn Middle School, adolescent observations, and service learning. The team approach, advocacy, and the middle school environment were a new idea to some of the cohort. Other members were looking forward to the specific subjects being taught and the adolescent atmosphere. Interesting guest speakers included Barbara Kaufman from Kid's Consortium and Lucy Merin from the Community Learning Center (CLC). In addition, Cohort 7 welcomed Will Murray, Nicole Caron, Jaclyn Traynor, and Courtney Tougas as new additions. All four of them have joined CLASS as "Modified Program" students. Other Cohort 7 students are Allison Hopkins, Kim Stuart, Chris Peterson, Ken Mashke, and Sheena Roy.



COHORT 8 This is our newest cohort, having started the program this past fall. In addition to completing their coursework toward their major, they also completed CLASS coursework and fieldwork at Sherwood Heights Elementary School. The members of this cohort are Bobby Bosse, Lori Caron, Lindsey Chadbourne, Scott Emery and Hibo Omer. Will, Nicole, Jaclyn and Courtney from Cohort 7 also take seminars with Cohort 8.

Lighting A Fire by Karen Erdmann

When I started this program, I was very idealistic. I wanted to save them all. One question I always have for my mentors is “Does it get easier the longer you teach?” What I meant was does one somehow become desensitized to students’ issues. Do you not care anymore after teaching for years? As you can imagine, I got different answers from different mentors. I think I was looking for a yes, it does get easier. You do get desensitized.

One of the things I’ve struggled with the most throughout the four and a half years is the worry I have about the students I knew were struggling or were living in a difficult situation at home. I wanted to ‘save’ them, somehow make it better, eas-

ier for them, give them everything they needed to succeed. My struggle came because I knew deep down inside there wasn’t any way I could, but still I really wanted to.

Then I found this quote, “Education is not the filling of a pail, but the lighting of a fire.” It was then that I knew I had my answer. I can’t save them all. I might not ever even save one, but that was ok. Being an educator isn’t about saving them or fixing everything for them. That’s an unattainable goal. Teaching is more than that. It’s what William Butler Yeats meant when he said it’s the lighting of a fire. Teaching is capitalizing on the skills the students have when they come to you whether those skills are high or low.

Teaching is doing the best you can for the students the short time that they’re in your classroom. Teaching is giving encouragement, its opening doors that may have been closed; it’s realizing the limitations, but making attempts to move past them.

I realize now that I don’t want to become desensitized. I want to always care about teaching and more importantly I want to care about the student and whatever issues he has. It’s the kind of teacher I am. I teach from the heart and when I’m teaching, I know it’s what I was put here to do. So I will use the school year to teach them the skills they need to move on to the next level, but I will also use the school year to try and light a fire.

Faculty Profile by Cheryl Robert

Dr. Christy Hammer, Ph.D.

Associate Professor, CLASS PDS Program

Dr. Christy Hammer, in addition to being a faculty member in the Social and Behavioral Sciences major, also serves as faculty advisor for all CLASS students.

When did you first realize you wanted to be a teacher?

Since childhood I knew my strengths were with the interpersonal—I think as a person born with a big body I developed a big personality to go along with it! I suppose there is a chicken and egg question there, though. It seemed “natural” for me to be a teacher or counselor of some sort. For a while I wanted to be a prison psychologist, too.

When did you decide you wanted to teach future teachers?

I worked for a decade as an Education Consultant in Civil Rights, Social Studies, and “Curriculum, Instruction, Assessment” roles in New Hampshire and was offered a job at a local college as an education professor. I love teaching adults best.

Those of us who have had you as a professor know how passionate you are about teaching and learning. Where does that passion derive from?

Well, I’ve always had a lot of “good energy” (as a friend says) and an almost Pollyanna-ish optimism. I suppose that has been tempered by age and experience a bit, but I think those who can “light the lamp of learning” in and for others, know they have a social and moral obligation to do so.



Who inspired you?

Students that are amazed and even awe-struck by learning some educational theory or practice inspire me. I’m blessed with a wonderful family and large circle of friends, so they all keep me going as well. Lastly, the ideal way the CLASS program tries to prepare teachers, in spite of the fact that most teacher preparation programs are not “on-site” or as rigorous, also inspires me.

How did you come to be involved with the CLASS PDS program?

While I was an Education Consultant and Associate Professor in NH, I also worked a “side job” as a specialist for a national program that tried to strengthen partnerships and the use of technology in K-16 collaborations. Bumper White and the CLASS program was one of the original 30 sites. So, I came up to help and evaluate the CLASS PDS program several times over the course of five years, and enjoyed the people I met (including then Dean Betty Robinson). I also was enchanted with the idea of both living close to the Maine coast and with returning, a bit, to my “original” preparation in Sociology (which I teach, along with other courses, in the Social and Behavioral Sciences major).

I’m borrowing this from James Lipton on the history channel...what are your favorite and least favorite words?

Favorite—Serendipitously. Least favorite—War.

Profile of Kathi Cutler, Principal of Auburn Middle School, by Ken Mashke

The CLASS program currently has two partner schools: Sherwood Heights Elementary and Auburn Middle School. I recently asked Kathi Cutler, Principal of Auburn Middle School, to share her thoughts about the CLASS PDS program as well as her teaching and educational philosophies.

How did you end up as a principal in a middle school?

When I graduated from college all I wanted to do was teach. I started as an elementary teacher in Brunswick, Me. for six years and then moved to middle school in Auburn where I taught for 4 years. I then decided to teach high school (EL for 11 years) which was followed by four years as an assistant principal at EL. Once I moved into administration I knew I wanted to be a principal and the middle school principal position seemed like a good fit.

Was it your ultimate goal?

It was and is my ultimate goal to work with kids and to see them grow up to be successful, caring adults.

What teaching philosophy or educational philosophy do you believe in?

That things always work out when the needs of the child are the focal point of our conversations. That every child can learn but not always at the same pace so it

is important to know what each child needs to be successful. We must use continuous formative classroom assessments of very clear learning targets to show student achievement.

Why are many teachers and pre-service teachers afraid of working at the middle school level?

I assume because middle school kids are in such a transitional time of life....but so are ninth graders!

What advice can you, or would you, like to pass on to pre-service teachers and teachers applying for a middle school position?

If you are hesitant at all about teaching in a middle school then make sure that you spend time in one before applying for a job.

How do you believe AMS and CLASS participants have benefited from working together?

I hope the CLASS students feel supported in their work and goals to become teachers and I hope that AMS teachers recognize the tremendous help that CLASS students are to students and teachers in so many ways. I know there is on-going sharing of ideas between CLASS students and AMS teachers and that the benefit is increased student learning.



Kathleen Cutler

Are principals swamped with paperwork and administrative duties?

Not to sound facetious, but what are administrative duties but those things that I need to do to be effective as an educational leader!

Are there things that get in the way sometimes?

Oh sure and it can take away from my day, but the motto truly is, "Whatever It Takes" in every sense of the phrase.

Besides administrative stuff, what other responsibilities go along with being principal?

Well, again I am not sure what you mean by "administrative stuff". My responsibility as an educational leader to each child, teacher and parent is the most important aspect of being a principal. This is people work and it can be messy sometimes but it is also very exhilarating!

My First Semester in CLASS by Scott Emery

My first semester was a challenge. I was challenged by the courses I took as well as the CLASS program requirements. The program was a joy though and I enjoyed it more than I had expected.

I knew I wanted to be a teacher and with what I have seen in my observations in my first semester, I have faith that the CLASS program will help me in becoming not only a teacher but a great teacher.

I was in the Marines for five years and the camaraderie in my cohort is nearly equal to that. The other students in the

cohort are not students I am competing with but rather working with and we are getting and giving support as a team.

In my first semester I have had a great opportunity to meet staff at the partner schools and hopefully that will make the process that much better. My mentor teacher was a joy and definitely left a positive impression of the partner schools and the CLASS program. The structure of the first semester classes works excellent with the program as well.

I look forward to this next semester!



Scott Emery

CLASS PDS “Library” of Education Related Articles

CLASS maintains a collection of education related articles that can be loaned to students, staff and faculty. Below is a partial listing of the articles we have. A complete listing is available on our website.

- Are PDS Trained Teachers Better Classroom Managers?
- Better Teachers for Our Nation’s Schools
- Graduates of PDS Programs: Perceptions of the Teacher as Change Agent
- Producing Teachers Who Understand, Believe, and Care
- Making Schools of Education Bridges to Better Learning
- Teacher Socialization: Opportunities for University-School Partnerships to Improve Professional Cultures
- The CLASS Professional Development School Initiative: Redesigning Teacher Education Through Effective Collaboration
- The Role of the Mentor Teacher: Insights, Challenges, and Implications
- Changing Roles of Teacher Education Students

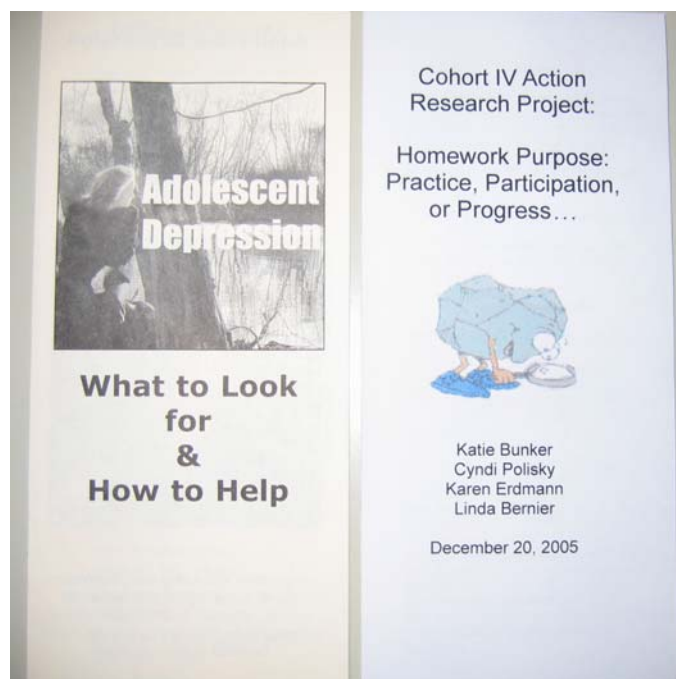


CLASS PDS Students—Making a Difference!

As part of the CLASS program, students are required to complete both Service Learning and Action Research Projects. This past year Cohorts IV and VI accomplished their projects and produced two very informative brochures which can now be used as resources for students and educators.

Tammy Watson from Cohort VI explains her cohort’s service learning project. *“We decided to design a pamphlet on adolescent depression. Last year we were all working at Auburn Middle School and thought we would like to do something for the children of that age group. Sean was the person who came up with this final idea, and the rest of us agreed with his suggestion and decided to run with it. We divided the pamphlet into sections and all took a part to work on. Sean worked on what depression is and how do teens help their friends who are depressed. Tammy worked on the signs of depression, while Stacey and Paulla researched the places and phone numbers of contact people and places that teens could call and talk to someone if they needed help. Bridget, along with her boyfriend Will, designed the layout of the pamphlet as well as supplying the photos that we used in it. It was a long process and we are happy with our final product. We have been given permission to distribute them in the Auburn School District and will be requesting permission to distribute them to other school districts as well.”*

Cohort IV successfully completed an action research project dealing with students being assigned homework. They developed a brochure for educators that provides guidelines for making the best use of homework assignments as part of the overall educational experience.



Both of these brochures are available online at:
[Http://www.usm.maine.edu/lac/class/projects.html](http://www.usm.maine.edu/lac/class/projects.html)

“When students don’t understand why they are doing a homework assignment, it can seem like “busy work” - they simply want to get through it. For this reason, connecting homework assignments to a meaningful purpose is a powerful instructional practice.”

CLASS PDS End of Semester Seminar, Dec. 20, 2005



Linda Bernier



Katie Bunker

At this year's ESS, the following students were recognized for successfully completing the CLASS PDS Program: Linda Bernier, Katie Bunker, Karen Erdmann, Julie LaPlante and Cynthia Polisky. Also pictured: Dr. Paul G. Caron presents certificates to Linda, Katie, Karen and Cynthia. Dr. Bumper White presents certificate to Julie.



Karen Erdmann



Julie LaPlante



Cynthia Polisky



Cohort IV students presented their action research project, "Homework Purpose: Practice, Participation, or Progress.." For more information regarding their project see page 5.



Students were also recognized for successfully completing candidacy. Those students are: (pictured l-r below) Sean Moore, Stacey Potvin, Bridget Fitzgerald, Tammy Watson and Paulla Billings.

The CLASS PDS Family



Record Enrollment at USM/L-A!

A record number of students are enrolled in USM courses on the Lewiston-Auburn campus. There were 1350 students enrolled for the Fall 2005 semester, an increase of almost 10% over the fall of 2004.

“USM/L-A has been the fastest growing campus in the entire state university system, says Assistant Dean Roger Philippon. “The number of USM students on our campus has doubled since 1995, and the total number of credits enrolled in since that time has increased by 143%. This demonstrates very clearly how important this campus has become to the Androscoggin County area,” he added.

Most lab science courses were at or close to full capacity, as were most of the writing, math, and computer courses. Two graduate programs offered at USM/L-A, leadership studies and occupational therapy, also experienced increased enrollment in the fall. In addition, a record

number of “Early Study” students are taking courses. Early Study is an academic enrichment program for qualified high school juniors and seniors to take college courses at USM.

The programs with the largest enrollment at USM/L-A include social and behavioral sciences, nursing, and leadership and organizational studies. Other programs offered in their entirety on this campus include arts and humanities, natural and applied sciences, and of course CLASS PDS, our professional K-8 teacher education program.

In order to accommodate continued growth and future programming needs, USM has purchased the adjacent property at 61 Westminster Street for a campus expansion. “In addition to creating additional instructional space, this expansion has as a centerpiece the establishment of the “Educational Change Center” that will



UNIVERSITY OF
SOUTHERN MAINE
Lewiston-Auburn College

serve as the resource hub to coordinate programs and services for the “College for ME-Androscoggin” campaign,” said Dean Zark VanZandt. “In addition to support and advising services, the Educational Change Center will conduct research on the barriers to higher education and the strategies that have the most impact on addressing those barriers. We are committed to increasing the number of college graduates in this county, and this center will be a catalyst for taking bold action and achieving lasting results.”

Frequently Asked Questions Regarding the CLASS PDS Program

Who is this program for?

CLASS is intended for students who have a strong interest in teaching at the elementary or middle school level. First year students, transfer students, current USM students are eligible to apply. CLASS is a selective program, and most students in the program have had experience working with school age children and have a commitment to the teaching field. This program is designed for both part-time and full-time students.

What will my major be?

CLASS students have a liberal arts major, and graduate with a degree in that field, rather than in education. At the end of the program, you will have earned a bachelor's degree, teacher certification, and some graduate credits toward a master's degree in education. Most CLASS students choose one of the following four interdisciplinary majors offered at LAC:

Arts and Humanities, Social and Behavioral Sciences, Natural and Applied Sciences, and Leadership and Organizational Studies.

All of the required coursework for these majors are offered at LAC. More detailed information about these programs is available from the College.

What courses will I take?

Students take a variety of courses which meet USM's Core curriculum, your major requirements, CLASS course requirements, and teacher certification requirements.

What will my schedule be like?

The CLASS program can be pursued on a part-time basis with the exception of the final year, full-time internship. Most students will take at least four and one-half years to complete all the requirements.

CLASS students are busy taking classes on campus and doing seminars and other work off-campus at the partner schools in Auburn.

It's possible to complete the program in less than 4.5 years if you already have a significant number of credits. For more information on our “Modified Program” see page 1.





Now Accepting Applications For Fall 2006!

To apply to the CLASS PDS program or for more information, you should call Jim Bradley at 753-6618.

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

<http://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

Don't forget:

It's that time of year again. Time to file your FAFSA form for 2006-07! USM has a priority deadline of February 15th, however, if you haven't filed yet we encourage you to still do so. Also remember that you can use estimated income on the FAFSA form. Just be sure to correct it once your taxes have been filed. If you have any financial aid questions, contact Suzanne Frigon for further information 753-6597.



CLASS PDS Program
Lewiston-Auburn College
University of Southern Maine
51 Westminster Street
Lewiston, ME 04240

Creating Teacher-Leaders for the 21st Century

Phone: 207-753-6618
Fax: 207-753-6555
Email: lacclass@usm.maine.edu
Http: <http://www.usm.maine.edu/lac/class>

CLASS PDS Program Personnel:
Dr. William "Bumper" White, Program Coordinator
Dr. Paul Caron, Faculty
Dr. Christy Hammer, Faculty
Mrs. Carol Miller, Site Coordinator
Mr. Jim Bradley, Administrative Assistant

Newsletter Committee Members:

Kenneth Mashke Tammy Watson
Kimberly Stuart Cheryl Robert
Jim Bradley