

Bates | EDUCATION DEPARTMENT

Guidelines for Field Experience – Community Partners

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We hope these guidelines will help clarify the student's role and our expectations.

1. What is the purpose of placing Bates students in local educational settings?

The Education Department is committed to a pedagogy called Community-Engaged Learning. This means that we believe that learning takes place in and with communities.

The Bates College Department of Education seeks to foster the democratic possibilities of schooling through the study of American public education and other comparative systems. The aim of the department is to create an environment in which students and faculty together analyze the complex dynamics between the purposes and products of schooling, and the social structures and cultural processes that comprise the broader context for education. In particular, we want to nurture in our students the development of these qualities:

- Critical action and civic responsibility - Because we want our students to develop a sense of social responsibility and concern for the common good, we encourage them to be involved in the local community and beyond through field work, service learning projects, policy analysis, student teaching, and empirical research.
- Reflection and engagement - In our vision of education, reflection and engagement work together to deepen students' understanding and foster their personal growth.
- Imagination and a passion for learning - With imagination, a passion for learning, and the skills and knowledge that we help them develop, our students are well prepared to pursue their interests in education.
- Commitment to social justice - Throughout our program, we encourage students to recognize and address the influence of social context on the democratic possibilities of schooling.

2. How are placements in local educational settings arranged for Bates Students?

The Education Department works both independently and in collaboration with the Harward Center for Community Partnerships, to establish placements within the local community. We hope to create ongoing opportunities and relationships, and we encourage referrals of fellow educators who might be interested in welcoming Bates students into their educational settings.

3. How often are Bates education students placed in local classrooms, programs, and other settings?

Thanks to the help of teachers, program supervisors, and other community members, almost all students who take any education course get hands-on experience in local settings to enrich the 'book knowledge' that they acquire in their classes at Bates. The placement becomes, in essence, a living text.

4. How many hours must the student complete in my educational setting?

In a typical semester, students are required to spend a minimum of 30 hours per placement doing field work during the semester. We ask them to set up a regular schedule that is agreeable to you. The students should let you know that they will be doing part of their hours elsewhere.

5. How much experience in educational settings do students typically bring?

The field experience component is an essential part of every course we teach, but some of you will be hosting students who have never before taken an education course. They may need a little more encouragement to become fully involved. Other students, however, may have taken one, two, or more previous courses, and thus will be ready to assume more responsibility. We strongly encourage community partners and students to have an explicit conversation about the responsibilities the student will take on throughout the semester.

6. How do Bates students use this fieldwork in their education courses?

Bates students use the fieldwork to deepen their understanding of course material, and they may draw upon their experiences in classroom discussions and class assignments (using pseudonyms to protect confidentiality).

7. What expectations should I hold about my student's participation in the educational setting?

You and your Bates student should talk about what role would be most helpful to you and your students and to the Bates student. You might consider: tutoring individual students, working with small groups of students, assisting you in finding resources for upcoming units of study, helping out with other classroom and school activities, or conducting action research projects. Students with more experience might also be ready to handle the responsibility of teaching lessons on occasion. We encourage you to talk together about the student's skills and prior experiences and how they can be useful in your classroom.

8. What kind of assessment am I expected to provide about the student?

You are not expected to grade the Bates students, but your feedback is valuable to us; thus, it is important that we receive the evaluation form before the end of the semester. Evaluation forms will be delivered to you via email and/or in hard copy via the student.

You can return the completed form in two ways:

- 1) Give it to the student to return to the professor (students are permitted to see the completed forms);
- 2) Complete the form and email to the appropriate professor (email addresses at the top of this brochure).

In order to meet the deadlines for our grades, we need to have the completed evaluation forms returned as follows:

Fall Semester-no later than December 10

Winter Semester-no later than April 10

Short Term - no later than the Wednesday before Memorial Day (Bates Commencement)

9. Whom do I contact if I have suggestions, questions, or concerns?

Please contact us whenever you have any suggestions, questions, or concerns. We want to make the field experience positive and beneficial for you as well as for our students. Most students are dependable, committed, and caring young people, but, once in a while, there may be a student who requires more guidance and support to be successful. You may contact the professor of the course or someone at the Harvard Center using the contact information at the top of this page.