Teacher Education Minor: Learning Goals

The Brandeis Teacher Education minor is designed for students who want to become pre-school, elementary, middle, or high school teachers. It includes the study of learners and learning, school and society, and general and subject-specific pedagogy. Teachers need deep and flexible subject matter knowledge; thus, students who minor in Teacher Education choose a compatible liberal arts major. Coursework on campus is integrated with field experiences in area schools which culminate in a semester of supervised student teaching.

For information about the teacher education course requirements, go to [http://www.brandeis.edu/programs/education/ugrad/teachered/requirements.html](http://www.brandeis.edu/programs/education/ugrad/teachered/requirements.html) Education Program advisors encourage interested students to meet with them early to discuss the teacher education programs, course requirements, and opportunities.

Four central themes define the Brandeis Teacher Education Program and shape our learning goals:

_Knowing students as learners._ Teacher Education students understand their pupils as individuals and members of communities and know how to shape instruction that builds on their interests, strengths, and needs as thinkers and doers.

_Teaching for understanding._ Teacher Education students learn how to make academic content a resource for inquiry and a means of giving pupils wider access to the world. They explore ways to teach to ambitious standards for all children, and learn principles and practices of assessment aligned with those standards and purposes.

_Inquiry._ Teacher Education students learn to promote curiosity, and they make inquiry a central part of their professional practice as teachers.

_Social Justice._ Teacher Education students create classrooms in which pupils practice respect, fairness and decency and learn to contribute to the development of a just society.

_Critical Understandings:_ Students who complete the teacher education minor will understand:

- the diverse ways that children explore, learn, and develop their interests inside and outside of the classroom;
- the importance of knowing the subject/s they teach in coherent and flexible ways;
- the relationship between race, class, and gender and educational opportunity; and
- the urgency of helping their pupils learn literacy and numeracy skills, effective communication, critical thinking, and working well with others in our democracy and interdependent world.
Core Skills: Student teachers who successfully complete the minor will be able to:

- prepare curriculum and adapt curricular materials to engage and challenge the diverse learners they teach;
- plan and employ a repertoire of instructional strategies and assessments so as to motivate and involve students in worthwhile learning;
- create and maintain a safe and respectful learning community in the classroom;
- promote equity in the classroom and school;
- work productively with families and colleagues; and
- reflect on their teaching and learn from experience.

These skills are aligned with the Massachusetts Professional Standards for Teachers (603 CMR 7.08) and are assessed using the MA Pre-service Performance Assessment (PPA). Students also videotape and reflect on their practice, and develop an electronic portfolio which contains a statement about their teaching stance, unit plan/s, and students’ work. Students must pass the relevant Massachusetts Tests for Educator License (MTEL) in order to qualify for the Massachusetts initial teaching license.

Upon Graduation: Successful completion of the elementary or secondary minor, together with passing grades on the MTELs, leads to an initial license to teach in Massachusetts, which has reciprocal licensing arrangements with the other states and the District of Columbia. Successful completion of the preschool minor fulfills the Massachusetts Department of Early Education and Care requirements for lead teachers in infant-toddler programs and/or preschool.

Becoming an accomplished teacher happens over time. In fact, good teachers never stop learning. Our program provides a strong foundation for beginning teaching along with the tools and dispositions needed to continue learning in and from teaching.