



Education Program Annual Report 2008-2009

Date: June 1, 2009
To: Ed Yeterian, Dean of Faculty
From: Mark Tappan, Chair
Re: Education Program Annual Report

1. PARTICIPATING FACULTY

Program Faculty:

Lyn Brown, Professor of Education
Adam Howard, Associate Professor of Education
Karen Kusiak, Assistant Professor of Education
Mark Tappan, Professor of Education and Chair

Affiliated Faculty:

Brett Pierce, Jan Plan Faculty

2. PROGRAM ACTIVITIES, 2008-2009

Most importantly, Adam Howard joined our program faculty. Adam served as a faculty fellow in our program during the 2003-2004 academic year (during Karen Barnhardt's pre-tenure sabbatical). He then returned to Antioch College (where he had received tenure and promotion to Associate Professor). Foreseeing Antioch's unfortunate demise, Adam accepted a position at Hanover College in Madison, IN, from 2005 to 2008. As a result of his teaching experience and impressive scholarship, we hired Adam at the Associate Professor level, with an abbreviated tenure clock, and he rejoined our faculty in the fall of 2008, once again replacing Karen Barnhardt.

Adam has been a wonderful addition to our faculty, and his presence has served to re-invigorate our program. He has made wonderful connections to our students, to the College, and to the greater Waterville community. We are so pleased to have him here, and we look forward to working with Adam for many years to come.

The other significant effect that occurred this year was Karen Kusiak's sabbatical, during the spring semester. Karen completed the field research for her dissertation on the impact of laptop computers on Maine high school students, and she is spending the summer writing. As a result of Karen's sabbatical we lost one of her four courses, and Mark Tappan covered her third course, ED 437: Senior Student Teaching Practicum, during Jan Plan.

During the fall semester we offered eight courses. Seven of these courses have been taught before, and represent regular features of our curriculum: ED 215-Children and Adolescents in Schools and Society (Tappan); ED 231-Teaching for Social Justice (Tappan); ED 235-Multiculturalism and the Political Project (Howard); ED 332-Women, Girls, and the Cultures of Education (Brown); ED 431-Curriculum and Methods

(Kusiak); ED 433–Senior Student Teaching Practicum (Kusiak); and ED 493–Senior Seminar in Education and Human Development (Howard). One new course, ED 197–Metacognition and Academic Success, was taught by Joe Atkins, Assistant Dean of Students and Visiting Assistant Professor of Psychology. This experimental course was designed to provide additional knowledge, skills, and support for first year students who Joe identified as likely to benefit from such a course. It turned out to be a very successful venture, and it will continue as a regular part of our curriculum going forward.

During Jan Plan we offered four courses: ED 197–Media for Social Justice (Brett Pierce); ED 351–Practicum in Education (Howard); ED 355–Social Justice Practicum (Tappan); and ED 437–Senior Student Teaching Practicum (Tappan). Continuing a tradition began in January 2006, four students enrolled in ED 355 spent the entire month working at the Gaston College Preparatory Academy in Gaston, NC, a KIPP school directed by Caleb Dolan (Colby '96).

During the spring semester we offered four courses. Two of these courses have been taught before, and represent regular features of our curriculum: ED/WG 217–Boys to Men (Tappan) and ED 231–Teaching for Social Justice (Tappan). Two courses represent new courses that will be added to our curriculum going forward: ED 298/242–History and Philosophy of Progressive Education (Howard) and ED 398/322–Social Class and Schooling.

Our program continues to play a major role in the Civic Engagement initiative at Colby, under the auspices of the Goldfarb Center. Students are responsible for completing civic engagement projects in a significant number of our courses, including ED 215, WG/ED 217, ED 231, ED 235, ED 298, ED 332, ED 351, and ED 355. In addition, our program continues to support the Colby Cares about Kids Mentoring Program. Mark Tappan serves as a member of the Civic Engagement Committee for the Goldfarb Center, and as a member of the CCAK Advisory Committee, responsible for training, mentor reflection sessions, and evaluation. Finally, our program continues responsibility for overseeing the America Reads/America Counts program for the College.

In terms of other activities this year, we held our third annual Colloquium on Research in Education in Human Development on May 1, 2009, as part of the Colby Undergraduate Research Symposium.

3. STUDENT ADVISING

The core program faculty has been responsible for advising the Education, Environmental Education, Human Development, and Professional Certification minors and the Independent Majors in Human Development that we have had in the program this year. This advising is largely informal and ad hoc. Rather than move to a more systematic procedure, we have decided to maintain the somewhat informal system that has evolved over the past decade or so within the structure of our program. Mark Tappan is primarily responsible for advising the students majoring and minoring in Education and Human Development; Adam Howard is primarily responsible for advising students minoring in Environmental Education; and Karen Kusiak works most closely with students seeking professional certification. This system is not set in stone, however, and students are free to seek advice from any faculty member(s) they choose.

All of the program faculty, in conjunction with the staff of the Career Center, do a significant amount of career and graduate school advising—the most common questions concern options for graduate school and ways in which students can obtain elementary and secondary teaching certificates after they graduate from Colby.

4. CLASS OF 2009

The Class of 2007 contained **3 Education** minors; **8 Human Development** minors; **3 Environmental Education** minors; and **8 Professional Certification** minors—for a total of **22** graduating minors.

Eight students graduated with an **Independent Major in Human Development**. Two of these students are headed to graduate school for elementary certification, two have been accepted into internship programs at a private elementary school, and one (Pam Colon) is teaching in India next year. The other four majors are still looking for employment as of this writing.

In terms of honors and awards, **six** of our seniors **Lauren Duval** (History, Professional Certification), **Benjamin Hauptman** (Mathematics, Professional Certification), **Carla Jacobs** (Psychology, Human Development minor), **Guy Sack** (Psychology, Human Development minor), **Hanna Schenk** (Psychology/Neuroscience, Human Development minor), and **Alea Thompson** (English, Professional Certification Minor) were elected to Phi Beta Kappa.

5. DIVERSITY RELATED ACTIVITIES

Because of our program's explicit commitment to social justice we consider virtually all of our efforts, both in and outside the classroom, to be in support of the College's ongoing diversity initiative:

The Education Program is guided by John Dewey's distinction between "education as a function of society," where the function of education is to prepare the minds of the young to maintain and uphold the basic principles of society, and "society as a function of education," where the function of education is to remake or reform society, because the principles and directives that govern society, and support the status quo, are by and large unjust. We firmly embrace the latter perspective, and thus our program is explicitly committed to promoting **social justice**, both in schools and in society at large. Our courses explore the impact of cultural assumptions, societal norms, and institutional policies and practices on both individuals and groups. Students and faculty work together to examine the operation of power as it relates to the construction of knowledge and the preservation of privilege. In so doing, students are encouraged to analyze and critique the intended and unintended oppressions resulting from specific educational and institutional practices by (1) considering the values and politics that pervade educational institutions, as well as the more pragmatic issues of teaching and organizing schools; (2) asking critical questions about how taken-for-granted assumptions and conventions about theory and practice came to be, and who in society benefits from such assumptions; (3) attending to differences in gender, race, social class, sexual orientation, and ability that result in political, social, economic, and educational marginalization and inequality, particularly for children and youth; (4) examining the connections among sexism, racism, classism, and other forms of oppression as they relate to environmental and ecological concerns; and (5) investigating how schooling plays a crucial role in the development of attitudes and behaviors toward "nature" and the environment. Students are also encouraged to move beyond critique and to theorize about the creation and implementation of educational and institutional practices that promote greater social justice and equity in society as a whole. (**Colby College Catalogue, 2008-2009**)

Some specific examples of work conducted by program faculty in support of social justice at Colby during the 2008-2009 academic year include:

- Mark Tappan served as member and Chair of the Race and Racism Committee, continuing the work of previous Program members on this committee, Lyn Brown and Karen Barnhardt.
- Adam Howard served as an ad-hoc member of the Race and Racism Committee.
- Adam Howard served as an Advisor and Trainer for the Campus Conversations on Race Program.
- Adam Howard and Mark Tappan served as members of the Multicultural Literacy Working Group.

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- Lyn Brown and Mark Tappan both served as a member of the Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies Program Faculty.
 - The program continued to provide a home and support for *The untold story: The history of activism and social justice at Colby* (<http://www.colby.edu/education/activism/>).

As always, we search for ways to attract more students of color and international students to our program. But we also believe our mission to promote social justice in schools and society at large also includes interrupting privilege and raising the consciousness of members of dominant social identity groups—which we continue to do at every opportunity.

6. CONCLUDING REMARKS

After negotiating a year of changes, with Adam returning and Karen on sabbatical, we face another year of changes in 2009-2010. Mark Tappan and Lyn Brown will both be on sabbatical, and we have hired Darla Linville (who received her Ph.D. from CUNY in May, 2009) as a faculty fellow to teach four courses in our program. Darla arrives this summer, and we are certain she will have a very successful year next year.

Adam Howard will serve as acting Chair of the program for 2009-2010, and while Adam will be new to this role at Colby, he is not new to higher education administration, and we have no doubt that he will also have a very successful (although busy) year in this role.

Finally, we undergo another Program Approval Review of our Professional Certification Program by the Maine State Board of Education next fall. Even though he is on sabbatical, Mark Tappan will be taking a lead role in coordinating this process.

Student interest in our program (including the Independent Major in Human Development) remains high. We are grateful for that, of course, but we need to make sure that we are not stretched too thin. Otherwise, students and faculty in the program will also continue their work with the Civic Engagement initiative, the Goldfarb Center, the Colby Cares About Kids program, America Reads/America Count, as well as the College's ongoing Diversity Initiative.

In conclusion, as always, we appreciate the support, assistance, and encouragement we have received from all members of the Colby community, particularly the Dean of Faculty's office.