

Document 1: Teaching Preparation in your Doctoral Program.

Jim Keenan, Director of Graduate Program for Theology at Boston College

WE supply to each of our (usually) 12 entering students in the Boston College Theology Department doctoral program, tuition remission for five years, plus a \$19,000 annual stipend. In return, we ask for no service to the university whatsoever during the first two years of study which are exclusively dedicated to coursework. In third year, when students are to do comprehensives and develop their thesis proposal, they are assigned a teaching assistantship for those professors teaching up to 2 sections of core courses or any advanced courses with more than 38 students. In their 4th year, the students, whose proposals must be filed by September 30th of their 4th year, do another teaching assistantship (with the same responsibilities as before) as they write their dissertation. In the fifth year, they are required to do a teaching fellowship, that is, one course that fulfills undergraduate's core requirements each semester; each course may have up to 38 students in the course. Like the teaching assistantship, the fellowship assignment of courses, takes into serious account, the student's particular requests.

Until recently teaching in the PhD program was understood significantly as service provided by PhD students to the university. Case in point: the fellowship program was run by the undergraduate program director who advised fellows whether their syllabuses were adequate; the teaching fellowship was not under the Grad program director's responsibilities.

However, Boston College developed in their learning center a state of the art teaching certification program for doctoral students just as I came on board as Program Director (September 2011). This program, Apprenticeship in College Teaching, provides teaching certification. Highlights of the programs requirements are outlined at the end of this document. I began to endorse vigorously this project

At the same time, I began upgrading the graduate program. Our greatest challenge was that each year we admitted twelve students into one of five areas: bible, ethics, systematics, church history, and comparative theology. The strength of the department is the focus of each area, but as a result, the entering PhD student learns of the department almost exclusively through her/his area and not the department as a whole.

Thus my first year I spent listening to student's needs and then listening collectively to them. Their needs were three-fold: to be better incorporated into the department; to learn professional skills for an academic theology vocation; and to develop an understanding of theological teaching.

This (second) year, I initiated a Professional Development seminar series as a response to the first two needs. (please see attached for this document).

As I was preparing this seminar for this year, in the Spring of last year, Dr. Meghan Sweeney came to me to tell me of the Teaching Initiative of Wabash. We then applied to develop a “Culture of Teaching Formation” at Boston College. In the next Document, I will report how we intend to move forward in light of that initiative to answer our third need.

Apprenticeship in College Teaching for Boston College PhD students

info can be found at:

<http://www.bc.edu/content/bc/libraries/help/tutoring/ACT.html>

Beginning in 2011, all graduate students are invited to participate in BC’s new Apprenticeship in College Teaching Program. The program coordinates and formalizes efforts that have long been under way in departments and in the university to prepare graduate students for teaching at Boston College and in their future careers. By combining these efforts, the Apprenticeship Program provides graduate students with a framework within which they can deliberately plan their development as teaching scholars. Students who complete the program will receive a letter from the Office of the Provost for inclusion in their teaching portfolios.

Students who choose to participate will file a plan of completion, including their

goals and a proposed timeline, with The Connors Family Learning Center. Since students' plans will differ depending on their departments, each department will have a liaison to help students choose the best ways to complete the program requirements, either through departmental or university resources. The program is very flexible and can be completed in one year or over the course of two or even three years.

Required components:

- Submit an online plan for completion to the CFLC.
- Attend a teaching orientation, to be held at the beginning of each semester.
- Attend five required workshops, plus two electives. The required workshops will be on Syllabus Design, Grading, Creating a Teaching Portfolio, Classroom Management and Conducting a Teaching Observation. The two electives can be chosen from a variety of topics. All workshops can be completed with departmental or CFLC programs.
- Write a course syllabus.
- Conduct and write up a teaching observation of a faculty member.
- Invite a faculty member to conduct and write up an observation of you teaching, in person and/or on videotape.
- Document your completion of all components in a teaching portfolio that includes a reflective statement of your teaching philosophy. All participants have the option of creating an electronic portfolio.

Benefits:

- Practical advice and information about college teaching, learning, college students and academic careers
- One-on-one guidance from faculty and the CFLC in developing your teaching skills.
- A credential to demonstrate your commitment to teaching.
- Help in developing an online portfolio, a very useful tool in the job search.

Many more details will be available by the end of the summer. If you have questions in the meantime, please contact Sue Barrett: barretsc@bc.edu or 617-552-0835

Example of Semester offerings in Teaching Apprenticeship

FALL 2012 TEACHING SEMINAR LUNCHEONS for Graduate Students

***All seminars are held in The Connors Family Learning Center,
2nd floor O'Neill Library, from 12 to 1:00. Lunch will be provided.***

RSVP to act.bostoncollege@gmail.com

Thursday, September 13th **CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT**

A practical discussion of how to make sure your
classroom policies help you reach your teaching goals.

Tuesday, September 18th **CLASSROOM TECHNOLOGY THAT ENHANCES THE
TEACHING AND LEARNING EXPERIENCE, INCLUDING
GETTING STARTED WITH BLACKBOARD VISTA**

Jeanne Po, Associate Director, Instructional Design and
eTeaching Services (IDeS)

Helen Healy, Manager of Instructional Technologies
(IDeS)

Wednesday, September 26th **PROMOTING ACADEMIC INTEGRITY IN YOUR CLASS**

Clare Dunsford, Associate Dean, College of Arts and
Sciences

Wednesday, October 10th **GRADING FAIRLY**

Using case studies, we will discuss the questions and situations that arise around grading.

Tuesday, October 23rd **TEACHING OBSERVATIONS**

Tools to help you get the most out of observing and being observed in the classroom.

Thursday, November 8th **TEACHING PORTFOLIOS**

How to create a teaching portfolio and write a statement of teaching philosophy.

Wednesday, November 28th **DESIGNING/REDESIGNING YOUR SYLLABUS**

Looking ahead to spring semester, this session will focus on elements of an effective syllabus.

Document 2: Summary of Findings from Teaching Initiative Work

James F. Keenan, Director of Graduate Program in Theology at Boston College

From September 28 to September 30, Dr. Meghan Sweeney and I hosted with Dr. Patricia Killen and Dr. Tom Pearson the Graduate Programs Teaching Initiative at Dover, MA. Ten Alumni from our program attended. The attached report by Meghan Sweeney was filed to us last week; we await the report from Killen and Wabash.

At this point, I want to mark the steps that I think we need to develop at BC regarding the development of a “Culture of Teaching Formation” for our Doctoral Students.

1. We need to make our faculty aware of teaching formation as integral to our doctoral candidate’s professional formation.
2. We need to put Teaching Assistantship and Teaching Fellowships under the responsibilities of the Graduate Program Director.
3. We need to articulate the teaching assistantship as not only a “pay back service” to the university, but also as having in its mission the teaching formation of the graduate student.
4. Toward that end, I will propose to our faculty that any professor seeking an assistant will need to allocate one class where the student teaches a full class under the supervision and evaluation of the professor of one class on the sabbatical AND that the student be allocated another class for teaching what her/his dissertation addresses.
5. We need to have some sections of next year’s professional development series dedicated to discussions on teacher formation and the vocation of the theologian (see report). For instance, we need two sessions on developing syllabuses for Teaching Fellows and at least two sessions on challenges and innovation in the classroom.
6. We need to require the Apprenticeship of College Teaching Program with its certification for each of our students.
7. We have begun a one day away seminar of exclusively faculty and doctoral students together each year: this year’s will be dedicated to teacher formation as a constitutive part of the doctoral program.