BEMIDJI STATE UNIVERSITY’S
Experiential Teaching Advisory Board
(Campus-based)

Governing Policy Handbook
Our Mission
BSU prepares teachers through inquisitive, involved and reflective practice. The conceptual framework outlining our program (seen on the left) sets a standard that is rigorous, exemplary and innovative. The curricular structure is research-based and organized around the Standards of Effective Practice.

Graduates are proficient, collaborative, technologically literate and environmentally aware teachers who work effectively in various settings with diverse learners.

Our Conceptual Framework
In order to achieve these aims, all of our programs adhere to an inquiry-based model that focuses on both theory and classroom application.

Our curriculum examines the educational theories of such scholars as Bloom, Dewey, Gardner, Vygotsky and Piaget as well as their application to teaching, as articulated by Danielson, Hammond-Darling, Maslow and Presky, among others. The Standards of Effective Practice serve as the outline for course articulations, so that we can accurately and effectively assess our students’ progress.

Embrace, Engage, Educate
Bemidji State University teacher candidates are reflective educators who can effectively identify their own strengths and weaknesses, and adapt accordingly. Through faculty modeling and clinical experiences, our teacher candidates see and understand the importance of collaboration, and practice it in the field. Understanding that change is a constant, our candidates embrace change, keeping up with existing and emerging technologies while remaining environmentally aware. Technologically proficient, environmentally conscious and skilled at collaboration, our teacher candidates are fully prepared to embrace diversity, engage communities and educate future generations.

21st Century Educators
In implementing the conceptual framework, we prepare teacher candidates who are proficient, collaborative, technologically literate, and environmentally aware.
**Proficiency**

We encourage critical thinking, reflection and problem solving so that our students can:

- display competence in their subject matter;
- understand the principles of learning and assessment;
- demonstrate the ability to model connections between philosophical foundations and best practices in the field; and
- engage in research and complex thinking.

As lifelong learners, Bemidji State University candidates demonstrate thoughtful analysis of the meaning and significance of their actions, decisions and results with regard to their work. In addition, candidates use a variety of techniques to question their procedures and consider alternatives for instruction and student growth. Bemidji State University candidates are able to recognize learning, motivational, and developmental variables in their instructional practice and relate those dimensions to their teaching practices. A cooperating teacher commented:

> [Candidate] demonstrated excellent knowledge of the mathematical concepts he was teaching. Students were always engaged in his class... I found every facet of my experience with [candidate] to be exceptional! From managing the classroom to creating an effective learning environment, he did an outstanding job. – Documentation from cooperating teacher, 2011

**Collaboration**

BSU graduates understand and value the personal and professional growth that can be achieved through collaborating with others. Neuman and King (2000) suggest that collaboration among professionals is key to meeting expectations placed on schools by society. By learning to work with colleagues, families and community members to share expertise and resources, teachers are better positioned to provide an appropriate and meaningful education to students of all backgrounds, abilities and needs. Our candidates are proficient in collaboration, as expressed in this report from a cooperating teacher:

> What I will miss most about [Candidate] is the collaboration we have had. We have collaboration time each week to work with our team teachers on best practices. We go over data and teaching strategies as we seek to find data driven solutions to identified weaknesses within our students. [Candidate] has been a strong force and contributor in these meetings. – Documentation from cooperating teacher, 2011
Technological Literacy

The integration of technology in education implies a shift in the role of the teacher toward that of being a “broker” of knowledge and/or resources for learning as outlined in the constructivist philosophy (Persichitte, Cafarella & Tharp, 1999). At BSU, technology is not an add-on but an integrated strategy in our curricula and courses. Our faculty are committed to teaching candidates best practices for using technology in preK-12 settings. BSU candidates:

- use educational technology in their own learning and apply their technological knowledge to their clinical field experiences;
- know how, when and why to use instructional and assistive technology tools and techniques that support teaching and learning;
- understand that technology contributes to the learning environment, serves as a resource to address the educational needs of diverse learners, and supports a constructivist approach to teaching and learning.

Classroom teachers often testify about our students’ proficiency in using technology, for example:

[Candidate] gave my fellow department members and me some great new ideas about how to incorporate technology into our daily lesson plans to enhance our students’ learning. – Documentation from cooperating teacher, 2010

Environmental Awareness

At BSU, we value the environment in part because the main campus is close to the natural world. But we also understand that environmental awareness is a world-view that extends beyond the natural environment and recognizes that all living things are interdependent upon one another for emotional and intellectual survival. We strive to instill in all of our graduates the importance of being and teaching others to be socially and environmentally conscious.

Environmental education cultivates critical thinking skills by:

- providing topics and problems that cut across the school curriculum and that enhance the integration of knowledge;
- providing real problems that can be studied or simulated; and
- providing topics and problems that can be adjusted to the developmental levels of students.

BSU candidates understand and take leadership responsibility for protecting the natural environment. They are prepared to integrate environmental content into appropriate curriculum for all levels of learners as they realize that the environment’s widespread appeal to students creates opportunities to nurture skills in areas such as language arts, math, science and social studies.
Experiential Teaching Program
(Campus-based)
Purpose Statements

The experiential teaching program at BSU is developed so that our students have ample experiential learning experiences and opportunities for collaboration and reflection before embarking on professional service.

As such the program, in consultation with the Experiential Teaching (ET) advisory board, aims to

- Co-construct mutually beneficial P-12 experiential teaching opportunities, by (2H, 3D)
  - Establishing mutually agreeable expectations for teaching candidate entry, preparation, and exit for experiential placements (AAQEP 3)
  - Ensuring that theory, practice, and the implementation of P-12 standards are linked in experiential placement opportunities (3F, AAQEP 1)
  - Engaging with partners to support high-needs schools and participating in efforts to reduce disparities in educational outcomes (AAQEP 4)
  - Co-selecting, preparing, evaluating, supporting, and retaining high-quality Host Teachers and Cooperating Teachers who demonstrate both a positive impact on candidate and P-12 student development (9E, AAQEP 3)
  - Designing experiential teaching placements of sufficient depth, breadth, diversity, coherence, and duration to ensure that candidates demonstrate not only an emergent positive impact on all students but also the dispositions necessary to the profession (3A), AAQEP 1)
  - Assuring that all candidates engage in culturally responsive educational practices with diverse populations, including students and families with a range of exceptionalities, and students representing a diversity of socioeconomic, linguistic, and cultural backgrounds (3C, AAQEP 2)

- Sustain the integrity of the experiential program by:
  - Preserving internal coherence across experiential and academic components of on-campus preparation
  - Aligning experiential teaching placements to the scope and content of the licensure sought; (3B)
  - Verifying that personnel who host teacher candidates hold a valid Minnesota license, or the equivalent and at least 3 years of teaching experience (3E)
  - Confirming that all faculty who supervise student teaching have advanced academic preparation and have at least one academic year of teaching experience aligned to the scope of the licensure programs they supervise (8I)

- Share responsibility for continuous improvement of candidate preparation with P-12 partners, including seeking to meet local and state educator workforce needs (9D, AAQEP 3 & 4)
Policy 1: Unity of Control
The Experiential Teaching Advisory Board functions with the principle of board holism, meaning that after board deliberations and consensus-based advisory are reached with regard to actions and policies, individual board members will conduct themselves in their interactions with stakeholders and community members in the spirit of holism by supporting those decisions.

See consensus-based decision making process of the board defined on page 5.

Policy 2: Board Job Products
The job of the Board is to consult the Experiential Teaching program toward its desired Purpose.

Consequently, Board Members are charged with being the sustainably productive link between the BSU Experiential Teaching Program and stakeholder districts, schools and communities.

As such, Board Members will work to:
- Communicate the Purpose of the Experiential Teaching program to colleagues
- Review results of formal and informal tools used to assess and prioritize the continuous improvement needs of partner districts, schools, teachers, and community members
- Adapt and amend the Purpose Statement, as well as other Board policies, as needs arise from partners and the BSU Professional Education department.
- Support the hosting of the Annual Meeting of the Experiential Teaching program
- Plan for Board orientation and training
**Policy 3: Board of Director Roles**

**Board Member’s Role**

Because of the importance of the Board’s role, board members must:

- commit to serving a minimum of a 2-year term
- attend meetings
- attend the annual retreat
- adhere to Policy 4: Code of Conduct for Board Members

If a board member cannot make this time commitment in good faith or misses 3 meetings in a row, the Board will review the situation and consider terminating that board member’s term.

**Helpful dispositions for the Experiential Teaching Advisory Board include:**

- an open mind
- ability to communicate with one another using group process methods and protocols
- willingness to contribute technical expertise, community knowledge, and skill set to Experiential Teaching program operations
- willingness to contribute to growth, development, and ongoing success of the Experiential Teaching program

Board members follow the governance policies of the Experiential Teaching Advisory Board and will be trained into their roles upon appointment.

Board members are obliged to prepare for meetings and to participate productively in the discussion, always within the boundaries established by the Board.

It is the primary responsibility of all Board members to educate themselves on the issues that come before them. Therefore, all Board members are expected to adequately prepare and educate themselves on issues that come up for discussion. To meet that end, Board members will be provided a packet no less than 3 days prior to the next ETAB meeting. A Board member must be present, physically or digitally, at the Board meeting in order to provide insight on an item.

**Director of Clinical Experience’s Role**

The job “product” of the Director with regard to the Experiential Teaching Advisory Board is the integrity of the Board’s process with its own rules. The Director is empowered to conduct Board meetings with all the commonly-accepted power of that position.

- Meeting discussion topics will include only those issues which clearly belong to the Advisory Board to discuss.
- Deliberation will be timely, fair, orderly, thorough, efficient, focused on topic, and limited to time.

The Director is the only person authorized to represent Board decisions to the Professional Education department and the wider University community. Meaning, Board Member’s interactions with the public must recognize the inability of any individual Board member to speak for the Board.
Policy 4: Code of Conduct

The Experiential Teaching Advisory Board expects ethical and businesslike conduct of itself and its members. This commitment includes proper use of authority and appropriate decorum in group and individual behavior when acting as Board Members.

The interests of the Experiential Teaching Advisory Board are nested in a complex regional system with various stakeholders and outcomes. As such, board members must represent unconflicted support of the actions the Board takes to further its Purpose. This accountability supersedes any conflicting loyalty such as that to advocacy and/or membership on other boards or staffs. It also supersedes the personal interest of any board member.

Board members must avoid any conflict of interest with respect to their responsibilities.

- There must be no self-dealing or any conduct of private business or personal services between board members, including the Director of Clinical Experiences, except as procedurally controlled to assure openness, competitive opportunity, and equal access to “inside” information.
- Board members must not use their positions to influence the organization for themselves, family members, or close associates.

Board members will always strive to avoid the appearance of conflict of interest. Each will sign a “Board Member Conflict of Interest Declaration” after appointment to the Board.

Board Members should alert the Board of an actual or perceived conflict of interest at the outset of discussion of an issue. The record should reflect that this notice was given.

- Where potential or perceived conflict of interest exists for a board member, it shall be recorded in the minutes for each issue.
- Said Board Members may participate in any discussion of the issue but shall refrain from voting.
- Said Board Members shall leave the room during voting, or the vote shall be taken by secret ballot.
- This all shall be recorded in the minutes.

Board members will respect confidentiality appropriate to sensitive issues and must continue to honor confidentiality after leaving Board service.

Board members will support the legitimacy and authority of Board decisions on any matter, regardless of their personal positions.

Any Board Member who does not follow the Code of Conduct Policy can be removed from the Board by a 2/3 majority vote of the remaining Board. If such a situation arises, said Board Member agrees to resign and not cause further disruption of the Experiential Teaching Advisory Board and governance.
Policy 5: Board Meetings

Board meetings are for the single task of getting the Board’s job done. Only issues within the Board’s Purpose shall consume Board time. Meetings shall be concluded with an evaluation on procedure and attention to all of the agenda items. Meetings will be open.

Whenever possible board insight and advice will be cultivated with consensus. Reaching consensus does not mean that there must always be unanimous, complete agreement on an issue. The following describes how we understand consensus with regard to board deliberations.

By using a consensus model instead of Robert’s Rules of Order, we seek …

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Not so much…</th>
<th>But …</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>majority rule</td>
<td>a convergence of the common sense of the total group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>unanimity</td>
<td>that which allows everyone to say yes and move forward</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fixed, final and unchangeable conclusion</td>
<td>working conclusion at a particular point in time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>settling for partial solutions from limited alternatives</td>
<td>designing effective solutions from expanded alternatives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>giving in to the most vocal individuals</td>
<td>eliciting the best wisdom of the whole group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the imposition of the strongest will or wills upon the group</td>
<td>the emergence of a collective will within the group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A legalistic contract which demands people’s compliance</td>
<td>a mutual covenant which elicits people’s commitment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a result of persistent advocacy for a particular position</td>
<td>proposals made, then offered up to the group.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>getting everyone to “buy in”</td>
<td>insuring everyone’s ownership</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a technique for deciding something</td>
<td>an overall culture within which decisions get made</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the result of managing the group process so as to arrive at anticipated outcomes</td>
<td>the result of facilitating the group process so as to allow for unanticipated outcomes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a process that leaves people irritated and exhausted by the struggle to reach agreement</td>
<td>a process that leaves people enlivened and motivated for action</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This table is adapted from the training manuals of the Technology of Participation®, a group process method that the Board uses to govern itself. For more information about ToP training see hue.life.

By infusing our deliberations with these consensus principles, we position ourselves to maximize the group wisdom on the board and, therefore, operate in a more cooperative, strengths-based manner.
Policy 6: Board Composition & Appointments

Purpose: To ensure fair and equal access for eligible candidates for the Board.

It is important to note that while BSU places student teachers statewide, the bulk of the work before the Experiential Teaching Advisory Board is focused on advising the scope of early and ongoing field experience placements for teacher candidates, which tend to occur primarily within a 75 mile radius of campus. So by *eligible* we mean board candidates who can demonstrate ability to fulfill the Code of Conduct and who work at a school district within a 75 mile radius of BSU’s Bemidji campus.

In order to provide a diverse range of insight into the continuous improvement of the Experiential Teaching program at Bemidji State University, the 19 board seats will be allocated through the following apportionment:

- (1) Dean of College of Education and Humanities, BSU
- (1) Director of Clinical Experiences, BSU
- (1) Professional Education Department Chair, BSU
- (4) BSU faculty members who instruct courses with field experience placements, including Professional Education faculty and other methods courses
- (2) Community stakeholders

Of the following school-based representatives, at least one seat needs to be held by a BSU graduate who has graduated from the campus-based program within the past 3 years.

  - (1) charter school representative
  - (1) private school representative (includes preschool representatives)
  - (2) representatives from each of the following geographical regions that represent a K-6 and 7-12 perspective when they partner with the Clinical Office, meaning these representatives will also have other roles in the Experiential Teaching Program (ex: Cooperating Teachers, University Supervisors, Host Administrators, etc):
    - Bemidji Area Schools (ISD#31)
    - Red Lake Area Schools (Red Lake#38, Kelliher#36, Northome School#363, Grand Rapids Area Schools#318, Blackduck #32, Clearbrook-Gonvick#2311, Red Lake County Central#2906)
    - Leech Lake Area Schools (Cass Lake-Bena#115, Deer River#317, Greenway#316, Northland Community #118, Laporte #306, WHA#113, Pine River-Backus#2174)
    - White Earth Area Schools (WinEMac#2609, Fosston#601, Bagley#162, Mahnomen#432, WOWE#435, Park Rapids#309, Nevis#308, Menahga#821, Sebeka#820)

1. The Board shall announce open board positions through the newsletter of the Clinical Experiences at the beginning of each spring semester.

2. Interested stakeholders who meet the requirements of Policy 4 will be required to:
   2.A. Attend at least one regularly scheduled board meeting and introduce him or herself as a potential board candidate.
   2.B. Meet with board members to learn more about the board’s role
   2.C. Complete an application to the board and sign the Board Code of Conduct.

3. Candidates who are appointed are introduced at the Annual Meeting of the Experiential Teaching Advisory Board

4. In the event that more candidates are interested than positions available, names will be drawn from a hat to seat board candidates for the 2 year term available.