

# Academic Programs



# Academic Programs

All graduate programs include three components: course work; supervised fieldwork/ advisement; and a culminating integrative project. There are four academic terms: Fall, Spring, Summer 1, and Summer 2.

## Course Work

Courses provide students with the opportunity to engage in readings, discussions, and experiences that address enduring and current aspects of education. The course work in all programs emphasizes human development and its variations; the historical, philosophical, and social foundations of education; and curriculum and inquiry. Through a variety of intellectual and experiential means, students acquire understanding of the role of education in promoting appreciation of human diversity. Course instructors challenge students through assignments, problem-solving tasks, and models of active learning.

Graduate courses are generally held during weekday evenings (Monday through Thursday) once a week, from 4:45 pm to 6:45 pm and from 7:00 pm to 9:00 pm. In the Summer 1 term, courses are generally held twice a week in the evening. In the Summer 2 term, courses are offered during the day as well as twice a week in the evening. Courses designed for the Museum Education, Museum Leadership, and summer-residency master's programs follow a different timetable.

## Supervised Fieldwork/ Advisement

One component of a Bank Street education, unique to this College, is supervised fieldwork/ advisement (SFW/A), a multifaceted process that enables students to integrate the study of theory with practice. This includes work as a student teacher, an assistant teacher, a head teacher, an educational leader, a museum intern, or a child life specialist.

During the period of supervised fieldwork/ advisement in most programs, the advisor visits the student in fieldwork settings for half days at least once a month. If the student is a student teacher or assistant teacher, advisors also work closely with the cooperating classroom teacher. The advisor and student also meet twice monthly for in-depth consultations.

In addition to meeting with each student individually, the advisor meets with his or her small group of advisees as a whole weekly. This "conference group" provides a setting in which students collaborate with fellow learners as they explore the challenging issues that face them as educators in their field placements. Throughout this crucial time of supervision, an advisor supports and encourages each student to develop his or her professional capacity. Through individual and group meetings, students learn more about their practice while being supported by others, and they gain perspective and reflective insight into their own practice as teachers or leaders. They learn to apply material from course work to their practice and to reflect on this process. Students are expected to participate

as responsible professionals in all facets of supervised fieldwork/ advisement.

Some programs, including most Educational Leadership programs and some Special Education programs, have a different structure for supervised fieldwork/ advisement. See individual program listings for the description of their respective supervised fieldwork/ advisement structures.

## Supervised Fieldwork/Advisement Options for Students in General, Special, and/or Dual Language/ Bilingual Programs

Graduate students in general education, special and general education, or dual language/bilingual education programs may choose to do supervised fieldwork/ advisement as student teachers, assistant teachers, or head teachers. In addition to the supervised fieldwork/ advisement semester(s), many programs leading to state certification require additional supervised experiences during the summer terms or during the school year. See individual program descriptions for details. An explanation of the differences among the fieldwork options follows.

### Student Teachers

Student teachers are typically placed in two to four different public and independent school sites over the course of the supervised fieldwork/ advisement year. Students, advisors, and the program director discuss placements, and decisions are made based on the availability of placements, with consideration for the student's professional needs and interests. Typically, the student-teaching schedule requires three full days per week (unpaid); (however, in some rare cases other scheduling arrangements equivalent to three full days are made).

### Assistant Teachers

Assistant teachers are typically employed by a school five days a week and are responsible for obtaining their own positions, which must be approved by the Bank Street program director as a supervised fieldwork setting appropriate to the student's program. Since the assistant teacher's own classroom is the training site during supervised fieldwork, and the faculty advisor will be making regular visits, the school principal/director must approve of the assistant teacher's participation in the program. The principal/director also needs to be aware that the assistant teacher's instructional approaches and curriculum in the class may change as the result of the advisement process. The supervised fieldwork/ advisement process entails collaboration among the graduate faculty advisor, assistant teacher, and head teacher. During the fieldwork/ advisement year or over the following summer, assistants in General Education programs expand their supervised experiences to include other age groups and diverse student populations and school environments by taking EDUC 991, a one-credit course.

## Head Teachers

Individuals who are head teachers in public or independent schools may be supervised in their own classrooms upon the Graduate School's approval of the school site or center. Since the teacher's own classroom is the training site during supervised fieldwork, and the faculty advisor will be making regular visits, the school principal/director must approve of the teacher's participation in the program. The principal/director also needs to be aware that the teacher's instructional approaches and curriculum in the class may change as the result of the advisement process. The faculty advisor and the program director communicate with the school administration as appropriate. Where necessary, head teachers in General Education programs expand their supervised experiences to include other age groups and diverse student populations and school environments by taking EDUC 991, a one-credit course, over the following summer.

## Integrative Master's Project

Bank Street degree programs require students to complete an Integrative Master's Project (IMP). As the culminating component of a student's degree requirements, it is expected to be a significant, academically rigorous body of work that integrates many facets of the student's experiences at Bank Street and in the field and applies theoretical knowledge to students' current and future work as educators and educational leaders. Students in all the General Teacher Education programs and Special and Dual Language/Bilingual Teacher Education programs, the Child Life program, the Studies in Education program, and some Educational Leadership programs choose one of the options described briefly below. Students are encouraged to discuss their choices with their advisors early in their studies at Bank Street. A full description of each IMP option is in *A Guide to the Integrative Master's Project*, available in the Registrar's Office, the Graduate Suite, and the Library. A pdf version can be accessed on [www.bankstreet.edu](http://www.bankstreet.edu).

**Independent Study:** This is a student-initiated project or formal study guided by a faculty mentor. The schedule for this option varies but students generally work on it over two semesters. A Commence Form signed by a student's advisor or program director and faculty mentor is required for

registration, which can occur during the registration period for any term.

**Portfolio:** Students write reflective essays on artifacts (documents, student papers, videos, objects, etc.) from their professional and academic experiences, organize and present those artifacts thematically, and frame them with introductory and concluding essays. Individual mentoring and monthly small peer-group meetings take place at Bank Street throughout the year. Students present their portfolios to faculty, peers, and families the evening before graduation. (Application due preceding June 30th.)

**Mentored Directed Essay:** Students who register for this option will be assigned a mentor by program faculty and will meet with their mentor in person or via phone/email four times during the semester. The completed essay will be read by the mentor. Directed Essay questions for each program are posted online. Available Fall, Spring, and combined Summer 1 and 2 semesters. Students register online or in person during the registration period for each semester.

**Site-Based Inquiry and Collaborative Student-Faculty Inquiry:** In both options, a faculty mentor will work with a group of 4–6 students, meeting four times during a semester to define and carry out a small-scale site-based research study. Students electing to do a Site-Based Inquiry will define the focus of their individual inquiry. For the Collaborative Student-Faculty Inquiry, the faculty mentor chooses the group topic within which students identify a specific area of focus. Students present their projects in January (Fall semester) or before graduation (Spring semester). Faculty mentors and meeting schedules for the two inquiry options as well as specific topics for the Collaborative Student-Faculty Inquiry will be posted before registration begins each semester. Available Fall and Spring semesters only.

For students in selected Educational Leadership programs, the Leadership Professional Seminar or a program-specific portfolio is the culminating activity. Because of culminating work at Hunter, students in the Infancy Dual Degree program with Hunter College School of Social Work are exempt from the Integrative Master's Project requirement.