

TESTIMONIES

Bowdoin College, Maine, USA

Report from Jennifer J., teaching fellow at Bowdoin for the 2008-2009 academic year

I was the Teaching Fellow in French for Bowdoin College last year and it was an outstanding experience. It is a unique opportunity to gain some insight in the American way of life, and particularly into student life.

The actual job consists in giving classes to small groups (varying between 4 and 8 students). These classes are exclusively oral and are meant to teach them to express themselves in everyday French, and to complement –as far as oral skills and vocabulary are concerned- the classes they have with their regular professors. The Teaching Fellow is also required to help the French department organize events (I accompanied a group of students to Quebec with a Professor for instance) and to participate in projects related to French classes. The Teaching Fellow sometimes help students individually if asked to. The number of hours of classes per week is compatible with another activity; for example I got my master degree while at Bowdoin.

The stipend is about 500 dollars per month, but the housing (including water, electricity and heating) and food are provided. The only thing the Teaching Fellow has to pay for is the laundry. For me, the stipend was sufficient to allow me to travel to a lot of places all around the United States and also to come back to France for Christmas.

The housing consists of an apartment close to the campus (less than a two-minute walk) sometimes shared with another Teaching Fellow. The apartment has an equipped kitchen, one or two bedrooms (depending on if there is someone else or not), a living room and of course a bathroom.

The Teaching Fellows are allowed to attend two classes among a huge variety of subjects (languages at all levels, scientific subjects as well as literary ones, artistic ones are also available). The assistant can also take part in all the activities organized on campus.

The university itself is beautiful. Located in Maine, the surroundings are wonderful, the ocean is nearby and the village in which the university is located is pretty and provides everything one could need.

The students at Bowdoin are cheerful, eager to meet foreign students and very friendly. It is the perfect opportunity to discover another culture and improve one's English tremendously.