



S O M A

Student Handbook



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WELCOME

The BMC certification program, which SOMA offered in France is licensed by Bonnie Bainbridge Cohen and the School for Body-Mind Centering in the US. We follow the official curriculum, which was developed by Bonnie and the staff at the school, especially Myra Avedon.

SOMA is dedicated to educational standards of professional ethics in the training of educators, practitioners and teachers. Our programs and courses present detailed and specific approaches to the personal embodiment of our cells, our body systems and our developmental patterns. The principles and techniques learned in our courses can be used for personal development and for professional enhancement.

The study of Body-Mind Centering is a creative process in which we learn to meet and recognize ourselves and others through the exploration of embodiment. Each person is both the student and the subject matter. Principles and techniques are taught in the context of self-discovery and openness. We learn to engage ourselves and others non-judgementally starting at the place where we are and the place where others are. In this way we seek to find the ease that underlies transformation.

For over thirty years, BMC practitioners and teachers have been dedicated to sharing this dynamic approach to embodiment studies with the world. People from more than twenty-five countries have attended our classes, workshops and trainings and there are certified practitioners on four continents.

FACULTY

The individuals on our teaching staff are graduates of both the BMC Practitioner and Teacher Certification Programs and have received advanced training in the teaching of Body-Mind Centering to groups. They have many years experience teaching BMC as well as having expertise in other fields. The rich spectrum of their teaching styles is grounded in their personal embodiment and application of the work.

ACADEMIC LIFE

The Teaching/Learning Environment

There are written study guides and notebooks for each course which were created to assist students in establishing an ongoing dialogue for their own experimentation and study. While the class material will be taken from these guides, due to the vastness and exploratory nature of this work, only a small portion of the guides will be addressed in the classes. The basic principles and techniques will be clarified within the context of the whole program but not all of the specific details of the material will be covered. Supplemental material may also be added. The embodiment of the different body systems and of developmental principles will be accessed through movement, breathing, touch, voice, somatizations, discussion and other methods. Sometimes the emphasis will be on practice; other times the emphasis will be on theory.

All of the BMC material is multilayered and interwoven. For example, in the course on the Skeletal System, while there may be only one class devoted to a specific joint, we will explore that joint in other contexts throughout our longer programs, such as, through the study of ligaments and muscles and through developmental reflexes and movement. Material from other courses is interwoven in a similar way through our core programs. In each class, the teachers will focus on key elements of the aspect of the material being studied that will not be covered elsewhere, but may be referred to in other classes.

Because each person has a unique style of learning, it is important to become aware of your own personal preferences and to be open to learning from styles different from your own. At times the material will be presented from an overall perspective; at other times the focus will be on details. Our intent is not to develop a particular style of educator, practitioner or teacher, but to help each person manifest more fully who they are and to approach the learning/teaching environment from their own nature, while simultaneously accepting others whose strengths are different from one's own. Because of this, our faculty is diverse, each representing distinct approaches to embodiment and learning/teaching. If a student is not able to connect with the material or a teacher's style of teaching,

different approaches to perceiving and acting may be part of the problem. If this occurs, please seek assistance.

Continued Self-Study throughout the Year

Students are expected to continue their exploration of the material throughout the year through self-study. During each course a large amount of information is presented. Embodiment is guided in the classes but in-depth experience takes place over time in the process of one's explorations outside the class structure, including the time at home as you work with the material on your own, apply it with others, and let the experience from your class time deepen and grow.

Academic Requirements

A student must maintain a passing grade in all courses, satisfactorily complete all homework and complementary studies in order to graduate. Final grades are given on a pass/fail basis. Courses are evaluated on attendance, class participation, and demonstration of competency.

Satisfactory Participation and Performance in Class

Students are expected to come to class prepared and to be physically present and actively engaged in the classroom dynamics. This means contributing to discussions, partnered work, feedback during practice sessions, and experiential exercises.

Students are expected to take care of learning needs by seeking additional explanations and asking questions and/or seeking help from teachers and/or assistants. Instructors will be supporting and observing students in class to assure that students are assimilating the material and interacting well with other students and staff. If an instructor feels that a student is not demonstrating satisfactory participation in class, the instructor will speak with the student in an effort to mutually address both of their concerns. If the student continues having difficulty, the instructor will bring the concerns to the attention of the Program Coordinator and fill out a written report. Whatever issues or agreements the instructor and student discuss will be listed on the report, giving the student guidelines for correcting any problem(s).

The Program Coordinator, at the request of instructor, may require a student do additional work, such as a tutorial. If the problem persists or if there is disagreement between the student and the instructor, then a conference will be arranged with the Program Coordinator to further discuss the matter.

Attendance

Teachers take attendance in classes. Students must be present for at least 90% of required classes in any course in order to receive credit for that course. All missed classes must be made up. Students are responsible for keeping track of and fulfilling their attendance requirements and for making up and, if necessary, reporting classes missed.

Attendance is recorded at the beginning of class. All classes start promptly; any student arriving after the start of class is considered tardy. Three tardy arrivals will equal one absence. A student who misses a class is responsible for the material and is expected to come prepared for the next class.

If you miss up to 10% of required classes

You may make up these classes (up to the 10% limit) informally, by working with the material taught in class with other students along with reviewing the related material in the notebooks. If you wish, you may also make up these classes in individual sessions with a certified practitioner or teacher. You are responsible for making arrangements for these sessions and for paying the teacher or practitioner for the session. You do not need to turn in any report for these make-ups with the exception of the Review and Evaluation class at the end of a course. See below for make-up instruction for this class.

If you miss more than 10% of required classes

You must make up these classes in a tutorial session with a practitioner or teacher (preferably

a teacher or TA in your program since they are familiar with the most up-to-date BMC material). You are responsible for making arrangements for your own tutorials and for paying the teacher or practitioner for the session. You should do at least a 30 minute session for up to 2 hours of missed class time.

These make-up tutorials must be completed and a Missed Class Make-up Report turned in before the end of the course in order to receive a passing grade and get credit for the course. Please make two copies of completed forms B one for your own records and one to turn in to the School. Two report forms are in your notebook.

If you miss the Review and Evaluation class at the end of a course, you must do-a make-up and turn in a report. Because this class is an evaluation class, you must make it up as a tutorial with a current faculty member.

You can not miss more than 20% of required classes and still receive credit for the course. If you miss more than this maximum number of classes, you will need to repeat the course.

If a student is repeatedly over the allowed absences in more than one course and is having to perform excessive tutorials and other make-up work, the student will be put on academic probation and could be dismissed from the program.

Tardiness

Students are expected arrive to class on time. Late arrival to class will be noted on the daily attendance sheets. Late time will accumulate as missed class time. Late time will be recorded on the quarter hour by every 15 minute segment of time missed. **Three 15-minute segments of missed class time or three tardies will count as one two hour missed class.**

Incompletes

Failure to fulfill minimum requirements by the end of a course will result in an Incomplete. It is the responsibility of the student to determine what make-up work is necessary to fulfill the requirements of that course by talking with the Program Coordinator. All make-up work must be completed within four weeks after the end of a class. Failure to do so will result in failing the course. Any tutorials and additional faculty time will be at the student=s expense.

Failure

A student who fails a course must re-take it. This may delay the student=s continuing in the program since passing some courses may be necessary for the next level of study.

Probation

Students are expected to keep up with homework, course work and attendance. A student having difficulty keeping up or participating in a course or program is responsible for informing the Program Coordinator of the difficulty in order to seek any necessary guidance.

If the Program Coordinator recognizes that a student is not fulfilling minimum requirements and the student has not come to speak with the coordinator, the Program Coordinator will bring it to the student=s attention. The Coordinator and student will meet to discuss how the student may correct the problem and any needs the student may have in getting assistance to move forward.

A student who is repeatedly having difficulty could be put on academic probation. If an academic or behavioral problem is not resolved the student could be dismissed from the program.

A student will be placed on academic or administrative probation under the following circumstances:

Academic Probation

1. If instructors, the Program Coordinator and the Program Director determine a student is not

- meeting course requirements.
2. If a student is absent or tardy excessively.
 3. If a student abuses the tutorial system to make up for missing class beyond 10% absence policy.
 4. If a student has been given an academic warning and does not respond appropriately within the specified time.

Disciplinary Probation

5. If a student exhibits behavior that is unethical, unprofessional, or that seriously interferes with the educational process.
6. If a student has been given a disciplinary warning and does not respond appropriately within the specified time.

Administrative Probation

1. If a student fails to fulfill financial agreements.

Probationary Procedure

1. Faculty will notify the Program Coordinator of academic or behavioral problems. The Program Coordinator will notify the Program Director as necessary. Financial probation is handled by the Administrative Director. A conference is scheduled with the student, the appropriate faculty, coordinators and/or directors to identify the requirements that must be fulfilled in order for the student to continue in the program. The requirements of probation will be given to the student in writing and put on file in the student's records
2. Once requirements are met, faculty or the Program Coordinator will notify the Program Director and the student will be taken off probation.
3. The lack of satisfactory progress during this probationary period may result in failing the course and/or academic or financial suspension and could lead to dismissal from the program.
4. The Program Coordinator will outline in writing specific requirements and specific deadlines for returning to a student in good standing.

Dismissal

For Academic or Disciplinary Reasons

A student who does not succeed in being reinstated from academic or disciplinary probation may be dismissed from the School. This student would have a review of status with the Program Coordinator and/or Program Director before being dismissed. A student could be dismissed immediately from the School without being put on probation for illegal, unethical or disruptive behavior.

For Financial Reasons

A student may be dismissed for failing to meet their financial obligations to the School.

Withdrawal

A student who cannot complete a course, must notify the office in writing. The student will be withdrawn from the course and will not receive credit. See the Financial

Changing Programs

A student may transfer to another program licensed by Bonnie Bainbridge Cohen if all prerequisites and requirements have been met. A written request for transfer must be submitted to the School administrative office.

Repeating a Course

Students who have successfully completed a course and want to re-take it for review purposes will receive a 50% discount on tuition for that course. Openings are on a space available basis.

Students who have failed or have withdrawn or been dismissed from a course and want to enroll in that course again will be charged the full tuition for that course.

Communication / Grievance Procedure

Honest and direct communication is at the heart of successful relationships. This is true personally and professionally. Both one-to-one and as part of a community, each person is responsible for their own communication. Students are encouraged to speak with peers directly if they have an issue to clear up with them. Issues which cannot be resolved and effect the learning environment, may come to the attention of the Program Coordinator for discussion. If this avenue produces unsatisfactory results, the Program Director may be called upon.

All students have a right to prompt and impartial consideration of complaints. In the event of a grievance with faculty, staff or administrative personnel, the grievance procedure is:

First, students are directed to pursue grievances with the person with whom they have a complaint. Then, if a problem cannot be resolved, the student should direct the grievance to the Program Coordinator. In the event that a grievance is with a Program Coordinator, it should be directed to the Program Director.

Confidentiality

Student educational records maintained by the administrative office include: application form, enrollment agreement, attendance records, grade reports, tracking forms, re-enrollment and a transcript. All student records remain confidential. A signed release is required of the student to permit access to his or her file by any person other than School administrative and teaching staff.

Visitor Policy

Visitors have always been an integral part of the certification program. Some of the people that visit are family or friends of current participants and they are able to get more insight into the nature of the process students are immersed in and in doing so find ways to better support them. Some visitors have backgrounds and interests similar to yours and are seriously interested in BMC; some of them may become students in future programs and some of them may become clients of program graduates. Hopefully, most or all of them leave with a greater respect for BMC and help carry this feeling out to the world.

Participants have priority over visitors. Considerations of space, energy and the nature of the class modulate the visitor policy. The program is not open to visitors on the first and last days of a course.

All visiting is on a space available basis. Visitors may visit up to one day of class during the course. Due to space considerations, visitors may observe class from the side of the room. We ask that they not participate in movement explorations or hands-on work unless invited to do so by the teacher and that they not take up class time with questions.

If someone is visiting as a guest of one of the students, that student is responsible for helping the visitor keep to these policies.

The following classes are open to visitors:

The following classes are not open to visitors:

Study Groups, Partnering Labs, or Community Sharing and Closure

Audio Taping Policy

Students attending the program may make audio tapes for their personal use only. These tapes may be copied for other students currently attending the program. Because these classes are taught within the context of the personal and group experiences of the program, copies of tapes may

not be made for anyone not currently a student in that course.

Video taping is not permitted.

Standards of Conduct

We offers courses at a professional level. Students are expected to observe their personal conduct and to act responsibly and cooperatively with peers, faculty, staff and administration. This includes honoring diversity, differences and the challenges of personal interactions.

Students are expected to conduct themselves in a manner that is conducive to the educational process. Students whose behavior is determined by the Program Director to be disruptive to the educational process may be subject to probation or dismissal.

Consensual Sexual Relations

It is the policy and intent to establish and maintain an environment that is conducive to its educational mission. The relationships between staff members, who are responsible for maintaining a supportive learning environment, and students are crucial to the learning process. Consensual sexual relations can add an additional element to the teaching-learning function, which could inhibit the learning environment for the student involved as well as for other students in the program. This is particularly true when either party is in a position to evaluate the other's academic or professional performance or to exercise judgment in the application of policy or procedure.

Therefore, the administration requires both staff and students to respectfully maintain educational roles and boundaries and to refrain from entering into consensual sexual relationships during a course of study. The School considers it a potential breach of professional ethics if a faculty member, assistant, administrator, or staff member initiates or enters into such a relationship with a student during a course. It is important for staff and students to remain mindful of themselves and maintain clarity in relationship to those around them. **FINANCIAL INFORMATION**

Payment Deadlines and Late Fees

Full payment for each course is due two weeks before the beginning of that course.

Financial Planning

Financial planning is important in undertaking an educational program and in succeeding in the professional world. In the past, students have financed the program through current earnings, savings, gifts and loans from family and friends, personal loans from banks or other financial institutions. Students have also, through their own initiative, gained grants from private, public and governmental organizations.

Financial Assistance

There is currently no financial assistance available through SOMA. Some students in the past have been partially or fully funded through government or private grants or vocational training programs. Students planning on funding through such agencies must have written confirmation of funding two months prior to the start of the courses or program they will be attending.

Tuition Payments

Early registration for certification courses is two months prior to be start of the course. The balance is due in full two weeks prior to the first day of class. A student will not be allowed to attend class until the full balance is paid. Students missing classes due to nonpayment of tuition, will be expected to arrange make-up tutorials at their own expense. Failure to do so will result in dismissal.

Students can direct questions to the Program Director and/or Administrative Director.

Books

The estimated cost for required books over the course of the four-year program is approximately 300 € with about 150 € of that falling in the first year.

The book, Sensing, Feeling and Action, by Bonnie Bainbridge Cohen is required reading in all programs and we recommend that students read it to get a general background before attending.

Other Study-Related Costs

Individual sessions with a Certified Practitioner or Teacher of Body-Mind Centering are required. The number of sessions depends on the program and the cost per session varies with individual practitioner's fees. Approximately five hours of sessions are required in the Somatic Movement Education program and approximately ten hours in the Body-Mind Centering⁷ Practitioner/Somatic Movement Therapy program.

Tutorials

Tutorials are required when more than 10% of the classes in a given course have been missed. Tutorials are encouraged and at times required if students need additional time and/or clarity on specific material.

If an instructor determines a tutorial is necessary due to poor performance in class, the student will be given written notification of what material needs to be covered, what student preparation is needed, a date and time and a time limit for completion. Tutorials are done at the student's expense.

Upon satisfactory completion of a tutorial, the instructor or assistant will note this in writing for the student's records. Students who come unprepared or who do not satisfactorily complete the tutorial may be required to do another and risk academic probation.

Suggested rates for tutorials with the School staff are as follows:

1 student	30.00€/ 1/2 hour
1 or more students	60.00€/hour

Personal Sessions with a Certified Practitioner or Teacher

Personal Sessions are subject to the individual rates set by the Certified Practitioner or Teacher

INFORMATION FOR ATTENDING COURSES

Safety in Class

Students should not engage in any movements or activities that put them at risk for injury or re-injury. We cannot determine from the outside what movements, activities or situations might put you at risk. The responsibility for deciding this rests with you. Your safety comes first. We expect you to be extremely conservative regarding safety in deciding whether to place yourself in a situation or participate in an activity or exercise.

Classroom Environment

Students are expected to maintain a clean and orderly space in the classroom to support the learning environment for all students. This means: removing shoes before entering the classroom; using only securely covered containers for water, not eating food or chewing gum in class; helping put away equipment, chairs and cushions at the end of class. Specific guidelines for the use of studio space may vary depending on the facility being use for each course. However, the following are some

general rules that should be followed:

1. Food / Drink. Absolutely no food of any kind or chewing gum is allowed in the classroom. However, spill-resistant water bottles are allowed.
2. Personal belongings. After class is over, students should remove books, notebooks, papers and other personal belongings from the classroom.
3. Shoes. No street shoes in the classrooms.
4. Since time is spent on the floor, students may want to bring a blanket or exercise mat.

Dress

It is recommended that students dress in layers to facilitate the changes of temperature due to either the air conditioning on one hand, or movement activities on the other.

Personal Hygiene

Our courses and workshops include movement and touch. Working in close contact with others requires that students pay careful attention to personal hygiene: overall body and hair cleanliness, breath, and nails.

Sensitivity to Fragrances

Many people have sensitivities or allergies to chemicals and fragrances. These can range from mild to severe. Please do not wear perfume, hair spray, styling gel, cologne, scented body oils, aftershave or similar products during classes.

General Maintenance

Student cooperation is necessary to keep classrooms in reasonable order, especially in the evenings.

COMMUNITY ENVIRONMENT

It is everyone's responsibility to create a supportive environment for learning, studying, relaxing and eating. We ask each student to interact with the buildings, grounds and equipment with respect and consideration.

Animals

No animals are allowed in the classroom.

Children

Children are allowed in the classroom as long as they are quiet and non-disruptive. If a child creates a disturbance, the parent is responsible for removing the child from the space.