The University of Memphis
College of Education
Conceptual Framework

College of Education

Conceptual Framework

Preparing Educational Leaders

The conceptual framework of the University of Memphis College of Education consists of its vision, mission, norms, philosophical commitments, and high expectations for candidate performance. It ensures that we are engaged with our community, relevant to our stakeholders and disciplines, and leading our profession.

The College’s vision, mission, norms, and philosophical commitments describe fundamental concepts guiding our work and our relationships. Measurable outcomes for professional educators are represented by the “pillars” of effective practice displayed on our conceptual framework graphic, as well as by diversity and dispositional standards and expectations.

Vision

The vision of the College of Education is to be an innovative national leader in preparing effective urban, suburban and rural professionals.

We envision a College with faculty who improve the intellectual lives of students, conduct innovative research, and create an academic environment recognized nationally and internationally for excellence in teaching, research, and service.

Quality teaching is our paramount concern. We seek to enhance all of our programs: undergraduate, graduate, and professional studies. Therefore, our instructional activities must be systematically improved to support the development of faculty, staff, and students. Quality instruction occurs in myriad ways (Biggs, 2001; Gardner, 1983; Sternberg, 1985), and our innovations will be shared through research, and participation in the professional dialog that occurs within and among academic disciplines.

The college fosters relationships that enhance our mission. Partnerships make available the
services that we are best able to provide. Our creativity serves the needs of Metropolitan Memphis, and the national and international communities. Programs that meet these needs must be created and sustained to help the college achieve its goals of excellence in teaching endeavors, research efforts, and service activities (Dobozy 2012; Knight, Tait & Mantz Yorke, 2006; Moran, Kornhaber & Gardner, 2004; Arvizu, 1996; Ross & Regan, 1993).

The college approaches its research mission in an evolutionary way, providing structures and opportunities for individual development. Scholarship is important if the college is to respond to the needs of the communities. A strong, college-wide research agenda allows all faculty members the opportunity to engage in this fundamental academic endeavor.

Mission

The mission of the College of Education is to provide high-quality education for undergraduate and graduate students, to conduct meaningful research designed to illuminate and solve problems, and to use our expertise to serve our community.

The College of Education ensures that we are recognized as among the foremost metropolitan universities in America by living this mission. We have responded to the opportunity of being located in an urban environment by unifying teaching, research, and service in a way that contributes to the betterment of Memphis, the Mid-South region and beyond (Welsh, Glenna, Lacy & Biscotti, 2008; Mueller, 2006; Banks, 2003). Strong partnerships created across all of West Tennessee allow for delivery of coursework in various locations. Online and hybrid course delivery eliminates geographic boundaries. Consistent with the mission of the university, we assert that excellence in teaching all students is our central responsibility. The academic environment of the college extends beyond campus boundaries to encompass the entire community (Duffield, Olson & Kerman, 2013; Epstein & Sanders, 2006; Eisler, 2000). Programs across the college are enhanced through exposure to intellectual diversity among the student body, faculty, staff, and administration (Schneider, 2012; Clark, 2011; Horowitz, 2004; Zimpher & Howey, 2005).

Central to its role in a research university, the college develops, integrates, disseminates, and applies knowledge. Faculty cultivate partnerships with undergraduate and graduate students to promote engaged scholarship. The faculty engages in basic and applied research and creative activities (Grossman & McDonald, 2008; Hazelnorn, 2008; Wittrock, 1986; Wang, Haertel, & Walberg, 1993). The college’s resources across West Tennessee provide a rich opportunity for research and creative scholarship, and opportunities to share that scholarship for the intellectual development of the region (Warren & Peel, 2011; Warren, Noftle, Ganley, & Quintanar, 2011; Ginsberg & Rhodes, 2003; Wong, 1998). The College of Education strives to serve all communities in the Memphis region.
Commitments

As represented by the conceptual framework graphic shown earlier, three philosophical commitments undergird the College of Education efforts for preparing educators to serve in P-12 schools.

Commitment to Diverse Communities
All College of Educations’ programs are built on the foundation of a commitment to diverse communities. We are committed to preparing effective professionals who understand and value diversity, and who act proactively in all relationships.

The University of Memphis (U of M) is first and foremost a large urban university with a strong and deep commitment to the community where it is located. Like many modern urban centers, Memphis is characterized by racial, ethnic, linguistic, and economic diversity. The University of Memphis and the College of Education have a long-standing history of preparing graduates for work in urban, suburban and rural settings, and of involvement in working with community agencies to solve problems in our urban, suburban and rural communities (Darling-Hammond, 2010; Darling-Hammond, 2009; Darling-Hammond & Bransford, 2005). With the recent acquisition of the Lambuth Campus in Jackson, TN, The College of Education has made a commitment to the rural communities. The focus toward all of the regions in West Tennessee furthers the commitment for diversity. The College of Education is committed to preparing effective professionals who understand and value diversity, and who act proactively in all relationships (Locks, Hurtado, Bowman & Oseguera, 2008; Ward, 2006; Banks et al., 2005; Gollnick & Chinn, 2006). A major consideration of the College of Education is:

…to create equal educational opportunities for students from diverse racial, ethnic, social-class, and cultural groups; to help all students to acquire the knowledge, attitudes, and skills needed to function effectively in a pluralistic democratic society and to interact, negotiate, and communicate with peoples from diverse groups in order to create a civic and moral community that works for the common good (Brooks et al. 2012; Crouch, 2008; Hurtado, 2007; Banks & Banks, 1995, p. xi).

The U of M is classified as a Carnegie Doctoral/Research University-Extensive. As such, College of Education faculty and students interact with a broad array of professional communities at state, regional, national and international levels. Commitment to preparing professionals who will become involved in meeting needs of their stakeholder communities is a hallmark of college programs. The College of Education and its programs are committed to helping candidates develop what (Boland, 2010; Stairs, 2010; Musil, 2005) terms, “the civic work of diversity” (p. 1); the disposition to become involved actively with diverse groups in the profession.

Commitment to Effective Practice
All programs are designed using principles of effective practice. We are committed to preparing candidates with the knowledge, skills, and dispositions necessary to begin practice as competent
professionals who meet and exceed the requirements for successful work in their chosen fields.

Professionals who engage in on-going learning and professional development define effective practice (McKee, John, Ritchie & Tew, 2013; McKee & Tew, 2013; Dobozy, 2012; Cooper, 1999). All College of Educations’ programs are committed to meeting the highest professional standards established by their respective fields. Teacher candidates respond to high expectations established by the College of Education. New teacher preparation reforms include a one-year residency program, implementation of edTPA, and positive teacher evaluations. Further, all programs are committed to preparing candidates with the knowledge, skills, and dispositions necessary to begin practice as competent professionals who meet and exceed the requirements for successful work in their chosen fields (Timperley & Alton-Lee, 2008; Feiman-Nemser, 2001). In particular, the College of Educations’ commitment to effective professional practice includes the ability to communicate ideas and information effectively in written, symbolic, and oral forms (Ball, Thames & Phelps, 2008; Shulman, 1987). Effective practice includes acting ethically and in accordance with professional standards (Moore, 2006; Fullan, 2001; Sirotnik, 1990). The National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education defines this disposition of practice as:

The values, commitments and professional ethics that influence behaviors toward students, families, colleagues, and communities and affect student learning, motivation, and development as well as the educator’s own professional growth. Dispositions are guided by beliefs and attitudes related to values such as caring, fairness, honesty, responsibility, and social justice. (Brennan & Naidoo, 2008; Enfeld & Collins, 2008; NCATE, 2002).

Commitment to Leadership

The College of Education and its programs are committed to preparing effective professionals who take leadership roles in their respective fields (Rutherford, 2006; Katzenmeyer & Moller, 1996). We believe that leaders are well versed in sound professional practice and innovative techniques. We are committed to the notion of leaders as problem-solvers who embrace change (Margolis, 2008; Darling-Hammond, 2006; Goldenberg, 2004). Our faculty and student leaders are disposed to positive change through active engagement with their various professional communities.

**Principles**

As we strive to meet our commitments to diverse communities, effective practice, and leadership, our actions are guided by six principles.

Social Justice

According to Putnam and Burke (2005), learning communities are central to the educational process in a democratic and socially just society. The college is committed to functioning as an organization that embraces working towards the good of others. All parties, regardless of
differences such as class, gender, race, ethnicity, citizenship, religion, age, sexual orientation, or disability are actively engaged in organizing themselves and working to accomplish the college mission/vision together. A climate of openness, and egalitarianism is embedded in all our actions (Brennan & Naidoo, 2008; Einfeld & Collins, 2008; Fullan & Hargreaves, 1996).

**Integrity**
The faculty and administration are committed to preparing professionals who conduct themselves with integrity. Integrity is especially significant for our educators and graduates. We prepare individuals to act in good conscience, to take responsibility for their behavior, and to do the right thing while respecting others. Hansen (2001) captures this eloquently: “Moral knowledge in teaching becomes ineffectual without technical skill. But technical skill and expertise may be damaging or even dangerous without a moral vision informing their use” (p. 849). (Other resources are available if you believe we should update this information)

**Excellence**
The College of Education values excellence across the interdependent domains of scholarship, service, and teaching. Our college community continuously creates collaborative networks that maximize resources and mobilizes the collective efforts of those working together toward the attainment of excellence in all endeavors. The College of Education has implemented several new requirements to build upon the established level of excellence. Teacher candidates must successfully pass the edTPA, a nationally scored teacher performance assessment. Students must achieve higher standards and maintain these standards throughout the duration of the teacher education program. Students are evaluated using the same tools as today’s teachers in the field. All of which better prepare teacher candidates for success in the field as teachers. The collaboration among our professionals reflects, “an educational team of interdependent individuals with unique skills and perspectives who interact directly to achieve their mutual goal of providing students with effective educational programs and services” (Friend & Cook, 2000, p. 28).

**Respect**
We are a community of scholars who embody professionalism and engage in respectful discourse. We have an open dialogue among faculty who welcome divergent ideas, cultural differences, and a plurality of research methodologies. This collegial commitment is reflected in our interactions with students that are characterized by a variety of teaching and learning approaches, and with the wider community through partnerships characterized by mutual respect.

**Accountability**
The College holds itself accountable for meeting the educational goals of the community it serves. Key elements of this core value are planning, communication, evaluation, and responsiveness. This accountability will allow the College to systemically shape its programs to the needs of the community in a way that leads to new methods, strategies, materials, and ways to motivate.
Continuous Learning
We are committed to continuous learning (Ermeling 2012; Johnson, Johnson, & Smith, 2007; Evers, 1998; Tuijnman & Van Der Kamp, 1992). To meet this commitment for students, our faculty offers challenging programs that span undergraduate through doctoral degrees. For faculty and staff, the Dean has established the Office of Faculty Development, which provides a variety of professional development opportunities. A Faculty Advisory Committee and a Staff Advisory Committee provide input to the Assistant Dean for Faculty Development. The departments, the University, and the broader community provide other opportunities for professional development.

The College of Education norms were developed collaboratively by college administration, staff, faculty, and students in 2007-2008 to guide behaviors and professional interactions among faculty and students. They provide benchmarks for continual monitoring and growth and assist the College in navigating change (Coates, 2010; Gore, 2002).

I take 100% responsibility.
I neither make excuses nor cast blame.

I seek equity of voice.
I participate, I support, I listen and I perform and contribute in a manner that encourages others to do the same.

I am willing to talk about sensitive issues.
I encourage dialogue and am prepared to discuss sensitive issues.

I listen for understanding.
I neither interrupt nor participate in secondary conversations. I will go directly to the source for information and problem resolution.

I appreciate the strengths and contributions of others.
I need, I want and I value the strengths and contributions of others.

I bring positive energy and encouragement to the team.
I contribute positively; I have high expectations of others and I contribute synergy to the team.

I commit to the mission of the College.
I support and implement the mission; I actively encourage others to do the same.

Effective Practice:
Outcomes for Professional Educators

Students in the College of Education are supported through their program with the Pillars of Practice. The student candidates learn the content and skills necessary to deliver and support learning. Their ability to make instructionally sound decisions based on their knowledge of the learner and ongoing formative assessment creates a learning environment conducive for all students. Self-reflective practices and professional growth opportunities support life-long learning found within the students of the College of Education, Health and Human Sciences. These foundational Pillars are aligned with NCATE and Tennessee State Standards.

1. **Content Knowledge and Skills**
   - Successful candidates understand how knowledge in their discipline is organized, connected and applied, within the discipline as well as across disciplines, and use that understanding to make the content meaningful to their students.
   - Successful candidates use the content knowledge and skills of the disciplines to help their students develop thinking, reasoning and analytical abilities.
   - Successful candidates use, and help their students learn to use resources to access information and support in the disciplines.

2. **Knowledge of the Learner**
   - Successful candidates address the uniqueness of the learners they encounter through instruction that addresses different and specific learning needs of individual learners, including the use of assistive technology to increase student participation in the total curriculum.
   - Successful candidates address the unique issues of urban settings, including their economic and socio-cultural experiences and perspectives.
   - Successful candidates communicate effectively with students and with their families.

3. **Pedagogy and Instruction**
   - Successful candidates facilitate learning through joint productive activity between teacher and students and among students.
   - Successful candidates apply literacy strategies and develop their students’ language competence in all subject areas.
   - Successful candidates contextualize teaching and curriculum in terms of their students’ existing experiences in home, community, and school.
   - Successful candidates challenge their students toward cognitive complexity.
   - Successful candidates instruct through teacher-student dialogue, especially academic, goal-directed, and small-group conversations (known as instructional conversations).
   - Successful candidates use current and emerging technologies to design and facilitate developmentally appropriate, active learning opportunities for their students.

4. **Assessment and Responsive Practice**
   - Successful candidates gather formative and summative evidence of student learning during regular instruction, and use that evidence to monitor and adjust instructional content, strategies, and resources as needed for individuals and groups of students.
• Successful candidates design and apply formative assessments that allow diverse students
to demonstrate their learning.
• Successful candidates select and administer formal assessment tools, as necessary, and
analyze results in order to make appropriate instructional diagnoses and decisions.

5. Management of Classrooms and Individuals
• Successful candidates have the knowledge, skills, and dispositions to organize the classroom
environment so that Pedagogy/Instruction and Assessment/Responsive Practice standards are
effectively implemented.
• Successful candidates create safe environments where they can address the uniqueneeds
of individual learners.
• Successful candidates use resources (e.g., time, materials, technology) effectively to
promote positive classroom learning cultures.

6. Personal and Professional Growth and Development
• Successful candidates are reflective about their work and their emerging practice, and
affirmatively seek out opportunities to participate in, learn from, and contribute to wider
communities of professional educators (e.g. joining professional organizations, seekingout
mentors, reading in the profession).
• Successful candidates promote ethical and equitable practices throughout their work; in
the classroom, the larger school/district organization, in the use of technology, and in
forming partnerships with families and communities.
• Successful candidates demonstrate the ability and willingness to assume leadership for
tasks beyond their classroom that contribute to the overall quality of the learning
community.
• Successful candidates use professional and appropriate language in all written and verbal
communication

Diversity: Outcomes for Professional Educators

To better operationalize our Commitment to Diverse Communities, the College of Education
faculty adopted in spring 2007 the following five Diversity Performance Standards as a more
focused and tangible expression of our Commitment to Diverse Communities.

The COE Community (including faculty, staff, and partners). . .
• Understands diversity, social justice, and equity in order to promote effective learning in their
everyday practice
• Understands linguistic, ethnic, racial, socioeconomic, disability, religious, sexual orientation
diversity and demonstrates culturally relevant practices.
• Understands the relationships among various historical and present social inequities and uses
reflective practice to challenge their work and explicitly confront social inequality.  

• Understands the larger national and global contexts and demonstrates a clear sense of their own identities in relationship to social justice.  

• Understands and values the importance of engaging in professional growth to enhance professional practices involving diverse populations.

Dispositions: Outcomes for Professional Educators

Teacher candidates at the University of Memphis are expected to demonstrate content knowledge and teaching skills necessary for all students to learn. However, content knowledge and teaching skills are not the only requirements of the Teacher Education Program at the University of Memphis.

As published in both The University of Memphis Undergraduate Bulletin, and Graduate Catalog: In programs where candidates are specializing in a professional area, awarding a degree or recommending for a professional license does not merely attest to the accumulation of the specified number of hours in the classroom or other professional setting but also to the demonstration of professional knowledge, skills, and dispositions. The faculty has the responsibility to both the public and the profession to award a degree or license only when the candidate has demonstrated a satisfactory level of professional knowledge, skills, and dispositions as judged by the program faculty. Further, candidates must exhibit integrity and character consistent with the standards of ethical principles set forth by appropriate professional associations and Tennessee law.

The National Council for the Accreditation of Colleges of Education, define dispositions as: Professional attitudes, values, and beliefs demonstrated through both verbal and non-verbal behaviors as educators interact with students, families, colleagues, and communities. These positive behaviors support student learning and development.

The College of Education has adopted the following as key dispositions and behaviors¹ essential for all candidates to demonstrate during all clinical experiences.

¹Permission has been granted by the University of Tennessee-Knoxville for the use of the disposition outcomes and behavioral indicators included in this list.
Behavioral Examples by Category of Professional Dispositions

Social Justice

1. Promoting social justice.
   • Holds high expectations for all students with no signs of bias or prejudice within those expectations.
   • Employs a variety of instructional practices that assure academic success for diverse groups of students, particularly those marginalized in US educational settings.
   • Links academically challenging curriculum to the cultural, intellectual, contextual, interest, and emotional assets and needs of students.
   • Develops personal bonds with students to avoid viewing students as separate or the other.
   • Constructs lessons that include the perspectives of different groups.
   • Explicitly teaches students about society's injustices and the dynamics of privilege.
   • Advocates for, gives significant voice to, and collaborates with parents and the community in educational decisions and processes.
   • Seeks opportunities to strengthen social justice understanding and practice as integral to everyday practice.

2. Providing equitable learning opportunities for all students.
   • Adapts instruction to meet varying needs and abilities, for example, fulfills instruction as detailed on an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) for a student.
   • Holds high expectations for all students.
   • Demonstrates no sign of overt bias, prejudice, or lack of fairness toward certain students or groups of people.
   • Creates a learning environment that enables all students to reach their full potential.

3. Promoting achievement of students at all levels.
   • Demonstrates persistence in helping all children achieve success.
   • Holds positive expectations for all students to learn.
   • Reinforces student achievement for all students.
   • Does not negatively compare current students to other students with whom they have worked.
   • Conveys high expectations for student achievement.
   • Advocates for all learners.

4. Recognizing students' unique prior knowledge, life experiences, and interests as part of the context for student learning.
   • Demonstrates the belief that diversity in the classroom, in the school, and in society enhances
learning.

• Develops lessons that encourage students to value and draw upon their unique life circumstances.
• Selects materials, develops lessons, and promotes classroom environments that counteract negative stereotypes and bigotry.
• Fosters student appreciation for diversity in the classroom.
• Demonstrates sensitivity to the legitimate needs and concerns of others.
• Demonstrates positive attitudes toward diverse cultures and learners.
• Provides students with access to varying points of view.

**Integrity**

5. **Maintaining his/her position as a positive role model for students and others.**
• Arrives for class(field experiences/clinical experiences on time.
• Attends class except when excused in advance.
• Exhibits positive attitude toward the discipline and/or teaching profession.
• Acts and dresses according to the standards of the school where the candidate is placed.
• Maintains composure in the classroom.
• Demonstrates situationally appropriate behavior and professional demeanor.
• Uses language free of profanity and malicious statements toward any individual or groups.
• Models behavior expected of both teachers and learners in an educational setting.
• Uses appropriate tone of voice.
• Maintains emotional control.
• Uses self-disclosure appropriately.
• Uses appropriate non-verbal expressions.
• Responds appropriately to actions and reactions of others.
• Demonstrates good personal hygiene and grooming.
• Recognizes the need for, and seeks help in, one of the areas above (self-monitoring).

6. **Demonstrating positive work habits and interpersonal skills, demonstrating a positive attitude, dependability, honesty and respect for others.**
• Completes assignments, duties, or tasks on time.
• Demonstrates willingness to adapt instruction to “best practices.”
• Interacts in a positive and professional manner with students, peers, teachers, university personnel, and others.
• Uses technology and electronic communications in an appropriate and ethical manner consistent with the COEHHS Norms and accepted university and societal decorum.
• Communicates without intent to deceive.
• Considers opinions of others with an open mind.
• Listens attentively to others in a variety of contexts.
• Interacts in a polite and respectful manner.
• Respects the property of others.
• Demonstrates empathy and concern for others.
• Displays equitable treatment of others.
• Acknowledges perspectives of individuals from diverse cultural and experiential backgrounds.
• Interacts appropriately in relation to cultural norms.
• Acts from a positive frame of reference, including when changes occur. Returns borrowed materials in a timely manner.
• Respects the intellectual property of others by giving credit to others when using their work and avoiding plagiarism.
• Adheres to the accepted standards of truthfulness, honesty, and ethical behavior as stated in U of M’s Student Handbook, student teaching guidelines, and course syllabi.
• Provides students access to varying points of view.
• Shows due courtesy and consideration for people and ideas.
• Maintains positive working relationships with peers.

7. Maintaining the standards of confidentiality regarding student information and communications.
• Maintains confidentiality of student records, parent communications, and private professional communications.
• Uses language that meets professional standards and is not demeaning or harmful to any individual or group.

Excellence

8. Understanding and involving a wide variety of resources in the school, family, culture, and community to facilitate student learning.
• Appreciates unique community culture.
• Provides materials for students of different cultures (bulletin boards, library books).
• Welcomes involvement of family and community members.
• Recognizes, values, and utilizes assets in the community.

9. Seeking out, developing, and implementing the most appropriate methods to meet the diverse learning needs of the students.
• Adapts teaching to changing classroom circumstances (Flexibility).
• Adapts instruction and assessment to fit various learning styles.
• Adapts instruction and assessment for students with special needs.
• Aware of the process for making referrals.
• Seeks and supports student services when appropriate.

10. Developing students’ skills as problem-solvers as they progress toward becoming self-directed learners.
• Models problem-solving skills.
• Provides opportunities for students to learn conflict resolution skills.
• Utilizes peer tutors in the classroom.
• Provides opportunities for students to learn to function in cooperative learning groups.
• Provides opportunities for student decision-making.
• Shared decision making with students.

11. Using effective planning and classroom organization as tools to maximize the time available for instruction.
• Prepares for classes, meetings, and group work.
• Submits lesson plans within agreed-upon timelines.
• Plans daily instruction in light of long range goals and objectives.
• Manages time effectively.
• Establishes routines and procedures to maximize instructional time (how to submit homework, taking attendance, etc.).
• Organizes seating and resources for efficiency.
• Completes assigned tasks from group activities within an acceptable time frame.
• Prioritizes work based upon established goals.

**Respect**

12. **Collaborating with other professionals to improve the overall learning of students.**
• Works together with others to achieve a common goal.
• Responds positively to requests from other professionals for collaboration.
• Makes a contribution to group effort.
• Shares information and materials with others.
• Assists peers.
• Supports decisions of group willingly, even if different from own.
• Supports work of others.
• Establishes professional goals that are aligned with those of the organization.
• Plans and sets goals and priorities with others.
• Maximizes individuals’ talents.
• Distributes responsibilities evenly.
• Keeps groups on task.

**Accountability**

13. **Accepting responsibility for what occurs in his/her classroom and for other school-wide responsibilities that contribute to student learning and a safe, orderly environment.**
• Consciously avoids acting in a dangerous or irresponsible manner that might put students at risk.
• Identifies personal responsibility in conflict/problem situations.
• Initiates communication to resolve conflict.
• Adapts to new or unexpected situation.
• Accepts consequences for personal actions or decisions.
• Submits assignments/reports on time or follows procedures for extensions.
• Takes action to solve problems within the authority granted to the candidate.
• Takes initiative to get materials and notes when absent from meetings or classes.
• Seeks/locates needed resources.
• Maintains order.
• Follows school procedures for discipline referrals.
• Ensures accuracy of information for which he/she is responsible.
• Supports assignments outside the classroom, such as bus duty or bathroom duty.
• Supports school system policies regarding health and safety issues.
• Knows and is prepared to implement plans for disasters and emergencies as required by the school system.
14. Using sound judgment and thoughtful decision making with consideration of the consequences.
   • Uses credible and data-based sources
   • Generates effective/productive options to situations
   • Analyzes situations, comments, and interactions and makes appropriate adjustments that promote a positive learning environment
   • Makes reasoned decisions with supporting evidence
   • Uses appropriate strategies to respond to emotional and emergency situations
   • Supports and follows school, system, and university directives
   • Avoids engaging in illegal or unethical conduct involving minor children or other behavior which would be grounds for dismissal from a teaching position

Continuous Learning

15. Demonstrating life-long learning and personal growth through reflection, seeking constructive feedback, and being willing to learn from others and past experience.
   • Values and participates in opportunities to improve instructional practices and teaching activities
   • Seeks opportunities to learn new skills
   • Views reflection as a component of the instructional process
   • Responds constructively to professional feedback from supervisors and others, making changes to address legitimate concerns.
   • Seeks clarification and/or assistance as needed
   • Exhibits curiosity about new and seemingly old concepts
   • Displays creative ideas about and applications to education concepts
   • Models flexibility regarding course content, process and tasks
   • Makes connections to previous readings/experiences/courses, etc.

16. Participating in professional growth activities within and outside the school.
   • Attends school and school system inservice/staff development sessions
   • Pursues opportunities in professional educational organizations and associations.
   • Is open to opportunities to attend/present at meetings of professional organizations

Professional Knowledge Base

The work of the unit educator preparation programs is guided by an integrated and coherent knowledge base including standards, best practices, and research. First, approval of all educator preparation programs in Tennessee is based on state standards which are tightly aligned with INTASC and SPA standards (see information at http://www.state.tn.us/education/teaching/educator_prep.shtml). Unit programs have adopted SPA or other professional standards as candidate outcome standards and have aligned these standards with the conceptual framework performance outcomes. The state, INTASC, and SPA standards all have similar foci which are reflected in our conceptual framework outcomes: content and pedagogical content knowledge and skills, knowledge of the learner, knowledge of teaching
and learning, assessment of student learning, management of the teaching and learning environments, and professionalism and professional growth and development. These unit outcomes are supported not only by state and professional standards, but are buttressed also by recent reports of best practice. For example, Darling-Hammond and Baratz-Snowden outline a professional and scholarly consensus on what makes a good teacher in their 2005 National Academy of Education report, *A Good Teacher in Every Classroom: Preparing the Highly Qualified Teacher our Children Deserve*. They lay out a clear framework for understanding teaching and learning: to be a professional a new teacher needs to acquire knowledge of learners and their development in social contexts (learning, human development, and language), knowledge of subject matter and curriculum goals (educational goals and purposes for skills and content subject matter), and knowledge of teaching (teaching subject matter, teaching diverse learners, assessment, and classroom management).

Second, given the urban context of the institution, and the mission and vision of the unit, our commitments and outcomes standards are influenced strongly by the research and standards of the Center for Research on Education, Diversity & Excellence (CREDE). CREDE has synthesized this work with five standards for effective teaching: joint productive activity, language and literacy development, contextualizing teaching and learning, complex thinking, and instructional conversation (http://crede.berkeley.edu/standards/standards.html). These standards have been incorporated into our conceptual framework outcome standards. This focus speaks explicitly to the College of Education conceptual framework of effective practice, commitment to diversity and its unique urban focus. Several studies have led to significant advances in understanding basic learning processes, including the social and cultural foundations of cognitive development (e.g. Jacobs, Assaf, & Lee, 2011; Waxman, H., Tharp, R., & Hilberg, R. (Eds.), 2004; Dalton, S. & Tharp, R., 2002; and, Tharp, R., Estrada, P., Dalton, S., & Yamauchi, L., 2000). Rather than focusing on presumed student deficits, researchers have focused on ways that schools can scaffold learning, build on student characteristics as resources, and mitigate risk factors.

Finally, the adopted unit diversity standards are built on a solid knowledge base that effective teacher make connections to their pupils’ communities and are able to build upon the cultural and community strengths that students bring to school (Bennett, 2013; Noel, 2010; Gay, 2000; Irving, 2003, Ladson- Billings, 1994). Prospective teachers need opportunities to interact with parents and students in their communities in order to develop this knowledge base necessary to be effective in the classroom (Evans, 2013; Bartone, 2010; Chavkin, 2005; Grant & Gillette, 2006; Ladson-Billings, 2001). Thus, an important characteristic of a teacher education program is its capacity to help candidates build these connections to the community. In addition to the capacity to build community connections, the new diversity standards aim to provide candidates with a better grounding in the theoretical and conceptual principles of multicultural education (Owen, 2010; Premier & Miller, 2009; Ladson-Billings, 1999). These standards strive to help candidates learn to challenge the status quo surrounding teaching in culturally diverse urban classrooms (Cross, 2003; 2005)
References


