

Conceptual Frameworks Committee 3/15/2011 Proposed Revisions

Missouri State University

Approved by PEC April 6, 2011

A Conceptual Framework to Guide the Preparation of Ethical and Inquiring Professional Educators for a Diverse and Inclusive Society

Our Shared Vision

At Missouri State University, we believe that education is essential across all levels of society. Professional education is one of the five primary “emphasis” areas realized within Missouri State’s overarching public affairs mission. To continue and enhance the University’s tradition of successful educator preparation, all programs prioritize the shared vision described in this document.

The Missouri State professional education community believes that effective professional education programs are based on shared beliefs and values about schools, learning, and education that guide program development and instruction in planning, assessment, evaluation, and content expertise. The various content and specialty areas interpret and apply this *Conceptual Framework* in accordance with their unique, specialized professional knowledge bases and standards. It articulates the assumptions, commitments, knowledge, skills, dispositions, and learning outcomes common to all professional education programs. Finally, our *Conceptual Framework* provides a set of guiding principles and attention to inquiry in order to ensure coherence among curriculum, instruction, field experiences, clinical practice, and assessment across a candidate’s program.

Our *Conceptual Framework* is a living text that is responsive to inquiry. It is regularly reviewed and modified to incorporate new knowledge and experience about best practices in order to deepen our understanding of the meaning and purpose of schooling and education. The focal point of our shared vision is that the professional educators are “*reflective practitioners*” (Dewey, 1933; Schön, 1984) who have the knowledge, skills, and dispositions needed to effectively and powerfully facilitate and enhance the learning and development of all learners across the lifespan. At Missouri State, reflective practice integrated with inquiry (Day, 1999; Elliot, 1991; Greenwood & Levin, 2007) and ethics (Freire, 2000; Hanson, 2001; Tom, 1984) is the lens through which best practice in education is viewed.

Our Mission

At Missouri State, the overarching Mission of the university is “to develop educated persons” (<http://www.missouristate.edu/longrangeplan/default.htm>, Long Range Plan, 2006-11). For the Professional Education Unit (PEU), our mission and purpose is to develop the specialized competencies and skills to facilitate, promote, and enhance, with compassion and fairness, the learning and development of all persons.

Who We Are

The PEU at Missouri State University is a community comprised of candidates, graduates, faculty, staff, and administrators from a variety of departments and colleges across the university, as well as our school and community partners in the quad-state region. Professional education candidates and graduates are enrolled in or have graduated from initial (undergraduate) or advanced (graduate) professional education programs in teacher education, communication sciences, counseling, or educational administration and leadership. Professional education faculty and staff, from all colleges in the university, are those who teach courses taken by candidates in professional education programs and provide advising, mentoring, and supervision of clinical and field experiences. Our partners include those in schools and community agencies in which our candidates observe and practice their developing skills under professional supervision and mentoring, from admission through their first three years of professional practice. With the contributions of faculty who teach liberal arts and general education courses, we are convinced that at Missouri State, education is everyone's business.

The Reflective Inquiring Educational Practitioner

We believe that professional educators are “reflective decision makers” and inquirers who maintain that all students can learn. In general, reflective decision-making and inquiry involves:

1. investigating and determining clear and fruitful ways of characterizing problems and opportunities;
2. developing careful, well-informed consideration of possibilities or alternatives for action;
3. evaluating the consequences of action and potential action through the consideration of fairness, equity, and justice (Dewey, 1922, 1933; Elliott, 1991; Freire, 2000; Gardner, 1996; Schön, 1984).

We believe that reflective practitioners intentionally realize the effect of professional education contexts in order to:

1. make informed, rational, fair choices in a variety of learning contexts and assume responsibility for those choices;
2. pursue learning as practitioners, researchers, mentors, coaches, and co-creators with students and provide meaningful learning experiences in an inclusive environment where all can learn;
3. examine critically experienced-based perceptions, strategies, and conventional wisdom about schooling and learning;
4. work in daily professional practice to integrate educational theories, academic scholarship, experiential knowledge, and best instructional practice;
5. recognize teaching as a dynamic process of inquiry, renewal, and re-examination in light of the refinement of established models and the emergence of new ones.

Our Beliefs about Professional Education Knowledge, Skills and Dispositions

We believe that professional educators must acquire the knowledge needed to make fully informed decisions (Brophy & Good, 1986; National Commission on Teaching, 2003; Shulman, 1986, 1987; Sirotnik & Clark, 1988). They must acquire a balanced foundation of subject matter, professional knowledge, and pedagogical skills allowing them to transform what they know into potent skills for inspiring professional practices, which actively engage all students in the learning process (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 1993; Darling-Hammond & Bransford, 2005; Day, 1999; National Commission on Teaching, 2003; Olson & Wyett, 2000; Stipek, 1986). Recognizing that teaching is fundamentally a moral enterprise encompassing both art and science, professional educators must be able to facilitate learning and development through the expression of appropriate dispositions that are learner-centered, ethical, socially and culturally respectful, fair, and promising (Eisner, 2001; Elliott, 1991; Hansen, 2001; Liston & Zeichner, 1987; Moje & Speyer, 2008; Noddings, 2005; Rubin, 1985; Somekh, 1995).

More specifically, we believe that:

[Knowledge]

Knowledge of:

1. a broad liberal arts education is the hallmark of an educated person and serves as a framework for understanding (Shulman, 1987);
2. major theories of learning and human development are crucial to developing effective instructional practices and professional relationships (Pintrich, 1990; Schunk, 2011; Shulman, 1987; Stipek, 1986; Wittrock, 1986);
3. the historical, cultural, political, technological, and community contexts of education serve to illuminate and focus educational ends, purposes, values, and practices (Ayers, 1990; Moje & Speyer, 2008; Shulman, 1987);
4. the role of cultural variation in learning in schooling and other contexts (Banks 2002; Nieto & Bode, 2007);
5. subject matter content knowledge must be sufficient to enable practitioners to fully understand the important ideas in their domains. They understand the influence that knowledge has on their pedagogical orientations, teaching decisions, and teaching acts (Allen, 2003; Black & Ammon, 1992; Boyer, 1983; Goodlad, 1990; Grossman, 1987; Kaplan & Owings, 2003; Kuhs, 1980; Sanders, 2004; Wilson, 1988; Witz, 2000);
6. pedagogical and leadership theories impacts teaching practice, serves as a foundation for developing and expanding existing and emerging theories, and guides evolving educational policies (Black & Ammon, 1992; Good & Brophy, 2007);
7. how current research, action inquiry approaches, and subsequent data analysis contributes to the development of best practice teaching methods (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 1993; Elliott, 1991; Greenwood & Levin, 2007; Hubbard & Power, 2003; Zeichner, 2001; Zeni, 2001);
8. awareness of one's self as a professional educator—including personal theories, “practical” knowledge, ethical leadership, beliefs, insights, assumptions and value systems, and expectations—serves as a potent source of teaching behaviors

conceptually reinforcing that educational success is for all learners (Anders, 2008; Ayers, 1990; Darling-Hammond & Bransford, 2005; Day, 1999; Frankenberg, 2006; Grimmert, Erickson, Mackinnon, & Riechen, 1990; May, 1989; Rudduck, 1995).

[Skills]

Professional educators:

1. are effective in building collaboration and community with diverse learners, colleagues, parents, support personnel, and community agencies (Burstein, Kretschmer, Smith, & Gudowski, 1999; Reason & Bradbury, 2001; Rogers, Mosley, Kramer, & LSJTRG, 2009);
2. are instructional leaders who play an active role in the development of classroom goals (Clark & Peterson, 1986; Doyle, 1986; Gump, 1982), curriculum, instructional, and disciplinary practices (Cruickshank, 1992; Glasser, 1986; Good, 1983; Good & Brophy, 2007; Steffe & Gale, 1995) and assessment procedures (Dagley & Orso, 1991; Oliva, 2008; Wiggins, 1993);
3. are critical thinkers (Clark & Peterson, 1986; Dewey, 1933; Onosko, 1992; Schön, 1984; Liston & Zeichner, 1987), active listeners and skilled communicators (Cazden, 1986; Cruickshank, 1992; Doyle, 1986; Galloway, 1984; Good & Brophy, 2007; Porter & Brophy, 1988), and helpful collaborators with learners (Bean, 1992; Costa, Garmston, & Lambert, 1988; Newman & Wehlage, 1993);
4. are effective in applying current technologies to teaching, assessment, and professional development (Conroy & Hedley, 1990; Dunn, 1996; Lockard, Abrams, & Many, 2003);
5. are skilled at creating and facilitating fair learning environments for diverse learners (Patrick & Reinhartz, 1999) that are active, expressive, and energized (Cruickshank, 1992; Delpit, 2006; Duncan & Biddle, 1982; Good & Brophy, 2007; Myers & Hammill, 1990; Steffe & Gale, 1995; Yager, 1991).

[Dispositions]

Professional educators:

- are insightful about the challenges and requirements of a democratic society and knowledgeable about, and sensitive to, issues such as equality and human diversity (Adejumo, 2002; Au, 1993; Baruth & Manning, 2008; Grant & Sleeter, 2008; Nieto & Bode, 2007). They are aware of the societal barriers that individuals with disabilities face (Banks, 2002; Best, Heller, & Bigge, 2009; Heward, 2005; Kauffman, 1989; Myers & Hammill, 1990; Shames & Wiig, 2011);
- are highly empathic (Cruickshank, 1990; MacDonald, 1991) and show positive regard for the potential of all students for academic and personal growth (Clark & Peterson, 1986);
- are ethical (Clark & Peterson, 1986; Tom, 1984; Valli, 1990, 1992), caring (Edwards, 2011), and willing to provide assistance to develop each student's individual potential for educational successes (Hansen, 2001; MacDonald, 1991; Noddings, 2005, 2006);

- are passionate about teaching, intellectually curious, genuinely concerned about the progress and fair treatment of students, and dedicated to inclusive excellence in their own professional development (Hansen, 1995; Schön, 1984);
- are responsible for creating and maintaining equitable, respectful, tolerant, collaborative, and healthy environment for diverse learners in whatever context they practice, as this is essential for student learning and development (Corno & Snow, 1986; Cotton & Savard, 1984; Crawford, 1978; Delpit, 2006; Good & Brophy, 2007; Lopez, Pichardo, Amescua, & Fernandez, 2001; Milian, 2001; Susi, 1995);
- are able to engage in self-appraisal (Anders, 2008; Ayers, 1990; Grimmitt et al., 1990) and use feedback from students, supervisors, mentors, and peers to improve their practice (Oliva, 2008).

Our General Learning Outcomes

The curricula of professional education programs at Missouri State University reflect our commitment to these beliefs. Further, they reflect and align with the professional standards specified by state, national, and professional accreditation organizations. Our initial and advanced programs are designed to develop candidate knowledge, skills, and dispositions associated with successful professional educational practice.

Missouri State professional education graduates will demonstrate competence in:

1. **Foundations:** knowledge of the historical development of the profession and foundational issues and arguments underlying its practices, as well as an understanding of the importance of integrated learning across disciplines.
2. **Subject Matter:** strong knowledge of subject matter discipline content and the ability to integrate content with pedagogy appropriate to the candidate's field of study.
3. **Learning and Development:** knowledge of human development and motivation, theories of learning, pedagogy, and assessment.
4. **Reflective and Inquiry Skills:** communication skills, critical and creative thinking abilities, and other skills crucial to reflective decision-making and action inquiry for classroom and school improvement.
5. **Technology:** knowledge and skills in the use of technology appropriate to the candidate's field of study.
6. **Professional Skills:** the practical abilities to implement the skills, techniques, and strategies associated with student learning and development across disciplines and practices.
7. **Assessment Skills:** the skills to conduct valid and reliable assessments of their students' learning, and use that assessment to improve learning and development for students and teachers.
8. **Dispositions:** the intellectual, social, ethical, and other personal attributes and beliefs previously ascribed to reflective decision-makers in a variety of professional settings,

- including a commitment to all persons and their own lifelong learning and professional development.
9. **Diversity:** the ability to skillfully facilitate and promote the learning of all students, including those from diverse cultural, racial, and economic backgrounds, varying abilities, and historically underrepresented groups.
 10. **Collaboration and Leadership:** the ability and skills to foster and maintain collaborative, empowering relationships with other professionals within schools and the community.

The Assessment of General Learning Outcomes

Candidate attainment of the general learning outcome competencies is continuously assessed and evaluated using multiple data sources. These outcome-based assessment systems include, but are not limited to, standardized testing procedures, traditional classroom-based testing, observations, research and conceptual papers, portfolios and related performance assessments, and teacher work samples. Individual departments responsible for specific programs that lead to certification develop assessment plans and procedures unique to their specific discipline area. These procedures are in alignment with our *Conceptual Framework*, national standards of various learned societies, National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) standards, and the program accreditation standards of the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE).

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