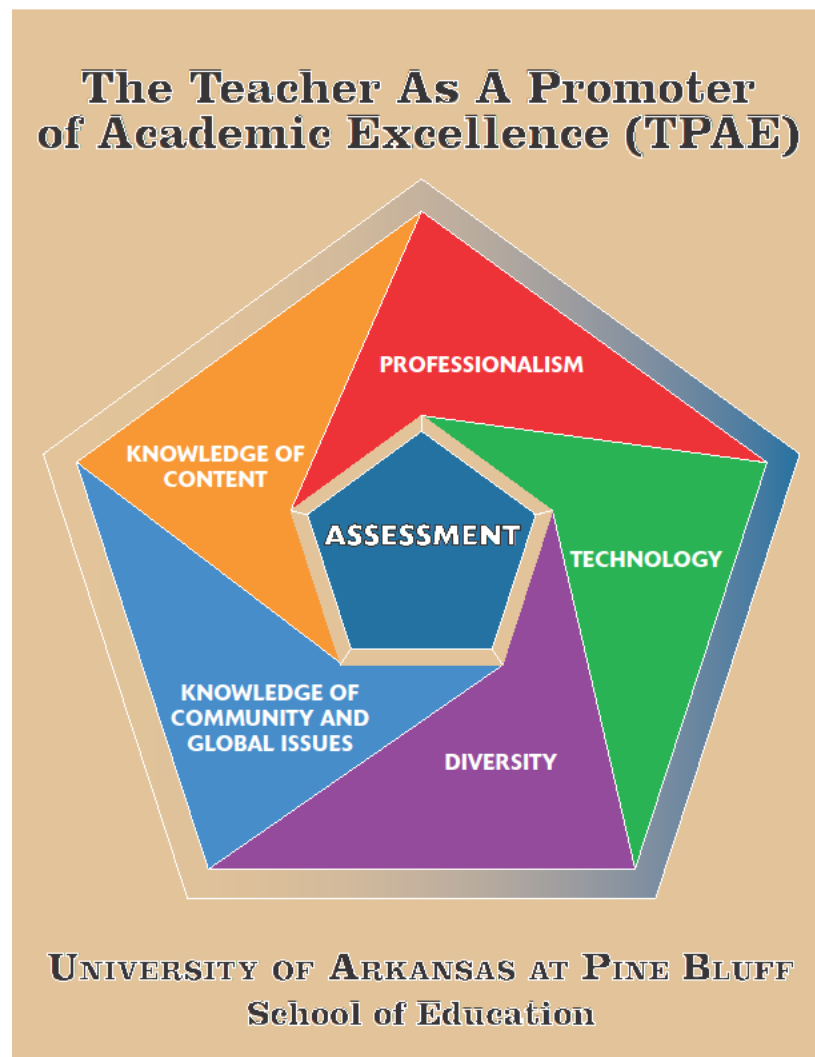


UNIVERSITY OF ARKANSAS AT PINE BLUFF

SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK HANDBOOK



Revised July 2012

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

The Teacher As A Promoter Of Academic Excellence (TPAE)

Table of Contents

I.	The Conceptual Framework: A Shared Vision	3
II.	The Conceptual Framework: Goals of the Unit	4
III.	The Conceptual Framework: Research and Policy Driven	5
IV.	The Conceptual Framework: Proficiencies Aligned with Standards	11
V.	The Conceptual Framework: Assessment Driven	16
VI.	Appendices	
	Appendix A- Alignment with State Standards	18
	Appendix B- Unit Assessment System	19

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

THE TEACHER AS A PROMOTER OF ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE (TPAE)

A SHARED VISION

One of the most important aspects of the historical mission of Agricultural, Mechanical and Normal College was established by the Legislative Act of 1873 that created the College. The Act stipulated that the institution was being established for the convenience and well-being of the “poorer classes.” The second statutory provision relating to the mission of the College was the Land Grant Act of 1890, which made the Morrill Act of 1862 applicable in every respect to Agricultural, Mechanical and Normal College.

While the University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff will continue to maintain a special Sensitivity to the needs, aspirations, problems and opportunities of its historic constituents, it shall expand its mission with a high degree of excellence and with a sense of constantly improving quality. The new social context that is emerging as a result of integration requires that this mission be expanded and enriched so as to become consonant with the needs and demands of a more culturally heterogeneous student clientele - a clientele differing academically, socially, racially, ethnically and culturally.

The teacher education faculty has always shared a common vision with the institution that has guided the preparation of teacher candidates. The process of self-study for NCATE accreditation has required that the shared vision is presented in a more explicit discussion. The shared vision must be mission driven. The mission of the School of Education is to offer quality programs leading to licensure and careers in professional education. In addition to training teachers to meet the educational challenges of an ever changing society, the School of Education

provides opportunities for its candidates to study in a multiethnic and diverse university setting, thereby encouraging, productive citizens and prospective change agents in the field of education. The School of Education fulfills its mission through teaching, research and public service to the immediate service area, the State of Arkansas, and the nation.

The unit's vision is based upon a model of interlocking strands of knowledge, skills, and dispositions that creates a teacher that is a Promoter Of Academic Excellence. The unit is committed to service to a heterogeneous clientele, underrepresented groups and to "build a new social organism" that will accommodate racial, ethnic and cultural pluralism.

GOALS OF THE UNIT

The School of Education Policies and Procedures Manual describes nine goals for the unit. Of the nine goals, six are directly related to graduating highly qualified teacher candidates. The following goals describe the type of teacher candidate needed in the program and what they must be able to do to be effective teachers after graduation.

1. To prepare highly qualified individuals (teacher candidates) for careers as professional educators or human service professionals through a variety of degree programs and endorsements which embody the skills in the art and science of teaching, varied methods and materials of instruction, technology, diversity, retention, social, cultural and human diversity skills, and competency in the use of effective methods of evaluation.
2. To recruit, retain and graduate a socially, ethnically, and culturally diverse student population.
3. To prepare teacher candidates to assume the role of teacher, contributing citizen and educational advocate.

4. To develop opportunities for teacher candidates to observe and work with children at various stages of development in many educational settings.
5. To enhance professionalism, teacher expectations and global awareness through participation in professional development activities and professional organizations.
6. To develop and promote the importance of knowledge, skills, and dispositions necessary to work effectively with all members of the community.

The professional unit is proud to announce a more concise set of goals designed to attract quality teacher candidates to the program and ensure our candidates are equipped to be knowledgeable and reflective teachers. The newly revised conceptual framework, commonly called, The Teacher As A Promoter of Academic Excellence (TPAE), has six major goals all teacher candidates must demonstrate throughout their program of study; *1) Knowledge of Content, 2) Professionalism, 3) Diversity, 4) Knowledge of Community and Global Issues, 5) Assessment, and 6) Technology*. These goals are described in the “Proficiencies Aligned with State Standards” section of this document.

RESEARCH AND POLICY DRIVEN

Diversity

The unit is committed to preparing professionals to work with all students. The unit also offers teacher candidates field experiences in a variety of settings. Teachers are challenged to understand the important role culture plays in curriculum development and instruction (Milner, 2010). Teacher candidates are involved in increasing awareness of and deepening understanding of other cultures. The philosophy of the unit embraces the concept of individual learner needs, especially for culturally diverse and exceptional populations. Gollnick (2008) describes the

future classrooms to include students of “micro-cultures” (i.e., race, age, gender orientation, geography).

The conceptual framework emphasizes the study of theorists and clinical experiences to promote reflection, research, and practical application. The effects of well-prepared teachers on student achievement can prevail over the influences of student background factors like poverty, linguistic differences, exceptionalities, and minority status (Cochran-Smith, 2010; Darling-Hammond, 2000; Ladson-Billings, 1994).

Technology

Technology standards from specialty organizations such as the International Society for Technology in Education (ISTE) are evident in the objectives for technology courses. These learning standards and performance indicators that extend content to include the application of knowledge in the context of learning, living, and working in our world. Cochran-Smith (2003) emphasizes that there is a growing demand that university based teacher education programs compete in the market place with an increasing array of streamlined alternative routes to certification.

Darling-Hammond (1996) presents a thought-provoking examination of how to better prepare teachers for challenging leadership roles as our schools restructure and reform. Teachers must be prepared to work in 21st century schools with 21st century students. They must also provide a curriculum that is technology-rich, problem and inquiry-centered, and “intensely individualized.” (Cochran-Smith, 2010; National Research Council, 2005)

Knowledge of Content

Faculty in the unit believe that before teacher candidates can teach others, they must first pursue and value learning themselves. Educators can significantly influence student-learning

when they are knowledgeable and enthusiastic about what they teach (Darling-Hammond, 2000). They are able to make informed decisions about instructional strategies, materials, and particular aspects of content that will be taught. In this way teachers can create learning experiences that make subject matter meaningful to students, while demonstrating a passion for teaching it.

Growth in cognition, language, social competence, physical abilities, aesthetic awareness, and morality is developmental and contextual. This means that young learners differ significantly in their development from older learners. Teachers must respond appropriately to the developmental age and individual characteristics of each learner. This represents developmentally appropriate responsive practice. Environments in which teachers use developmentally appropriate practices can significantly influence student learning (Gardner, 1993; Gilligan, 1982; Kohlberg, 1984; Levine, 2002; NAEYC, 2010; Piaget, 1952).

Professionalism

It is important that teacher candidates know that if you want to be a teacher, you must demonstrate certain characteristics associated with those of an effective teacher. Effective teachers move beyond their personal self-interest and begin to identify with the intellectual culture of teaching (Goodlad, 1994). The need for ongoing professional development is essential for teachers to enhance reflection abilities and inquiry techniques (Danielson, 2009). Effective teachers must continue to search for available strategies and resources that promote student achievement. Such teachers believe all students can learn and make every effort to help develop their student's skills and knowledge to help them learn and retain the information needed for academic success.

Teaching is a deliberate social, moral, and political act that involves reconstructing knowledge and values, then communicating these understandings to novice learners (Beyer,

Feinberg, Pagano, & Whitson, 1989). The teacher education unit nurtures preservice teachers as they move beyond their personal self-interest and begin to identify with the intellectual culture of teaching (Goodlad, 1994).

Our candidates understand the role of education in a democratic society, and believe that equality of opportunity, equity, and excellence should characterize all classrooms and schools (Goodlad & Soder, 2001). They develop an ethic of care that is grounded in the human condition (Noddings, 2002; Dalton & Watson, 1997) while simultaneously respecting the intellectual mission of schooling. In essence, they become “thoughtful” teachers (Clark, 1995) who show enthusiasm and commitment to their professional development. Completing a teacher education program, however, is only the first step to take in becoming an effective teacher. Candidates must continue to learn about themselves, their students and their subject area to remain effective teachers who are advocates for both children and the profession (Garcia, Spalding, & Powell, 2001).

Knowledge of Community and Global Issues

Teaching and learning are contingent upon the quality of human connectedness (Bakhtin, 1981; Dewey, 1948). Building on these historical understandings, we seek to create learning communities that facilitate collaboration and welcome diversity. The heterogeneous nature of our classrooms today reflects diversity in race, culture, language, and social class (Delpit, Kilgour & Dowdy, 2002). Our ability to perceive these differences and to use them in constructive ways is often limited. According to Banks (2007), democratic, collaborative learning communities that welcome diversity and honor the voices of all hold the most promise for both individual and organizational progress.

The School of Education at UAPB is engaged in the art of building an inclusive community by helping to develop an appreciation for the cultural identities of others. Furthermore, students should see themselves as members of a global community with shared economic, scientific, and environmental interests (Darling-Hammond, 2005; Nieto & Boede, 2008), as classrooms of today are enriched by the array of multilingual and multicultural intelligence that the global society provides.

Our candidates develop collaboration and communication skills essential for the 21st century. Throughout their program, they are expected to effectively collaborate with students, peers, parents, cooperating teachers, administrators and representatives of community agencies. In this way, they exchange information and develop understandings so as to create optimal learning opportunities for all students. They become proficient at articulating their beliefs as to what constitutes “best practice” in teaching and are able to sensitively describe those beliefs to others both within and outside the profession. They learn how to respond to the work of students and each other in ways that are supportive, as well as sensitive to cultural, linguistic, developmental, and gender differences. They also become skilled at clearly and accurately communicating information about children to parents and other professionals. We work to ensure that candidate’s repertoire of communication tools includes oral and written presentation skills, nonverbal skills, and the use of technological resources.

In each licensure program, we design learning experiences for our candidates that are cumulative in nature, moving them from novices to experts. As candidates progress through their licensure program, they grow professionally toward full responsibility for classroom instruction. To achieve this goal, our curriculum is structured so that they have multiple opportunities to practice teaching strategies and techniques in their college classrooms, questioning, analyzing,

discussing and writing about their developing constructs regarding teaching and learning. They then have the opportunity to try out their developing understandings in field experience and student teaching settings that include students with diverse backgrounds and learning needs. Support and feedback from college supervisors and field-based cooperating teachers, along with each candidate's personal reflections, help these prospective teachers develop complex understandings of how teaching supports the development of all learners. These understandings, in turn, provide them with a sound theoretical perspective for making instructional decisions.

Teachers must be able to communicate effectively with all students, adjusting their interactions based on age, developmental level, cultural/linguistic background and student response. Effective communication leads to the development of a community of learners (Cazden, 1988; Delpit, 1988; Garcia, 1994; Heath, 1993). Because the lives of all students are embedded in their families and communities, prospective teachers must value, respect, and celebrate families and communities as significant partners who have much to contribute to the educational process. They must be sensitive to and accepting of the diverse languages and cultural backgrounds of families and community members, using this knowledge to communicate appropriately and effectively with all stakeholders in the educational process (Bronfenbrenner, 1986; Espstein, 1991).

Assessment

Candidates also come to understand the importance of assessment that is authentic, frequent, purposeful, and varied to meet individual needs (Howey & Zempher, 1989; Eisner, 1998, AMLE, 2012). They must appropriately use both formative and summative assessment to inform instruction and design or select assessments that not only measure factual knowledge but also critical thinking. They must understand the issues related to nondiscriminatory assessment

and how to select or construct assessments that are nondiscriminatory. They must also be able to articulate the ethical issues related to assessment, particularly those related to accountability measures, like achievement or proficiency tests mandated by governmental agencies. Finally, candidates must clearly and accurately communicate assessment information to students, parents, and other professionals, using technology or other resources to accomplish this task.

PROFICIENCIES ALIGNED WITH STANDARDS

The unit offers multiple ways to provide teacher candidates with the experiences needed to document and assess competencies that can be measured. These competencies are further measured during the professional semester and again during the initial year of teaching. The following section describes the competencies for the TPAE model and the unit is committed to providing teacher candidates with the knowledge needed to successfully perform the competencies in their teaching career.

Knowledge of Content -The teacher candidate models competencies (central concepts and tools of inquiry) in the required general education core and the specialization core (content area) and designs learning experiences that exhibit the types of performances needed to link disciplines with other subjects.

Professionalism -The teacher candidate is a life-long learner who uses reflective practice, as well as federal, state and local statutes, policies and laws, to plan developmentally effective curriculum that incorporates research-based teaching strategies and promotes classroom environments that are conducive to learning.

Diversity -The teacher candidate develops and promotes cultural responsibility and responsive curricula and practices that create and support equity and inclusiveness as an integral part of the classroom and society.

Knowledge of Community and Global Issues -The teacher candidate demonstrates knowledge of community systems and their relationships to the larger society as they foster relationships with schools, colleagues, parents, and agencies to support student learning and well-being.

Assessment -The teacher candidate constructs and uses a variety of developmentally appropriate measures such as observation, paper-and-pencil test, and performance-based assessments to assess student learning and development.

Technology -The teacher candidate demonstrates technical proficiencies, informational literacy, and technological skills and competencies for assessment, instruction, communication, collaboration, and research.

Commitment to Knowledge, Skills, and Dispositions

The Knowledge of Content component of the TPAE Model is the cornerstone for assessment within the conceptual framework for both the initial and advanced program. This segment builds upon the competencies that the teacher candidates gain from the general education curriculum and provides the academic foundation for all the content courses leading to teacher licensure, including field experiences.

Success in the general education core is critical since each student must achieve a 2.75 grade point average or better to be considered for unconditional admission to the basic program in the unit. The units' conceptual framework articulates its professional commitments to knowledge, teaching competence, and student learning. It has outlined the dispositions that the faculty value in teachers and other professional school personnel.

The teacher candidates are exposed to pedagogical content knowledge. The results of state required assessment and institutional assessment of the candidates reflect a thorough understanding delineated in professional, state, and institutional standards. They demonstrate that

they have an in-depth understanding of the subject matter that they plan to teach, which allows them to provide multiple instructional strategies so that all students learn. Assessments of candidates related to the professional semester, artifacts, portfolios, and results from the PRAXIS II, demonstrate that candidates can present the content to students while using appropriate integrated technology in a challenging, clear, and compelling way.

The unit's teacher preparation program requires that candidates develop concrete indicators of their preparedness to teach as evidenced by in-class exams, portfolios, artifacts, field experience, reflection, lesson plans, and standardized test scores. Given these indicators, a teacher candidate must demonstrate he/she reflects a thorough understanding of professional and pedagogical knowledge and skills. The program requires that candidates develop meaningful learning experiences to facilitate learning for all students. Reflection on performance is an integral part of their teaching.

The conceptual framework is an illustration of a contextual statement that candidates are being prepared to demonstrate. As reflective practitioners, the candidates will know how to enhance student learning and make ideas accessible to them. The candidates will consider school, family, and community in connecting concepts to students' prior experiences and applying the ideas to real world problems.

The units' teacher candidates reflect that they understand how to assess student learning and make data driven decisions. They demonstrate the ability to accurately monitor, assess and analyze student learning, make appropriate adjustment to instruction, and have a positive effect on learning for all students. These candidates demonstrate their commitment to students by effectively managing the learning environment. The candidate, who is a reflective practitioner, demonstrates the ability to learn from their experiences, adjust to current situations, think

systematically, and conduct in-class research related to teaching. Demonstrating the above commitments is closely aligned with TPAE and a commitment to work with all students, families, and communities. The commitment ultimately reflects the dispositions expected of professional educators. The unit administers a dispositions survey in the teacher education courses. Faculty review student responses and lead class discussions based on the results of the survey. The discussion allows the student to reflect and use self-analysis to discover ways to improve any negative responses documented in their survey response.

Commitment to Diversity

The curriculum of the initial and advanced professional education programs provides candidates experiences to develop knowledge, skills, and dispositions that will enhance self-esteem, confidence, and promote constructive interpersonal relations among people of all ethnic, cultural, socio-economic, and religious backgrounds. The school of Education has integrated diversity issues into curriculum throughout the courses in the unit and through experiences in the following courses: *SPED 2300 Survey of Exceptional Children*, *ECE 4305 Building Family and Community Relationships*, *ECE 3323 Diversity and Young Learners*, at the initial level and at the advanced level, *GEDU 5364 Teaching Diverse Learners*. Moreover, in the general education courses, students are exposed to diverse issues through music, art, history, and literature.

Students prepare for teaching diverse populations in special methods courses which require that teacher candidates create and implement authentic teaching methods and experiences which are designed to challenge all students regardless of background, exceptionalities, overall academic ability.

The units' conceptual framework reflects the units' commitment to preparing candidates to support learning for all students. It provides an understanding of how knowledge, disposition,

and skills related to diversity are integrated across the curriculum, instruction, field experience, clinical practice, assessment and evaluations.

The unit is committed to preparing professionals to work with all students. In addition, the unit offers teacher candidates varied exposure to diversity including field experiences, courses of study, and clinical practice in a variety of setting. Researchers (Ladson-Billing, 1994; Grant & Sleeter, 1998; Boute, 1999) have advocated that educators remain open to new ideas and different perspectives when working with children, families and communities. Teacher candidates are involved in increasing awareness of other cultures. The philosophy of the unit embraces the concept of individual learner needs, especially for culturally diverse and exceptional populations. To ensure its commitment to diversity the unit has implemented measures to recruit and retain candidates from diverse backgrounds and cultures and experiences to promote reflection, research, and practical application in working with these groups. From the general education courses to the professional semester practicum, all courses ensure the disposition that candidates are:

- ❖ Positive and enthusiastic about all students
- ❖ Holding the belief that all students can learn and accept responsibility to help them do so
- ❖ Holding the belief that the teachers role includes helping all students develop to their full potential
- ❖ Valuing the importance of connecting curriculum and assessment to the needs, interest, and experiences of all students.

Commitment to Technology

The unit is committed to preparing candidates to become excellent teachers who are ready to teach students in the 21st century. The conceptual framework (TPAE) emphasizes a commitment

to the use of technology in teaching and learning. This commitment is demonstrated by an assessment of the candidates conceptual understanding of how knowledge, skills, and dispositions relates to educational and informational technology and how these critical components are integrated into the curriculum, instruction, and field experience. Instructional media and instructional design are part of the educational core for all candidates. *EDUC 2309 Instructional Media for the Classroom* is an unrestricted required sophomore level course. Required use and proficiencies of technology skills fused into this and other required courses are evident throughout all degree programs. At the advanced level, *GEDU 5321 Introduction to Instructional Technology* offers media and instructional design with application of state of the art technology.

Technology standards from specialty organizations such as the International Society for Technology in Education (ISTE) are evident in the objectives for the technology courses. Technology and specialty organizations content guidelines and standards are also evident in other course objectives and activities; such as in *MLED 4302 Methods and Materials for Math and Science*. In this course students review and plan lessons around content specific software and graphing calculators prior to the completion of eighth grade.

ASSESSMENT DRIVEN

The unit has an assessment system that uses multiple measures to assess candidate knowledge, skills and dispositions. These assessments are based upon national, state, University, and unit standards. Data are collected at transition points on the qualifications and proficiencies of undergraduate and graduate applicants to the unit (entry level data), of candidates during their professional preparation (mid-level data), of candidates seeking initial licensure during the professional semester and graduate candidates enhancing and perfecting their knowledge, skills

and dispositions (exit level data), and of candidates after they become program completers (follow-up data). Data are collected, analyzed and summarized during regularly scheduled periods and stored on the School of Education Assessment Database in the dean's office. Appendix C outlines the assessment system. It highlights the transition point assessments for undergraduate candidates, traditional graduate candidates, and non-traditional graduate candidates (those enrolled in the non-traditional alternative licensure program, Master of Arts in Teaching (MAT). Traditional graduate candidates complete all of the undergraduate key assessments at the transition points with the exception of "Exiting University College." These graduate candidates also complete all of the key assessments as listed for traditional graduate candidates.

APPENDIX A- Alignment with State Standards

Conceptual Framework	Arkansas Teaching Standards
Knowledge of Content	#1 Learner Development #2 Learning Differences #3 Learning Environment #4 Content Knowledge #5 Application of Content #8 Instructional Strategies
Professionalism	#7 Planning for Instruction #8 Instructional Strategies #9 Professional Learning and Ethical Practice #10 Leadership and Collaboration
Diversity	#1 Learner Development #2 Learning Differences
Knowledge of Community and Global Issues	#10 Leadership and Collaboration
Assessment	#6 Assessment
Technology	#8 Instructional Strategies

APPENDIX B-Unit Assessment System

