

DESCRIPTION OF THE UNIVERSITY

George Fox University (GFU) is an independent university founded in 1891 by Quakers who also formed what has become the Northwest Yearly Meeting of Friends (NWYM). The university is currently governed by the Board of Trustees whose members are appointed by members of NWYM at their annual sessions. Thus, George Fox University is a privately administered, fully accredited (Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities), coeducational, institution offering undergraduate, graduate, and professional curricula to a student population that reflects the diversity found in the Pacific Northwest, especially Oregon. George Fox University's primary focus is teaching, scholarship, and service to the church and the public arena.

George Fox University remains faithful to its liberal arts tradition by emphasizing academic challenge, professional preparation, attainment of marketable skills, personal enrichment, and the rightful integration of Christian faith and learning. Though the graduate programs emphasize preparation for high-quality professional practice, those programs build from a liberal arts base.

As a faith community of teaching, learning, and service, members come from various Christian traditions. As faculty members integrate faith and learning through their disciplines they are influenced by the Quaker traditions that govern organizational practice at George Fox University. Members of the academic community are actively involved in the life of local, state, national, and international communities as they carry out the mission of the university.

George Fox University's philosophy is rooted in the belief that education flourishes in a community motivated by a Christian vision, Christ-centered values, and a commitment to the education of the whole person. The George Fox University community accepts the responsibility to respond to the needs of our students by challenging and empowering them to develop holistically in the attainment of knowledge, skills, and values necessary to thrive in an ever-changing world. From these beliefs, the George Fox University community adopted the following values statement in 1997: The George Fox University community values ...

- Following Christ, the Center of Truth
- Honoring the worth, dignity, and potential of the individual
- Developing the whole person — spirit, mind, and body
- Living and learning in a Christ-centered community
- Pursuing integrity over image
- Achieving academic excellence in the liberal arts
- Preparing every person to serve Christ in the world
- Preserving our Friends (Quaker) heritage



Preparing and supporting professionals who think critically, transform practice, and promote justice.

GEORGE FOX UNIVERSITY MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the university from its beginning has been to demonstrate the meaning of Jesus Christ by offering a caring educational community in which each individual may achieve the highest intellectual and personal growth, and by participating responsibly in our world's concerns.

The foregoing mission statement of George Fox University is detailed in the following institutional objectives:

- Teach all truth as God's truth, integrating all fields of learning around the person and work of Jesus Christ, bringing the divine revelations through sense, reason, and intuition to the confirming test of Scripture.
- Support academic programs that liberate the student for a life of purpose and fulfillment through an awareness of the resources of knowledge and culture available; maximize career-oriented education through counseling, curriculum, field experience, and placement.
- Maintain a program of varied activities that directs the student to a commitment to Christ as Lord and Savior, encourages attitudes of reverence and devotion toward God, leads to recognition that the revealed commandments of God are the supreme criteria of the good life, enables the student to mirror the example of Christ in human relationships, and develops a greater desire to serve humanity in a spirit of Christian love.
- Provide a center for Quaker leadership where faculty and students learn the history and Christian doctrines of the Friends movement and make contemporary applications of these insights.
- Give leadership to evangelical Christianity generally, through scholarly publication, lecturing, and by evangelistic and prophetic proclamation and service.
- Promote cocurricular activities that will emphasize the development of leadership, initiative, and teamwork by giving opportunity to make practical use of the skills and ideas acquired through academic courses.
- Make itself a community in which studies and activities are made relevant to life, develop insight into social and political issues confronting humanity, and learn to participate democratically in decision making and policy implementation as responsible citizens.
- Serve as a cultural center for all publics of the university, and sponsor programs that are informative and culturally stimulating to the larger university community.
- Provide distinctive learning opportunities through continuing education programs and through curriculum enhancements such as off-campus centers, study abroad, honors programs, and other special programs and events.
- Cultivate awareness, respect, understanding, and appreciation of cultural diversity throughout the university community to provide members of diverse races and cultures an affirming environment that encourages cross-cultural sharing in the context of Christian lifestyle expectations.



Although the mission statement of George Fox University is reevaluated from time to time (especially during regional accreditation reviews), its basic assumptions are understood throughout the school community and guide the daily operation of the institution. Faculty members engage in dialogue about the mission (especially in relation to education programs) at their annual three-day retreat in August, in monthly all-university faculty meetings, university-wide faculty committees, and in school and department meetings.

PURPOSES OF THE EDUCATION PROGRAMS IN THE SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

Initial Teacher-Educator Programs

Through George Fox University's School of Education (SOE), initial teacher-education programs are available at the undergraduate and graduate levels. The curricula, field experiences, and practica (student teaching) prepare candidates to acquire the knowledge, skills, and dispositions to become competent teachers in public and private schools that reflect our multicultural society. Only candidates who demonstrate competence in content knowledge, professional knowledge, and professional practice are considered professionally suitable for teaching careers. All candidates must successfully meet these competencies to be recommended as program completers. Only program completers are eligible for the Initial Teaching License through Oregon's Teachers Standards and Practices Commission (TSPC).

The content of the teacher-education programs meet the standards for university-approved programs set by TSPC. These state standards reflect the professional standards recommended by the various national professional associations that influence teacher education. Currently, at the undergraduate level the SOE offers the Bachelor of Science (BS) degree in Elementary Education. Candidates in this two-year program can gain formal admittance during their sophomore year at George Fox University. The program prepares candidates for teaching multiple subjects through content knowledge gained in the liberal arts and elementary education program curriculum at the early childhood and elementary authorization levels. Candidates must pass the standardized test required by TSPC for the multiple subjects endorsement. At the graduate level, candidates enter either the Master of Arts in Teaching (MAT) program or the Alternative Pathways Teaching program having earned a bachelor's degree from an accredited college or university, having passed (or showing the potential to pass) the appropriate Praxis exam for their endorsement(s), and showing through prior experience that they have the potential to meet the knowledge, skills, and dispositions necessary for the Initial Teaching License at the appropriate authorization level(s).

Regardless of educational level (undergraduate or graduate), candidates' professional knowledge is gained through coursework in educational foundations, instructional design, and content pedagogy and methods in conjunction with practical and clinical experiences, seminars, and role modeling. According to the standards set by TSPC and George Fox University, candidates are evaluated in coursework, practica experiences, work samples, and student teaching.



The teacher-education programs undergo continual revision as data are acquired from student evaluations of teacher effectiveness, Praxis test scores, field experience and student teacher evaluations, work sample evaluations, alumni and k-12 school leader surveys, and educational research on preparing teachers for a multicultural society. Faculty members in these programs regularly evaluate this data for the purpose of program improvement.

Advanced Professional Programs

The School of Education offers advanced professional programs leading to TSPC-licensure in educational administration, school counseling, school psychology, and teacher education. Along with licensure, candidates can add other endorsements to their teaching licenses, earn the master's degree (MA, MS, or M. Ed.), and earn the doctorate (Ed. D.). The advanced professional programs at the graduate level provide opportunities for intellectual, professional, and spiritual growth and foster within candidates those qualities that enable them to contribute as leaders within their chosen professions. The Quaker heritage of George Fox University and the Christian understanding of service to others are integral to the philosophy of the Advanced Professional Programs.

The graduate programs are specifically designed to enhance the students' knowledge, skills and dispositions in their chosen academic areas and to prepare them to accept professional responsibilities. All candidates for advanced licenses must meet standards set by TSPC and George Fox University by demonstrating through coursework and portfolio the knowledge, skills, and dispositions appropriate to their chosen specialty. In addition, candidates for the initial license in advanced programs (administration, school counseling, and school psychology) must pass the standardized content knowledge test required by TSPC. Advanced graduate programs have as their main goal the carrying out of the SOE mission: preparing and supporting professionals who think critically, transform practice, and promote justice.

The graduate programs in education incorporate the mission of George Fox University into its own statement of mission and philosophy, by offering a "caring educational community in which each individual may achieve the highest intellectual and personal growth, and by participating responsibly in our world's concerns." Graduate faculty members provide challenge and support to students as they become competent professionals who contribute to their communities as positive agents of change. Like the rest of the programs at George Fox University, the SOE advanced graduate programs emphasize the development of the whole person—body, mind, and spirit. Through their coursework and experiences candidates consider the spiritual, intellectual, cultural, and material values necessary to live responsibly, respect individuality, seek truth and peace, and foster justice in society.

Graduate faculty members are very active in teaching, scholarship, and service. In order to live out the GFU mission statement, graduate faculty offer courses in a variety of settings: face-to-



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face courses at GFU's Newberg, Portland Center, and Salem Center campuses; face-to-face courses in various school districts around the state of Oregon; and online courses through the GFU course-management systems. Courses are offered three semesters a year (fall, spring, and summer) to accommodate the working professionals who attend.

THE UNIT'S (SCHOOL OF EDUCATION) CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Introduction

With Christ at the center, the School of Education offers practical and challenging programs for professionals in education and counseling where excellence, innovation, and professional expertise are modeled by faculty members who continue their journey of learning, teaching, and leading. The School of Education faculty members, responding to the mission of George Fox University, believe that the development of an ever-learning professional is dependent upon training programs that focus on developing the whole person through challenging and supportive classroom instruction and practical and clinical experiences. Furthermore, the training programs seeks to foster stewardship by enabling and encouraging teacher, administrator, school counseling, and school psychology candidates to become familiar with and to develop a strong commitment to principles of serving others in a spirit of compassion, justice, and selflessness. Consequently, the School of Education's conceptual framework centers on the vision statement: *Preparing and supporting professionals who think critically, transform practice, and promote justice.*

At the foundation is a commitment by the School of Education to produce practitioners at the initial and advanced levels who are stewards of the value of developing the whole person—mind, body, and spirit. Whether they serve as teachers, counselors, psychologists, or administrators we desire to produce candidates who hold a primary commitment to the idea that all students can learn. Whether or not they come to us with this value already well formed, we want our candidates to advocate for each individual under their care and use their professional positions to influence the system to provide appropriate resources to ensure that all students can learn.

The following three sections explain the process used in developing the conceptual framework, the School of Education's philosophy and commitment to knowledge, teaching competence, and student learning, and the theoretical underpinnings of the three components that provide coherence to the Conceptual Framework: think critically, transform practice, and promote justice.

Developing the Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework for George Fox University's School of Education (SOE) arose out of focused mission statement work started by GFU faculty in 1999. This earlier work helped to set a vision for our established and emerging programs and led to the creation of a school of



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education in June 2002. Thus, three departments were formed: undergraduate elementary education, master of arts in teaching, and educational foundations and leadership. The addition of the GFU graduate counseling department to the school of education in June 2003 and the desire to join the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) required us to revisit our mission statement and state more clearly the conceptual framework that ties the school together. The conceptual framework mission statement (approved by SOE faculty in May 2004) provides direction for SOE programs that are spread across three campuses and five teaching sites.

The development of the School of Education's Conceptual Framework was a collaborative effort that gained focus after the mission statement was approved. Starting with the focused mission and vision statement work completed earlier, the conceptual framework committee sought input from school of education faculty for deepening the meanings of the three constructs that make up the mission statement. An initial draft of the Conceptual Framework was prepared by the committee and presented at the August 2004 School of Education faculty meeting.

The draft of the SOE Conceptual Framework was approved at the August 2004 meeting as faculty members agreed that it complied with the philosophy and mission of George Fox University and represented the values, commitments, and dispositions of SOE faculty members. The Conceptual Framework was submitted in September 2004 as partial fulfillment to NCATE's precondition requirements. The fact that the NCATE committee evaluating the precondition report desired further clarification helped the School of Education focus its efforts on those deficiencies in the conceptual framework, namely the integration of the conceptual framework with the SOE's commitment to teaching and learning and state and national licensure standards. Between September and November 19, 2004 six SOE committees were formed to reflect the six NCATE standards. These committees evaluated what work the SOE needed yet to complete in order to be ready for a focused, NCATE visit. Overwhelmingly, these committees recognized the need to articulate the SOE's conceptual framework with the TSPC-required standards for licensure.

Faculty took great to ensure that the three dimensions of the conceptual framework (*think critically, transform practice, and promote justice*) provide a context for ensuring continuity in School of Education's curriculum, instruction, field experience, clinical practice, and assessment throughout the candidates' program of study. The work done by NCATE Standards 1 and 2 committees to ensure that the values described in SOE's conceptual framework are assessed along with knowledge, skills, and dispositions required by TSPC and NCATE. The system for ensuring that this assessment is consistent and accurate appears later in this document.

SOE's philosophy and commitment to knowledge, teaching competence, and student learning

The School of Education's vision statement (*preparing and supporting professionals who think critically, transform practice, and promote justice*) is rooted in the Judeo-Christian ideal that all



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life has its origin in the creative work of God, and human life is to be regarded as a sacred gift from God. Further, all learners have value because they reflect the image of God. As creator, God imbues humans with the ability to know and be known. Thus, all humans can seek truth, learn knowledge, and show empathy (love) towards one another. These actions imply responsibility. To know means to care for others, care for the systems God has created, and to seek to improve the lives of those who have less.

Further, the three dimensions that make up the SOE's conceptual framework are influenced by the following Christian principles as emphasized in the Friends (Quaker) tradition:

- Jesus Christ is actively present with us as Savior, Teacher, Lord, Healer, and Friend and is immediately accessible to all who believe in Him.
- Because all persons have equal value and are created in the image of God, we must treat others with respect and dignity, regardless of human measures of merit or value.
- The Holy Spirit enlightens our paths and transforms our lives. As we yield our lives to God and become immersed in the life of the Spirit, things change. Despair gives way to hope, and weakness gives way to empowerment. All things indeed become new.
- Christ through His Spirit transforms us to be more like Himself. He enables us to live lives of integrity and righteousness and calls us to bring others into this relationship. We listen to Christ, we obey Him, and we teach others how to do the same.
- Jesus reveals the fullest measure of God's love by His example and in His death on the cross. As we become more Christ-like, we hope to display this same quality of love corporately and individually to those around us.
- We are called to work for justice and to be agents of peace in a broken world. Whether situations of conflict and confusion be personal, national or global—within the church or beyond it—we are called to be agents of the same healing and love we have received from God.¹

From this foundation that all human life is a sacred gift of God, the School of Education faculty members have developed the following statement describing a commitment to their actions as members of a learning community:

Excellence, integrity, and a balanced life are hallmarks of the Christian professional educator. Through our character, words, and actions we model servant leadership as we support and challenge our students. "We teach who we are" as we demonstrate the love of God by modeling Christ.² Our goal is to provide a safe environment for people to explore the roles of the professional educator through a Christian worldview. "To teach is to create a space in which obedience to truth is practiced."³ We believe that all truth is God's truth, and as seekers of truth we create for our students a space in which learning can flourish.

1 Northwest Yearly Meeting of Friends Churches Values Statement, adopted 1999.

2 Parker Palmer, *The Courage to Teach: Exploring the Inner Landscape of a Teacher's Life*, San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers, p. 1.

3 Parker Palmer, *To Know As We Are Known: Education as a Spiritual Journey*, San Francisco: Harper, p. 69.



We prepare educators who think critically through multiple perspectives, reflect deeply upon their own practice, and act wisely as agents of change to influence society in supportive, creative, and just ways. We offer integrated programs rich in academic complexity, practical in experience, and challenging in paradigm, thought, and strategy. Our techniques and strategies ultimately reflect our view of the learner, the profession, and our Lord. Together, as students and faculty, we define excellence in character, innovation, and professional expertise through the light of Christ, as we continue the journey of learning, teaching, and leading.

From this Christ-centered world view that infuses the mission of George Fox University, the School of Education's views on learning are heavily influenced by our views on knowing. To develop holistically—body, mind, and spirit—requires one to use three primary modes of knowing: reasoning, intuiting, and sensing (hearing, seeing, tasting, smelling, and touching). How we know determines in large part what we know. Thus, we provide a variety of learning experiences that require students to use all three modes of knowing in order that they might construct new knowledge to build upon or replace their old paradigms.

Our views of learning are infused with ideas from constructivist learning theory which holds that learners actively create meaning by building understanding and reconstructing ideas about reality through active engagement in all three modes of knowing (Ornstein and Levine, 2000; Woolfolk, 1994). Current constructivist theory comes from a long line of thought that predates the term, and we argue that gets its source about the value of the learner from the world view mentioned above. Grounded in the research of Piaget, Vygotsky, Bartlett, and Bruner the constructivist theory of learning is influenced by the educational philosophy of John Dewey (instrumentalism; also called pragmatism) that focused on learning-by-doing (along with reflectively considering what one knows) rather than rote learning and dogmatic instruction, the current practice of his day.

Constructivist epistemology usually rests on three major premises: (1) learners actively create meaning from their own perception of reality rather than passively receiving and storing information in their minds; (2) learners continually reconstruct their concepts as they make meaning of new knowledge juxtaposed to prior experiences; and (3) new knowledge is constructed in the social situations and interactions experienced by the learner (Airasian and Walsh, 1997). Concepts central to constructivist design, teaching and learning were isolated by Wilson & Cole (1991):

- Embed learning in a rich authentic problem-solving environment;
- Provide for authentic versus academic contexts for learning;
- Provide for learner control;
- Use errors as a mechanism to provide feedback on learners' understanding (pp.59-61).



An important concept for social constructivists is that of *scaffolding*, a process of guiding the learner from what is presently known to what is to be known. Vygotsky (1978) found that students' problem solving skills fall into three categories:

- skills which the student cannot perform
- skills which the student may be able to perform
- skills that the student can perform with help

Scaffolding allows students to perform tasks that would normally be slightly beyond their ability without the assistance and guidance from the teacher. Thus, appropriate teacher support can allow students to function at the cutting edge of their individual development.

Widely written about, constructivism is articulated in the literature in a variety of ways: situated cognition, anchored instruction, apprenticeship learning, problem-based learning, generative learning, constructionism, exploratory learning. The following is a summary of characteristics commonly found in the literature on constructivist learning and teaching along with examples used by School of Education faculty:

- Multiple perspectives and representations of concepts and content are presented and encouraged.
- Goals and objectives are derived by the student or in negotiation with the teacher or system.
- Teachers serve in the role of guides, monitors, coaches, tutors and facilitators.
- Activities, opportunities, tools and environments are provided to encourage metacognition, self-analysis, self-regulation, self-reflection & self-awareness.
- The student plays a central role in mediating and controlling learning.
- Learning situations, environments, skills, content and tasks are relevant, realistic, and authentic and represent the natural complexities of the 'real world'.
- Primary sources of data are used in order to ensure authenticity and real-world complexity.
- Knowledge construction and not reproduction is emphasized.
- This construction takes place in individual contexts and through social negotiation, collaboration, and experience.
- The learner's previous knowledge constructions, beliefs, and attitudes are considered in the knowledge construction process.
- Problem-solving, higher-order thinking skills and deep understanding are emphasized.
- Errors provide the opportunity for insight into students' previous knowledge constructions.
- Exploration is a favored approach in order to encourage students to seek knowledge independently and to manage the pursuit of their goals.
- Learners are provided with the opportunity for apprenticeship learning in which there is an increasing complexity of tasks, skills and knowledge acquisition.
- Knowledge complexity is reflected in an emphasis on conceptual interrelatedness and interdisciplinary learning.



- Collaborative and cooperative learning are favored in order to expose the learner to alternative viewpoints.
- Scaffolding is facilitated to help students perform just beyond the limits of their ability.
- Assessment is authentic and interwoven with teaching.

Examples of Constructivist Teaching by GFU School of Education Faculty:

Example 1 – from faculty member in initial teaching license preparation (undergraduate):

How they are encouraged to move from one place of knowing to other places of knowledge:

- I use authentic learning situations: panels of teachers, practicums, units of instruction, discussion leaders, etc.
- We assign metacognition journals in several classes. I use it with good success in Language and Literacy(EDUG560) and in Professional Seminar (EDUG 590).

To enhance reflection we use life maps in EDUG 501, we will use collage, personal narrative and drama in this next cohort.

To help them with the construction of a philosophy of education, I use an exercise in the first two months where they write their philosophy. One year later, I present it in puzzle form and they restructure their philosophy by removing pieces, adding new pieces, or adding to the overall design. They then explain that orally.

We negotiate curriculum whenever possible--making sure to fulfill TSPC guidelines.

Example 2 – from faculty member in advanced professional program (reading):

I want to respond to this request about teaching in a constructivist manner but I am having a hard time knowing how to put what I do in words. I think my training in the realm of the Reading Recovery program has allowed me to evolve through the years by constructing my own learning and it has become a natural way for me to teach. I am always allowing the students time to interact in the social learning environment within my classroom; they talk around the topics presented and I try to scaffold them in helping them answer their own questions. One very concrete thing I do in Advanced Strategies in Literacy Instruction is present the seven principles of apprenticeship in teaching. We discuss situations that exemplify apprenticeship in teaching. Then they make a video of their own teaching that is viewed by the rest of the class. Together we identify examples of principles of apprenticeship in teaching in those videos.



Example 3 – from faculty member in initial teaching license preparation (graduate):

Action Research for Teachers:

- The concept behind this course is that every preservice teacher will construct his/her own knowledge of “effective pedagogy,” how “context matters” in determining “effectiveness” through critical analysis and, finally, how to transform their own practice and promote justice within the classroom. This is the AR course.
- As the teacher, I provide the scaffold for the inquiry; the preservice teacher provides the “content,” i.e. the topic (the critical question). The setting for the project is the classroom where the preservice teacher is located for student teaching.
- In constructing the scaffold, I use authentic sources, i.e. data sets from previous students’ work, for current student to analyze.
- Students’ work through the inquiry process by simultaneously analyzing the cultural context of their work, conducting self-analysis (how the self is both participant and instrument) while actually implementing intervention strategies which they believe might provide for a better education for their students.
- Preservice teachers are introduced to the concept of “paradigm” and how our personal paradigm is mediated through cultural norms. This is then applied to data interpretation: student understand that to be totally “objective” is in Haraway’s words, a “god-trick.” They must include how their own biases and beliefs of what a good teacher and a good student is, for example, into their interpretations, and consider how this influences these interpretations.
- The AR process is one of exploration. Preservice teachers are told that their critical question may change due to their discoveries along the way. In short, they may find that they were asking the wrong question, but the “wrong” then will become the learning.
- The entire process relies upon higher order thinking skills; in fact, my own hunch at this time, is that those students who work through the AR process the best, ultimately, become the teachers who are most likely to transform practice and promote justice.
- Finally, the AR class uses an apprenticeship learning approach. A typical class session this fall in my AR class went like this: 1 hour of direct/interactive instruction using authentic data sources; 2 hours of “choice” (eTextbook activities in the computer lab, plus additional interactive, guided, partner activities for extended learning). During the last 2 hours, I met with students individually, using a workshop format, tracking who I met with and what their questions and issues were. We followed with a “closure,” where students synthesized their “Ah Ha’s” (those who had them!) during the course.

Teaching Reading Theory: The second example comes from the EDUG 560 & EDUG 551/2 courses I taught with another faculty member. I don’t think this class is as “pure” as form but I’ll give an example that worked closely with the apprentice type approach. Reading theory



is difficult for preservice teachers since they do not have much to “hang” the concepts upon – they don’t have any real experience listening and observing children learn to read. What we did:

- EDUG 560: Presented an overall literacy framework; In introducing this, we guided students through a number of exercises illustrating the concepts of the four language systems. Once this framework was established, we continued the scaffolding so students could explore and construct their own understanding of this framework. Below are some of the ways we did this over the course of two classes
- Metacognition of own reading of different kinds of text.
- Deconstruction and analysis of different kinds of reading programs.
- Listening, doing running records, and analyzing video tapes of “real” children reading; applying the framework.
- Constructing literacy lessons that represented the framework; being able to describe the relationship.
- Using various questions and scenarios, students worked through “literacy conflicts” and applied the framework.
- Students created guided reading lessons, min-novel units, social studies lessons, all based upon the theoretical framework.
- Mindy & I constructed a large representation of the framework (a Victorian Lily); student created they own miniature lily; we referred back to the lily when teaching and doing activities. Then, students were required to make their own representation, demonstrating how they had come to know the theoretical framework.
- Students responded to an “interview question” they most likely would be asked when interviewing for teaching positions. The question was evaluated for how the theoretical framework was included; feedback was given; student revised.

Theoretical underpinnings of the the Conceptual Framework

Because it is coherent with institutional mission, constructivism was selected as the theoretical learning perspective to support the development of professionals who think critically, transform practice, and promote justice. Throughout their programs, candidates are offered multiple opportunities and diverse processes to be connected with what is already known. Faculty members serve as facilitators, coaches, guides, mentors, supervisors in providing rich opportunities for student learning within and outside the classroom, while listening to students’ current conceptions, ideas, and thinking.

Integrally related to the constructivist approach is the use of reflection, a concept central to the Friends (Quaker) understanding of worship and the School of Education’s understanding of learning. Reflection allows candidates to articulate their thoughts regarding the knowledge, skills, and dispositions they have acquired in their education programs. Reflection provides candidates a vehicle for developing strategies they wish to use when they move into their new



sphere of influence. Reflection draws on a constructivist view of knowledge whereby candidates can thoughtfully review their experiences in order to fully understand and value their professional routine (Collier, 1999; Seghers, 2000; Thomas & Montgomery, 1998). In addition to benefiting the individuals who have the opportunity to reflect on their experiences, shared reflection can bring new understandings and helpful suggestions to fellow practitioners (Grimmett, 1989). Reflection is mutually beneficial to candidates, as well as to those who have an opportunity to share these reflections (Seghers, 2000).

A critical relationship exists between reflection and transfer (Burke, 1994; Fogarty, Perkins, and Barell, 1992; Van Halen-Faber, C., 1997; and Perkins and Salomon, 1992). In order to transfer knowledge or skills from one situation to another, one must first be aware; reflective strategies are designed to help students become more aware (Barell, 1992; Burke, 1994). Transfer, however, does not happen automatically unless teachers teach it (Burke, 1994). Ordinary learning contrasts with transfer. In ordinary learning, individuals do more of the same thing in the same situations. Real transfer happens when people carry something they learned in one context to a significantly different context (Fogarty et al., 1992; Pedersen & Liu, 2003).

Throughout their programs, candidates are provided many opportunities for reflection. Faculty members encourage meta-cognitive techniques, such as journaling, thoughtful questioning, goal setting, problem-based learning, simulations, and self assessments. These and other activities are designed to help make candidates more aware of their own thought processes and, therefore, more able to transfer those strategies to real-life situations. Critical to the initial teaching license are the two “work samples” required by TSPC for licensure at each authorization level. In these thorough documents (often approaching 100 pages), candidates present their ability to meet the standards for a teaching license: plan instruction that supports student progress in learning appropriate for the developmental level; establish a classroom climate conducive to learning; engage students in planned learning activities; evaluate, act upon, and report progress in learning for each student; and exhibit professional behaviors, ethics and values appropriate to professional educator. Integral to these work samples is the requirement for candidates to assess their own growth as a beginning professional by cognitively reflecting on what they learned from their teaching experience. Faculty members use these classroom-generated reflective activities and the field-generated work samples to assess the ability of candidates to transfer what they are learning to practice as a beginning teacher. Likewise, a similar portfolio approach is used with advanced professionals in showing their progress towards meeting the standards for continuing teaching, administration licenses, school counseling, and school psychology licenses.

Although the components of *think critically*, *transform practice*, and *promote justice* are discussed separately in the following sections, the School of Education realizes that these three components are interconnected, flowing from and to one another. In reality, they form the apex points of a pyramid that sits within a sphere called professional practice. Consequently, the breakdown of these areas is arbitrary, but it is convenient to discuss the three components using separate formats.



Preparing and supporting professionals who think critically, transform practice, and promote justice.

Think Critically

Think critically has the following components: Candidates seek multiple perspectives, imagine possibilities, formulate wise decisions, anticipate paradigm shifts, love learning, and make inferences based on evidence. The School of Education has adopted the following belief about this component: initial and advanced program candidates in the SOE should have the ability to think critically about subject area knowledge and knowledge that informs their practice.

The following summarizes the knowledge base that forms the foundation for this component: *Think Critically* is to be a lifelong learner who anticipates, examines, reflects, and proceeds. How does the educational professional move beyond the mundane? Reflective practitioners systematically examine their practices using lenses that are developed through research and reflection. “Reflection is itself a form of social interaction; it is carried on through a dialogue of words or action with other participants in the teaching-learning context or else it is a symbolic dialogue in which the teacher anticipates and invents the reactions of students, colleagues and others, using this symbolic dialogue as test and critique of proposed interpretations and plans for future actions.” (Tabachnick & Zeichner, 1991, p.16) To think critically involves data collection, analysis, planned movement forward, and post evaluation (Schon, 1983; Valli 1992). Differing amounts of specificity may be used, but the sequence of active research on practice is comparable. Changes in practice are not merely a result of passing fads or mandates, but are thoughtful decisions based in exploration of multiple perspectives and assessment of those possibilities. Educators who use critical, thoughtful judgment provide models of thinking for others (Tom, 1997; Clark & Peterson, 1986). To think critically allows others to observe a planned thoughtful method for problem solving. Innovation is embraced and anticipated in an active pursuit of knowledge in support of teaching and learning. Our interest in learning creates ongoing curiosity and a desire to develop as a professional as we explore knowledge of content, pedagogical content knowledge, and professional content knowledge (Shulman, 1986; NCATE Professional Standards, 2002). To think critically informs our teaching/leading and celebrates a professional life of reflection and learning.

Transform Practice

Transform practice has the following components: Candidates use technology, research, subject knowledge, and effective oral and written communication to enhance student and client learning; analyze, debrief, and abstract from their own experiences for the purpose of transforming practice; and, take the lead in reforming practice at their institutions. The School of Education has adopted the following belief about this component: initial and advanced program candidates in the SOE should have the ability to reflectively use a variety of research tools, cognitive strategies, and professional practices to take the lead in reforming their institutions.

The following summarizes the knowledge base that forms the foundation for this component:



Preparing and supporting professionals who think critically, transform practice, and promote justice.

To transform is to undergo a metamorphosis, it speaks of change, adaptation, and re-invention. One does not merely transform practice, but rather, such transformation comes from the site of self engaged with others for “Knowledge emerges only through invention and re-invention, through the restless, impatient, continuing, hopefully inquiry men(sic) pursue in the world, with the world, and with each other” (Freire, 1984, p. 58). Such engagement through dialogue and authentic experience, transforms us through an ethic of care as we seek community, solutions, and intentionally pursue relationships and knowledge that challenge our paradigms and prod us to create our practice as never-completed art, always already our history and our future (Dewey, 1944; Foucault, 1976; Noddings, 1992; Vygotsky, 1967). To transform is the willing acknowledgment of limitations and requires the risk of remembering what we otherwise want to ignore; in the humbleness of incompleteness, we find ourselves open to possibilities and our practices altered (Ellsworth, 1997; Felman, 1987; McLaren, 2001). “Learning to teach – like teaching itself – is always the process of becoming: a time of formation and transformation, of scrutiny into what one is doing, and who one can become” (Britzman, 1991, p. 8). We embrace this quest of *becoming* as an act of faith and love and sing with ee. cummings (1954), “i who have died am alive again today now the ears of my ears awake and now the eyes of my eyes are opened.” As a verb, the word *transform* is rooted in *praxis* – the transformation of ourselves and the world.

Promote Justice

Promote justice has the following components: Candidates act to ensure that all students and clients can learn; advocate for the needs of all students and clients by promoting justice; and, widen students’ and clients’ understandings by teaching about and modeling what it means to “love one’s neighbor.” The School of Education has adopted the following belief about this component: initial and advanced program candidates in the SOE should have the ability to advocate for the needs of for all students and clients in a caring manner by actively promoting justice.

The following summarizes the knowledge base that forms the foundation for this component: *Promote justice* means to unconditionally love our neighbors as our equals. Who is our neighbor? Christ teaches that all people are our neighbors. “To love one’s neighbor, therefore, means essentially to will to exist equally for every human being without exception. . . . In being king, beggar, scholar, rich man, poor man, friend, enemy, we do not resemble each other – in these ways we are different. But in being neighbor we are all unconditionally alike” (Kierkegaard, edited by Moore, 1999, p. 100-101). In the schoolhouse or in clinical practice, promoting justice means that one’s actions reveal a commitment to the belief that *all* can learn (NCATE Professional Standards, 2002, p. 12). Promoting justice is a commitment to the democratic values of preparing young people for equal and responsible citizenship and productive adulthood (Dewey, 1944; Bruner, 1971); a commitment to “unlearning” viewpoints (i.e., racist, sexist, socio-economic) that keep us from loving our neighbor fully (Kohl, 1994; Charney, 1997); a commitment to helping young people develop two behavioral characteristics



crucial for forming good people – deferring gratification (ability to control impulse), and empathy (ability to walk in another person’s shoes) (Etzioni, 2003; Palmer, 1983). Promoting justice is the “direct confrontation of oppression—social, sexual, and economic—both in school and society” (Kohl, 1994, p. 32). Promoting justice is a commitment to ethical practice, reflectively thinking about the values that often appear to be a conflict between two right courses of action: individual versus community (the needs of the self or small group pitted against the claims of the larger society); truth versus loyalty (personal integrity at odds with responsibility); short-term versus long term (important requirements of the present come up against foresight, stewardship, and deferred gratification); and, justice versus mercy (fairness, expectation, and an equal application of the rules opposed to empathy, compassion, and a desire to make exceptions) (Darling-Hammond, ; Rhodes, 2002). As professionals, we embrace the responsibility of promoting justice through a living relationship with Christ, the source of our love for our neighbors. Only in love for God can we love in truth.



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