

SUNY POTSDAM TEACHER EDUCATION

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK



A TRADITION OF EXCELLENCE: PREPARING CREATIVE AND REFLECTIVE EDUCATORS

In 1999, the State of New York required all of its teacher education programs to be revised and re-registered. As part of this process the SUNY Potsdam faculty in education programs revisited the mission statement and developed a conceptual framework organized around three main themes. In 2006 we revisited and updated the knowledge base, and revisited and updated both the framework (2012) and the knowledge base (2013).

- **Well-Educated Citizen**
- **Reflective Practitioner**
- **Principled Educator**

Well-Educated Citizen

- critically analyzes and solves problems
- organizes thought and communicates effectively
- understands history and our social and political institutions
- understands and respects diverse cultures and our intercultural world
- understands the impact of science and technology on our lives
- uses technology appropriately for research, analysis and communication and exhibits information literacy
- has experience creating and appreciating the arts
- has a broad and deep understanding of the subject matter one teaches
- models the skills, attitudes, and values of inquiry appropriate to one's discipline

Reflective Practitioner

- models inquiry, practice, and reflection
- uses research to inform curriculum, instruction, and assessment effectively
- meets the diverse learning needs of students
- applies knowledge of local, state, national, and professional standards
- utilizes instructional and assistive technology effectively
- promotes inquiry, critical thinking, and problem solving
- creates positive learning environments for all students
- uses research, reflection, and discourse throughout one's career
- prepares to become an instructional leader

Principled Educator

- behaves in a professional manner
- maintains a high level of competence and integrity in one's practice
- demonstrates a willingness to take risks, be flexible, and show comfort with uncertainty
- works well with others
- takes responsibility for one's own actions
- recognizes and respects one's own diversity and that of others
- fosters positive relationships with students, parents, administrators, colleagues, and agencies in the community to support student learning and well-being

Conceptual Framework Knowledge Base (2001, updated 2006 and 2012)

In developing the conceptual framework, efforts were focused on the three central questions identified by the National Academy of Education's Committee on Teacher Education (Darling-Hammond & Bransford, 2005; National Academy of Education, 2009a, 2009b), namely the knowledge and skills effective teachers need and the professional commitments that will allow them to help every child succeed.

Well-Educated Citizen. Content knowledge and the skills for learning and using that knowledge are the foundation of any teacher preparation program. From its earliest beginnings in 1816, education at SUNY Potsdam (then the St. Lawrence Academy) was based on a firm grounding in the content disciplines from which the school would prepare quality teachers for the region (Lahey, 1966). When Asa Brainerd became preceptor in 1828, he set about the task of developing a curriculum to meet the needs of the changing society, coupled with a way of learning to allow students to take advantage of the curriculum. Mastery in the content disciplines has remained a central mission of the college since that time.

SUNY Potsdam still believes today that the full college community must be involved in preparing teachers to meet the needs of today's elementary and secondary school students. All undergraduate students at SUNY Potsdam complete a General Education program that is committed to developing the students' skills as critical thinkers, problem solvers, and graduates who have the ability to organize thought and communicate effectively in written and oral form. Supported by faculty from all three schools at SUNY Potsdam, the General Education program seeks to provide students with a deep and broad understanding of history and social and political institutions; an understanding of the impact of science and technology in today's world; experience in creating and appreciating the arts; and the intercultural understandings that are so essential in the interactive and intercultural world. Learning to use technology as research, analysis, and communication tools (U.S. Department of Education, 2010; National Council of Teachers of Mathematics, 2011; President's Council of Advisors on Science and Technology, 2010) during their years at SUNY Potsdam, students are prepared to maintain their technical skills throughout their lifetime. The General Education program provides strong support to the development of undergraduate candidates as *well-educated citizens*.

In their role as teachers, candidates must also have a deep and flexible understanding of the subjects they teach as the foundation for their pedagogical content knowledge (Ball, Thames, & Phelps, 2008; Baumert, Kunter, Blum, Brunner, Voss, et al., 2010; Darling-Hammond, 1998; Darling-Hammond & Bransford, 2005; Guring, Chick, & Ciccone, 2009; National Research Council, 2010). Through their academic majors, graduates of the SUNY Potsdam teacher education programs acquire a broad and deep knowledge of this subject matter; develop appropriate modes of inquiry for their discipline(s) and see a variety of appropriate instructional and assessment techniques modeled by their teachers. They learn to model the skills, attitudes, and values of inquiry appropriate to their discipline while developing a life-long love and curiosity for the subject. Their strong liberal arts majors or concentrations ensure that SUNY Potsdam's

teacher education graduates have the content knowledge to put into practice Common Core State Standards Initiative (Common Core State Standards, 2010) and to support the New York Learning Standards appropriate for their certification area (INTASC, 2011; New York State Education Department, n.d.; Polikoff, Porter, & Smithson, 2011; Schmidt, Cogan, Houang, & McKnight, 2011).

The graduate programs consider a strong foundation in the disciplines as the primary criteria for admission. Whether the graduate applicants received their baccalaureate preparation at SUNY Potsdam or at another institution, the objective is to assure that the breadth, depth and strength of that knowledge base will support the pursuit of a career in teaching through demonstration of the completion of an academic major and General Education requirements. Research shows that “the better prepared teachers are, the longer they're likely to stay in teaching and the more likely they are actually to enter teaching” (Darling-Hammond, 2001).

Faculty members understand that growth in their disciplines is critical to effective teaching. While the scholarship of teaching is the most prevalent way faculty contributes to the growth of the knowledge base, SUNY Potsdam professors also engage in the scholarship of discovery, integration, and application (Boyer, 1990; Glassick, Huber, & Maeroff, 1997; Shulman, 2004; Klecka, Odell, Houston, & McBee, 2009; Stewart & Webster, 2010).

Reflective Practitioner. Becoming a good teacher requires more than completing an excellent education in the liberal arts and sciences (Darling-Hammond, 2008, 1987; Darling-Hammond & Bransford, 2005; Darling-Hammond, Wise & Klein, 1995; Hill, Schilling & Ball, 2004; Presseisen, 2008). Teacher education research shows that liberally educated college students do not necessarily acquire the knowledge, insight, and imagination essential for good teaching. Instead, as argued by Linda Darling-Hammond (1987), good teaching “requires knowledge of

and insight into the minds of students, and relentless imagination in forging connections that will make understanding the possession of the learner, not just the teacher. Such knowledge, insight and imagination ... must be developed and nurtured through careful and disciplined inquiry, practice and reflection.” (p. 44)

This disciplined inquiry begins with helping novice teachers develop a sense of themselves as learners. Early in their programs candidates are asked to articulate their philosophy of education and are given the opportunity to identify their preferred learning styles. By examining their strengths, weaknesses, and beliefs about learning, they are better able to provide appropriate instruction for their diverse students.

Education programs at SUNY Potsdam seek to develop and nurture inquiry, practice, and reflection by working with the arts and sciences faculty to ensure that the content knowledge base for teachers is strong and appropriate. Building on that strong liberal arts foundation, the teacher education programs at SUNY Potsdam provide candidates with the understanding of how best to teach. These best teaching practices are research-based and represent both general and content-specific teaching methodology (Abramovich, Easton, & Hayes, 2012; Joyce, Weil, & Calhoun, 2004; Hill, Ball, & Schilling, 2008; Koehler, Mishra, & Yahya, 2007).

However, "teachers learn best by studying, doing, reflecting; by collaborating with other teachers; by looking closely at students and their work; and by sharing what they see" (Darling-Hammond, 1998, p. 8). Carefully developed sequences of education courses and integrated field-based programs provide these best learning experiences for pre-service and in-service teachers at SUNY Potsdam. Field supervisors carefully guide candidates in reflecting on their practice, using the techniques of cognitive coaching (Auerbach, 2006; Costa & Garmston, 2002). Working closely with PreK-12 school partners, essential experiential opportunities are

developed to help teachers to connect theoretical and experiential aspects of teaching (Bryk, Sebring, Allensworth, Luppescu, & Easton, 2010; Darling-Hammond, Wei, Andree, Richardson, & Orphanos, 2009). Program advisory groups made up of SUNY Potsdam faculty and alumni, and faculty and administrators from PreK-12 school partners inform and advise all of the teacher education programs.

SUNY Potsdam's teacher education candidates build their understanding of best teaching practices by focusing on the following four areas:

Diverse learning and developmental needs of students. Understanding how children and adolescents develop and learn is essential for successful teaching. Through interrelated coursework in the arts and sciences, education, and practicum experience, teacher education candidates at SUNY Potsdam learn how to support the intellectual, social, physical, and emotional development of diverse learners (New York State Education Department, 2009). Through a variety of field experiences, program candidates have the opportunity to observe, implement, and reflect on instructional practices deemed appropriate for these different developmental stages and learning needs (INTASC, 2011, Principles 2 and 3; Smith, 1998; Common Core State Standards, 2010; Ingersoll & Merrill, 2010).

Curriculum, instruction, and assessment. Effective curriculum development, instructional planning and design of informal and formal means of assessment are central to good teaching. Using research-based models of curriculum and instruction, SUNY Potsdam candidates develop curricular and instructional plans based on the needs of their students, the subject matter and its disciplinary structures, and state and local standards (INTASC, 2011, Principles 1 and 2; Common Core State Standards, 2010). Building on their knowledge of the diverse learning and developmental needs of their students, SUNY

Potsdam candidates learn to develop or select content, resources, and strategies that respond to cultural, linguistic and gender differences and the developmental stages and special learning needs of their students (INTASC, 2011, Principle 3; Smith, 1998). They will promote inquiry, critical thinking, and problem solving in their classrooms, by using a variety of instructional strategies. These instructional plans recognize students as active learners, participants in learning, and creators of knowledge (INTASC, 2011, Principles 4 and 7).

Candidates also become skilled in the use of instructional and assistive technologies. They understand how to help their students acquire information, communicate, and enhance understanding using appropriate technologies (International Society for Technology in Education, 2007, 2008; President's Council of Advisors on Science and Technology, 2010; INTASC, 2011, Principle 6). In addition, candidates are prepared to help their students develop an understanding of ethical and effective uses of information and information technology.

If good learning experiences are to be challenging, coherent, and aimed at developing the full range of students' capabilities, then curriculum, instruction, and assessment must be coordinated and interrelated rather than being delivered out of context (New York State Education Department, 1994; Common Core State Standards, 2010). In accordance with the New York State Education Department's view of assessment, the education faculty at SUNY Potsdam both model for and develop in candidates the ability to use a variety of assessment tools to evaluate student performance and to inform instruction (Abramovich & Brouwer, 2008). Pre-service and in-service teachers learn to value and use a variety of tools to assess the growth and development of diverse learners. They understand how to align their curriculum, instruction and assessments with state standards to ensure that each student has the opportunity to meet those standards. In addition, they learn to communicate

the results of these assessments to students, parents, administrators, and other members of the school community in a constructive and informative manner (INTASC, 2011, Principles 6, 7, 8 and 10). During their capstone practica, they demonstrate these capabilities through preparation of a data-based teaching unit (Girod, 2002; Stobaugh, Tassell, Norman, 2010).

Learning environment for all students. “In the kind of country we are and aspire to be, teaching and learning for understanding cannot be rationed to a few” (Holmes Group, 1990, p. 29). Graduates of SUNY Potsdam teacher education programs are able to create classrooms where “everybody's children participate in making knowledge and meaning-- where each child is a valued member of a community of learning” (Holmes Group, 1990, p.29). Using effective, research-based instructional and behavioral management strategies, candidates learn to develop learning environments that encourage self-discipline, self-advocacy, self-esteem, and self-reflection in their students. They create accessible and flexible instructional environments based on the principles of Universal Design for Learning (Rose, Meyer, & Hitchcock, 2005). They also apply their knowledge of motivational and classroom management techniques to foster the interest, cooperation and achievement of all students. Their classrooms are inviting, well organized and make effective use of available instructional technology. The learning environments created will promote effective, culturally responsive communication and collaboration with and among students, parents, and school-community personnel (INTASC, 2011, Principles 5, 6, and 10; Smith, 1998).

Reflective teaching leading to educational reform. Reflection provides the foundation for innovation and change. Accomplished teachers today model what it means to be an educated person – they read, they question, they are curious about and willing to try new things. They are familiar with learning theories and instructional strategies and stay abreast of current issues in American education. They respect the cultural and family differences

students bring to their classroom. These accomplished teachers critically examine their practice on a regular basis, to deepen knowledge, expand their repertoire of skills, and incorporate new findings into their practice (Girrod, 2002; NBPTS, n. d., Core Proposition 4).

SUNY Potsdam's teacher education programs seek to prepare teachers to become the instructional leaders in their schools. This preparation begins with an introduction to the history, philosophy, and role of education in society. Candidates begin with knowledge of how local, state and national standards are developed and implemented in schools (Common Core State Standards, 2010). They come to understand how they can become involved in this process and how to participate in relevant professional educational organizations.

Through the use of inquiry, reflection, and discourse, the education faculty at SUNY Potsdam encourages students to continually examine their practice. The ability to engage in quantitative, qualitative and action research helps provide candidates with "disciplined ways to evaluate both their intuitive beliefs about teaching and the effectiveness of instructional approaches derived from theories and research" (Ross, 1990, p. 101). SUNY Potsdam candidates exit the program with the tools needed to continue this research, reflection, and discourse throughout their careers. They will seek out and value the voices of all stakeholders. Graduates will be prepared to make well-informed curricular and instructional decisions for their schools (INTASC, 2011, Principle 9).

Principled Educator. Teachers are role models for their students. It is therefore imperative that they be professionally ethical and maintain a high level of competence and integrity in practicing their profession. The teacher education programs at SUNY Potsdam are committed to developing teachers who exhibit the values and dispositions that will influence positively the

lives of all of their students. Dispositions are “the professional virtues, qualities and habits of mind and behavior held and developed by teachers on the basis of their knowledge, understanding, and commitments to students, families, their colleagues, and communities” (Sockett, 2006, p.23).

Pre-service teachers must recognize that their teacher education program is only the beginning of their journey toward becoming a model teacher. If the journey is to be successful, they must continue to develop as a teacher, be comfortable with uncertainty, be flexible, and be willing to take risks throughout their careers. They must also demonstrate the ability to work well with others and to take responsibility for their actions.

Knowing that they are preparing children and adolescents to enter a global society, graduates of the SUNY Potsdam teacher education programs need to demonstrate a knowledge of and respect for the diverse cultures, socioeconomic status, religions, gender, language, sexual orientation, and physical and mental abilities among members of this society. Early in their programs, candidates learn to recognize the diversity in their backgrounds and how that diversity influences them as a person. They use these experiences as a foundation to learn about and to value the diversity in the communities where they will teach (Nieto, 2005; Smith, 1998). Whether working with students, parents, colleagues, administrators, or agencies in the larger community, graduates will display the dispositions needed to foster positive relationships to support their students' learning and well-being.

Summary

Teacher education has been and continues to be central to the mission of SUNY Potsdam. The college community and the College's PreK-12 school partners are working together to develop tomorrow's teachers today. These teachers will be well prepared to meet the needs of today's schools and develop into the educational leaders of the future. Whether the schools are in the immediate College service area, or a part of the program's broadening urban and international partnerships, graduates are prepared as well-educated citizens, reflective practitioners and principled educators to serve, individually as teachers and collectively as life-long learners, the diverse needs of the communities in which they live and work.

References

- Abramovich, S., & Brouwer, P. (2008). Task Stream as a Web 2.0 Technology for Interactive Communication in Teacher Education. *International Journal of Technology in Teaching and Learning*, 4(2), 97-108.
- Abramovich, S., Easton, J., & Hayes, V. O. (2012). Parallel Structures of Computer-Assisted Signature Pedagogy: The Case of Integrated Spreadsheets. *Computers in the Schools (special issue on Signature Pedagogy)*, 29(1-2), 174-190.
- Auerbach, J. E. (2006). Cognitive coaching. In D. R. Stober & A. M. Grant (eds), *Evidence based coaching handbook*. Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons.
- Ball, D. L., Thames, M. H., & Phelps, G. (2008). Content knowledge for Teaching: What makes it special? *Journal of teacher education*, 59(5), 389-407.
- Baumert, J., Kunter, M., Blum, W., Brunner, M., Voss, T., Jordan, A., Klusmann, U., Krauss, S., Neubrand, M., & Tsai, Y.-M. (2010). Teachers' mathematical knowledge, cognitive activation in the classroom, and student progress. *American Educational Research Journal*, 47(1), 133-180.
- Boyer, E.L. (1990). *Scholarship reconsidered: Priorities of the professoriate*. Lawrenceville, NJ: Princeton University Press.
- Bryk, A. S., Sebring, P. B., Allensworth, E., Luppescu, S., & Easton, J. Q. (2010). *Organizing schools for improvement: Lessons from Chicago*. Chicago, IL: The University of Chicago Press.
- Common Core State Standards. (2010). Common Core Standards Initiative: Preparing America's Students for College and Career. [On-line materials]. Available at <http://www.corestandards.org>.

Costa, A.I., & Garmston, R.J. (2002). *Cognitive coaching: A foundation for renaissance schools* (2nd ed.). Norwood MA: Christopher Gordon Publishers.

Darling-Hammond, L. (1987). Schools for tomorrow's teachers. In J. Soltis (Ed.), *Reforming teacher education: The impact of the Holmes Group report* (pp. 44-48). New York: Teachers College Press.

Darling-Hammond, L. (1998). Teacher learning that supports the student learning. *Educational Leadership*, 55(5), 6-11.

Darling-Hammond, L. (2001). Thoughts on teacher preparation. *Edutopia* [on-line materials]. Available at <http://www.edutopia.org/ldh-teacher-preparation>.

Darling-Hammond, L. (2008). Teacher learning that supports student learning. In B. Z. Presseisen (ed), *Teaching for intelligence* (pp. 91-100). Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.

Darling-Hammond, L & Bransford, J. (Eds.). (2005). *Preparing teachers for a changing world: What teachers should learn and be able to do*. San Francisco: Jossey Bass.

Darling-Hammond, L., Wei, R. C., Andree, A., Richardson, N., & Orphanos, S. (2009). *Professional learning in the learning profession: A status report of teacher development in the United States and abroad*. Dallas, TX: National Staff Development Council and the School Redesign Network at Stanford University.

Darling-Hammond, L., Wise, A., and Klein, S. (1995). *A license to teach: Building a profession for the 21st century schools*. Boulder, CO: Westview Press.

- Girod, G.R. (Ed.). (2002). *Connecting teaching and learning: A handbook for teacher educators on teacher work sample methodology*. Washington DC: Western Oregon University/AACTE.
- Glassick, C., M. Huber, & G. Maeroff. (1997). *Scholarship assessed: Evaluation of the professoriate*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Guring , R. A. R., Chick, N. L., & Ciccone, A. A. (eds). (2009) *Exploring signature pedagogies*. Sterling, VA: Stylus.
- Hill, H. C., Ball, D. L., & Schilling, S. G. (2008). Unpacking pedagogical content knowledge: Conceptualizing and measuring teachers' topic-specific knowledge of students. *Journal for Research in Mathematics Education*, 39(4), 372-400.
- Hill, H.C., Schilling, S.G., & Ball, D.L. (2004). Developing measures of teachers' mathematics knowledge for teaching. *The Elementary School Journal*, 105(1), 11-30.
- Holmes Group. (1990). *Tomorrow's Schools*. Lansing, MI: Author.
- Ingersoll, R., & Merrill, L. (2010). Who's teaching our children? *Educational Leadership*, 67(8), 14-20.
- International Society for Technology in Education. (2007). *National educational technology standards and performance indicators for students*. Eugene, OR: Author.
- International Society for Technology in Education. (2008). *National educational technology standards and performance indicators for teachers*. Eugene, OR: Author.
- Interstate New Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium (INTASC). (2011). *Model core teaching standards: A resource for state dialogue*. Washington, DC: CCSSO.

Joyce, B.R., Weil, M., & Calhoun, E. (2004). *Models of teaching* (7th ed.). Boston: Allyn and Bacon.

Klecka, C. L., Odell, S. J., Houston, W. R., & McBee, R. H. (Eds). (2009). *Visions for teacher educators: perspectives on the Association of Teacher Educators' standards*. Lanham, Maryland: Rowman & Littlefield Education.

Koehler, M. J., Mishra, P., & Yahya, K. (2007). Tracing the development of teacher knowledge in a design seminar: Integrating content, pedagogy and technology. *Computers & Education*, 49(3), 740-762.

Lahey, W.C. (1966). *The Potsdam tradition: A history and a challenge*. New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts.

National Academy of Education. (2009a). *Education Policy White Paper on Teacher Quality*. S. Wilson (Ed.). Washington, DC: Author.

National Academy of Education. (2009b). *Education Policy White Paper on Science and Mathematics Education*. J. Kilpatrick and H. Quinn (Eds.). Washington, DC: Author.

National Board of Professional Teacher Standards (NBPTS). (n.d.) *Moving education forward through National Board Certification: The five core propositions*. Retrieved July 20, 2013, from http://www.realizethedream.org/programs/docs/04_moving_ed_forward.pdf

National Council of Teachers of Mathematics. (2011). *Technology in teaching and learning of mathematics: A position of the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics*. Reston, VA: Author.

National Research Council. (2010). *Preparing teachers: Building evidence for sound policy*. Washington, DC: National Academies Press.

- New York State Education Department. (1994). *Learning-centered curriculum and assessment for New York State*. Albany, New York: Author.
- New York State Education Department. (2009). *Section 52.21 of the Regulations of the Commissioner of Education*. Albany, NY: Author. Retrieved July 20, 2013 from <http://www.highered.nysed.gov/tcert/part52-21.htm>
- New York State Education Department. (n.d.). *Core subjects/Learning standards*. Retrieved July 20, 2013 from <http://www.emsc.nysed.gov/deputy/Documents/learnstandards.htm>
- Nieto, S. (2005). Schools for a New Majority: The Role of Teacher Education in Hard times. *The New Educator*, 1 (1), 27-43. Retrieved January 15, 2014 from <http://www.sonianieto.com/OLD/PDF/Schools%20for%20a%20New%20Majority.pdf>
- Polikoff, M. S., Porter, A. C., & Smithson, J. (2011). How well aligned are state assessments of student achievement with state content standards? *American Educational Research Journal*, 48(4), 965-995.
- President's Council of Advisors on Science and Technology. (2010). *Prepare and Inspire: K-12 Education in Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) for America's Future*. Retrieved July 20, 2013 from <http://www.whitehouse.gov/ostp/pcast>.
- Presseisen, B. Z. (ed). (2008). *Teaching for intelligence*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.
- Rose, D.H., Meyer, A., & Hitchcock, C. (Eds.). (2005). *The universally designed classroom: Accessible curriculum and digital technologies*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Ross, D. (1990). Programmatic structures for the preparation of reflective teachers. In R. Clift, W. Houston, & M. Pugach (Eds.). (1990) *Encouraging reflective practice in education: An analysis of*

issues and programs. New York: Teachers College Press.

Schmidt, W. H., Cogan, L. S., Houang, R. T., & McKnight, C. C. (2011). Content coverage differences across districts/states: A persisting challenge for U.S. education policy. *American Journal of Education*, 117(3), 399-427.

Shulman, L. (2004). *Teaching as community property: Essays on higher education*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Smith, G.P. (1998). *Common sense about uncommon knowledge: The knowledge bases for diversity*. Washington DC: AACTE.

Sockett, H. (Ed.). (2006). *Teacher dispositions: Building a teacher education framework of moral standards*. Washington DC: AACTE.

Stewart, T., & Webster, N. (2010). *Problematizing Service-Learning: Critical Reflections for Development and Action*. Charlotte, NC: Information Age Publishing.

Stobaugh, R. R., Tassell, J. L., & Norman, A. D. (2010). Improving Preservice Teacher Preparation through the Teacher Work Sample: Exploring Assessment and Analysis of Student Learning. *Action in Teacher Education*, 32(1), 39-53.

U.S. Department of Education (2010). *Transforming American education: Learning powered by technology*. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education. Retrieved July 20, 2013 from <http://www.ed.gov/sites/default/files/NETP-2010-final-report.pdf>.