

Conceptual Framework for Teacher Education and Educational Specialists

California University of Pennsylvania has a rich history of preparing teachers and educational specialists since 1852. The faculty is committed to the preparation of today's students to become tomorrow's teachers and educational leaders. Advances in learning theory, assessment, technology, global communications, and a better understanding of changing family dynamics require that tomorrow's educational leaders and teachers have the most up-to-date skills.

The theme for our conceptual framework is "Preparing Tomorrow's Educational Leaders through Knowledge, Professional Practices, and Professionalism." The conceptual framework for California University of Pennsylvania's teacher education and educational specialist programs is based upon the three principles of Knowledge, Professional Practices, and Professionalism, which form our philosophical foundation. Three elements support each of the conceptual framework principles, creating a strong base for our candidates to build the knowledge, skills, and dispositions required of a 21st century educational leader and teacher.

Conceptual Framework Principles

#1 Knowledge

- Content (1A)
- Standards (1B)
- Technology (1C)

#2 Professional Practices

- Child Development (2A)
- Diversity (2B)
- Design, Implementation, and Assessment (2C)

#3 Professionalism

- Professional Dispositions (3A)
- Leadership Development (3B)
- Personal Learning (3C)



Preparing tomorrow's educational leaders through knowledge, professional practices, and professionalism

Principle #1: Knowledge

When preparing to work with P-12 students, our candidates' mastery of specialized knowledge of content is crucial. Standards guide our candidates' practice. Technological literacy is essential for educators in the 21st century as they seek to effectively meet the needs of all P-12 students. Education candidates and educational specialists must have expertise in the areas of:

Content (1A)

Content is the significant information that establishes the foundation for each discipline. Education candidates and educational specialists must possess a strong content knowledge base in their discipline. Mastering content is challenging in an information age when knowledge grows and evolves quickly. They must understand the need to update relevant discipline knowledge, and how to apply that knowledge effectively in their practice with P-12 students.

Standards (1B)

Standards set the minimum requirements for achievement, thereby forming the building blocks for education. Standards are set forth by the Pennsylvania Department of Education and related specialized professional associations. Education candidates and educational specialists are held accountable for meeting discipline specific standards and designing professional practices in alignment with all standards for their discipline.

Technology (1C)

Technology refers to the integration of appropriate and meaningful technological devices and media to enhance learning. Understanding and using technology is critical for our education candidates and educational specialists. They are expected to gain knowledge and skill in the use of discipline-appropriate technology. The integration of technological devices within our programs allows candidates to observe, participate in, and practice technology-related skills to effectively enhance student learning in P-12 education.

Principle #2: Professional Practices

Knowledge of professional practice is key for the development of all our candidates. They need to understand the theories of child development, and how to adapt their practices to meet the needs of diverse populations. Our candidates learn to design, implement, and assess their professional practices to meet the needs of all P-12 students. Education candidates and educational specialists must have expertise in the areas of:

Child Development (2A)

Child development focuses on the physical, emotional, psychological, and educational growth of children and adolescents. Tomorrow's professional educators need to be knowledgeable about differing needs and abilities of children and adolescents. They need to understand developmentally appropriate practices to meet the needs of different age groups. Our candidates become proficient in working with children of different age groups and at all ability levels so all P-12 students are treated fairly and learn to their potential.

Diversity (2B)

Diversity is recognizing that all P-12 students come from unique backgrounds. California University of Pennsylvania is committed to meeting the diverse learning needs of P-12 students and of our own education candidates. Candidates' professional practices demonstrate the belief that diversity takes many forms and that all P-12 students can learn. Education candidates and educational specialists must hold high expectations when interacting with and supporting all P-12 students, regardless of their background.

Design, Implementation, & Assessment (2C)

Sound learning begins with the ability to design, implement, and assess educational experiences for P-12 students. Candidates are able to plan and implement practices that reflect standards, knowledge, global events, and emerging technologies. They will understand assessment and how to utilize it effectively in professional environments. By learning to analyze, design, implement, and evaluate their instructional and professional efforts, our candidates are equipped to make data-driven decisions to address the needs of all learners and constituents.

Principle #3: Professionalism

Candidates' professional attitude toward learning, children, adolescents, schools and agencies or organizations is essential for success and is developed throughout their program. They learn the importance of developing relationships with colleagues, caregivers, and agencies within the community to support P-12 students learning and well-being. Education candidates and educational specialists must have expertise in the areas of:

Professional Disposition (3A)

Professional disposition is the set of values, commitments, ethics, and attitudes that distinguish our education candidates and educational specialists as professionals. Professional disposition is demonstrated in alignment with our university's core values, the professional expectations of the field, and the codes for ethical conduct.

Leadership Development (3B)

Leadership development is the activity by which education candidates and educational specialists guide P-12 students and constituents to achieve success. Our candidates must continue to develop their leadership practices in relationship to their work with P-12 students, colleagues, and community members. Our candidates must be able to communicate and collaborate effectively. Positive professional relationships are essential to reach a shared goal of meeting the needs of P-12 students.

Personal Learning (3C)

Personal learning refers to the commitment of lifelong intellectual, personal, and professional growth. We expect candidates to use goal setting and reflection processes to guide their personal learning and growth in the rapidly evolving environment of professional education. We encourage continual personal research, the development of a personal learning network,

and membership in professional organizations.