

Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework of the College of Education (COE) has been revisited several times since the last NCATE visit. The conceptual framework provides coherence among the program areas within the college and remains a compass during times of change.

SHARED VISION:

It has been imperative that the conceptual framework be continually re-examined as it provides the central focus to guide our beliefs and work as a college. It must be congruent with the direction and mission of the university as outlined by the President in his published Strategic Plan entitled “Dare to Lead: A Vision of Butler Education for the New Century” (Exhibit). That plan stresses ethical and moral values within our university community along with a strong emphasis on improving the diversity of our campus within the student body and the faculty, and working to continue our high academic standards. The revisions made to the COE mission and vision statements are the result of faculty discussion and debate and reflect a cohesive view of the direction for the college as a unit and as a part of the larger institution. The mission of the College of Education is to prepare individuals to be highly qualified professionals who exemplify our four core values. The Four Core Values of the COE—Integrity and Responsibility; Teaching, Learning, and Mentoring; Diversity and Similarity; the Collaboration of Theory and Practice—have remained the same and are the common elements used in developing the college core experience and the COE Disposition Form. The focus of our vision is that upon graduation, “College of Education students dare to imagine and create schools that reach high standards and promote excellence in education. These schools focus not only on student achievement, but also on the development of thoughtful citizens in a democratic society.”

As we work with the wider professional community, we share both our mission and our values with them. We do this in various ways. Cooperating teachers work closely with the university supervisors who orient them to their responsibilities as mentors to our candidates. Our undergraduate and graduate programs have clear evaluation measures for them to use. The rubrics are tied to both the professional standards within each program and our four core values. With the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences we have key dual advisors who work with their departments to assure the integration of state content standards into the courses our students take. Each program area has a group of outside advisors who meet with them both formally and informally to share values and ideas. One group for the undergraduate programs is the Teacher Education Advisory Council (TEAC), which meets with designated faculty three to four times a year. TEAC also includes students from the undergraduate programs. In these meetings we continually keep the faculty up to date on any revisions to our programs, the way in which we measure student dispositions, the program requirements to help them in advising students from their college who also are seeking licensing, and other developments within our college. These advisors also bring to us changes being anticipated in their programs so that we can keep our students current with the content

requirement shifts if they occur. To help us continue our evaluation process, Faculty from all program areas also meet annually with a group of previous graduates, school administrators and teachers who work with our students. The name of the committee is the External Constituent Advisory Committee (ECAC). Through these meetings we are able to get feedback on our programs and also share our values and mission with them.

COHERENCE:

The Unit Assessment System (UAS) completed for the Indiana Professional Standards Board (IPSB) 2002 Standards has also influenced the conceptual framework. The UAS made the unit more consistent across program areas by identifying a common core, field and clinical experiences that fulfill our mission, and standards-based assessments for all teacher education candidates. The common core of classes within the undergraduate and the cores for each of the graduate programs are taught by full-time faculty throughout the college, and the frameworks for these core classes were developed by large groups of faculty beginning in 2001.

The Conceptual Framework is aligned to each program curriculum and subsequent instruction via inclusion in individual course syllabi. Additionally, the core values are imbedded within programmatic assessments instruments which measure candidates' proficiencies and the course evaluation form which evaluates course instructors' effectiveness.

PROFESSIONAL COMMITMENTS AND DISPOSITIONS:

Butler's mission is to provide the highest quality of liberal and professional education and to integrate the liberal arts into professional education, by creating and fostering a stimulating intellectual community built upon interactive dialogue and inquiry among students and faculty. Our college values and integrates the liberal arts into the programs for all of the undergraduates. Our graduate programs build on the liberal arts base to create that intellectual community through the cohort structures in the programs. All programs use the College of Education Disposition form. The form consists of eight criteria based upon the conceptual framework as exemplified through the four Core values. We value our position of a small professional college within a university whose main mission is the integration of knowledge within an intellectual community because this speaks directly to our core values of teaching, learning and mentoring as well as the integration of theory and practice through collaboration.

COMMITMENT TO DIVERSITY:

One of the four core values of the College of Education is: Diversity and Similarity. Thus, "we value the richness of differences of experiences, values, beliefs, and backgrounds that each person brings to the learning environment. We encourage our

students to honor differences and see similarities, and strive to increase the diversity for faculty, students, and staff.” This appreciation is embedded in courses, faculty evaluations, and the student disposition form.

COMMITMENT TO TECHNOLOGY:

Technology is an accepted part of all the programs and is used within both the core classes and the program assessments. Its integration into our core values is reflected perhaps most strongly in our teaching, learning and mentoring and in our integration of theory and practice through collaboration. Beginning with the first year core and its emphasis on educational technology through lesson planning, presentations and, student teaching or internships, technology is part of all programs and embedded strongly within all evaluations.

CANDIDATE PROFICIENCIES ALIGNED WITH PROFESSIONAL AND STATE STANDARDS:

All program frameworks are under continual review. Each Initial program area in the college also has a knowledge base and program goals based upon the four core values, and course objectives are matched to the values as well as the IPSB standards. The various knowledge bases obviously overlap so that a common base of knowledge is clear for the entire college and relates directly to our four core values. Thus the cumulative knowledge base of each program area is the knowledge base of the conceptual framework which is the four core values.

Knowledge bases for the Advanced programs reflect the appropriate professional standards (Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium (ISLLC) for educational administration, Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Education Programs (CACREP) for School Counseling, and National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS) for METL and have the core values embedded within.