

Augusta State University

Conceptual Framework: Understanding for Teaching, Teaching for Understanding

The preparation of educators is the most critical of all professions, without educators there are no other professions. The professional educator is the key element in the learning process. Building on the key elements of the professional educator, the Conceptual Framework of the unit of Augusta State University consists of a vision and mission with an overarching theme to produce **prepared, able, and responsive** professionals to teach diverse learners.

This vision and mission is a shared responsibility between campus colleagues, public school practitioners, and involved community agencies requiring the partnership of the entire education unit including the College of Education, the College of Arts and Sciences, and the local community educational system and the Professional Development School Network.

Conceptual Framework: Vision

Prepare school professionals who transform P-12 learners into thinking, productive citizens.

Conceptual Framework: Mission

Educating prospective school professionals to be knowledgeable, effective, and ethical.

Element: Prepared

Dispositions: Critical thinkers about the process of teaching, learning, and assessment. *The disposition to think critically is about the process of teaching and learning is tendency to question that which may be assumed. It involves probing, digging deeper, establishing quality and using dialogue as a means to work toward that end. It may be deconstructive in its nature and seek to unpack the black and white nature of statements, and simplistic nature of responses, procedures or assignments. Well prepared candidates:*

- Demonstrate strong content and pedagogical preparation in their respective subject area or professional field.
- Use self assessment and analysis to form the basis for collaboration with colleagues and the development of a desire to be a lifelong learner.
- Participate in graduate study is to extend and refine the knowledge base of educators to build expertise.
- Possess an understanding of the central concepts, tools of inquiry, and structures of the discipline(s) or their professional field of study and be able to create learning experiences that enable all students to learn.

- Understand how students learn and develop (intellectually, socially, and individually) and be able to provide developmentally appropriate learning opportunities and support for these opportunities.
- Demonstrate a knowledge of how to implement effective verbal, nonverbal, and information and utilize technology techniques to foster active inquiry, collaboration, and supportive interaction in educational settings.

Element: Able

Dispositions: Empathetic, responsive, enthusiastic, inclusive, and reflective in relations with students, parents and peers. *This disposition is characterized by the propensity to view learning as encompassing a variety of approaches to meet individual learner needs focusing on differentiating instruction. The education professional sees multiple ways of framing learning, solving problems, approaching instruction, and providing examples. The professional is disposed to act as a guide and think in an inquiry oriented mode and views facts and knowledge as a means to build toward understanding. The professional is disposed to focus on goal setting and taking next steps toward improvement. Student competence is assumed and all students are pushed toward high levels of achievement. High quality educator preparation produces stronger candidates and thus more effective classroom teachers, counselors, and administrators who can:*

- Understand, use and support a variety of instructional strategies to encourage the learner's development of critical and creative thinking, problem solving, and performance skills.
- Create a learning environment that encourages positive social interaction, active engagement in learning, and self-motivation for all learners.
- Plan, guide, and support instruction based upon knowledge of subject matter, the learners, the community, and curriculum goals.
- Understand and use authentic assessment to evaluate and ensure the continuous intellectual, social, and physical development of the learner.

Element: Responsive

Dispositions: Creative, challenging, and flexible in teaching/professional practices. *The education professional is disposed to be responsive to students' developmental needs and characteristics and exhibits responsiveness to students as diverse individuals including their personal lives and experiences. Learning is viewed as relevant and connected to students' lives. Families and parents are embraced as partners in the learning process and community is valued as an asset to learning. Peers are treated as partners and resources in a collaborative manner. This disposition is a thinking-based orientation that is reflective in many dimensions in terms of needs and actions of the learner, their developmental characteristics, their cultural background and experiences, their levels of understanding, student questions, student work samples, the learning context and expectations of the profession and society as a whole. All partners including*

students, parents, and colleagues are valued as providing input into important decisions in the learning process. Candidate who are responsive demonstrate:

- A respect for the dignity of all persons. All children can learn and have the right to an opportunity to do so.
- Preparation in the subject area(s) to be taught or the professional field of study must be accompanied by the skill and dispositions to translate knowledge into creating and supporting meaningful experiences for diverse learners
- Ability to teach and work in authentic settings with diverse populations of learners
- Understanding of how students differ in their approaches to learning and demonstrate the commitment for meeting their educational needs in fair, caring, nondiscriminatory, and equitable manners.
- Ability to be a reflective practitioner who continually evaluates the effects of his/her choices and actions on others (students, parents, and other professionals in the learning community) and actively seeks the opportunity to grow professionally
- Fostering of relationships with school colleagues, parents, and agencies in the larger community to support the learning and well-being of all students.