Purpose of the Gateway Portfolio

The primary goal of the Teacher Education Program at Southern Illinois University Carbondale is to prepare prospective and current teachers to be thoughtful, competent, dedicated and caring professionals. We expect that our graduates will be ready to assume the full responsibilities of educating diverse groups of children and adolescents in school classrooms and related settings. However, this should be done with full awareness that their education as professionals continues throughout the duration of their careers. Indeed, our Conceptual Framework emphasizes the professional development of teachers and other educational personnel as a lifelong, reflective process. As part of this continuing learning experience, and to support our Teacher Education Program, the assessment system that includes this Gateway Portfolio was developed so that both our current students and our faculty will have a clearer idea, at different points in time, of the extent to which they are successful in the achievement of our goals for them.

The Southern Illinois University at Carbondale Gateway Portfolio is linked to the Illinois Professional Teaching Standards (IPTS) and to the national and state professional standards relevant to each teacher candidate's major. Teacher candidates are required to demonstrate competence through presenting their work electronically and explaining its link to the standards. The compilation of the portfolio involves a process as well as a product. Thus the Gateway Portfolio provides teacher candidates with the opportunity to construct, present, and reflect on the act of teaching.

Process of Completing the Gateway Portfolio

This portfolio is to be completed between the time the teacher candidate enters the Teacher Education Program and the time he or she is approved to advance to Student Teaching.

1. The candidate receives **formal instruction** on how to add artifacts, link standards, and write reflective introductions in the course EDUC 313, “Reflective Classroom Planning, Organization, and Management."

2. Beyond that initial instruction, each candidate is expected to **continue to add artifacts**, link Illinois Professional Teaching Standards, and add reflective introductions to artifacts throughout Teacher Education coursework. Some pages in the portfolio are reserved for artifacts specific to Physical Education. These requirements are to be completed independently by the candidate OR as assignments in program methods courses.

3. One page is devoted to the **Illinois Professional Teaching Standards**. **There must be an artifact for every standard**, but some artifacts required by Physical Education may be used again as IL-PTS artifacts. Guidance regarding appropriate artifacts is available to any
candidate by contacting the LiveText help office (Wham 112A, livetext@siu.edu).

4. During the semester prior to Student Teaching the candidate completes the Gateway Reflective Paper and attaches it to the appropriate page in the portfolio. The candidate receives instructions for completing this paper in the course KIN 323, “Methods of Teaching Secondary Physical Education.”

5. By noon on Monday of Finals Week of the semester prior to his or her Student Teaching, the candidate submits the entire Physical Education Gateway Portfolio to the Gateway Portfolio assignment in the Gateway course on their LiveText dashboard.

6. By noon on Monday of Finals Week of the semester prior to his or her Student Teaching, the candidate submits the Gateway Reflection Paper to the Gateway reflection paper assignment in the Gateway course on their LiveText dashboard.

7. Mrs. Laurie Chapman will review the portfolio and send the candidate feedback in LiveText. She will supervise the assessment of the Gateway Reflective Paper and send feedback in LiveText.

The deadline for Mrs. Laurie Chapman to notify the Office of Teacher Education that a candidate has NOT been approved to advance to Student Teaching is two (2) weeks before the semester his or her scheduled Student Teaching begins.* If a candidate is approved, no separate notice will be sent. Therefore, after fulfilling all the steps above, the teacher candidate may assume that he or she is approved to advance to Student Teaching if not contacted and notified otherwise.

*Please open the attached Gateway Benchmark Policy Statement for further details.

Conceptual Framework of Teacher Education at SIUC

Preparing Reflective Educators

The conceptual framework identified by Southern Illinois University Carbondale's College of Education and Human Services reflects the professional community's commitment to preparing reflective educators at both the undergraduate and graduate levels. This section of the report describes the conceptual framework, its relationship to the university's mission, its development, and its relationship to professional education standards.
Relationship to SIUC Mission

The mission statements of Southern Illinois University Carbondale and of SIUC's College of Education and Human Services reflect a strong commitment to effective instruction, quality research and service to the region. One of SIUC's means for addressing this mission is to prepare quality teachers for southern Illinois and for the state and nation. By preparing quality teachers, SIUC will enable all communities to employ teachers possessing knowledge and skills necessary to ensure that all children learn as well as to enrich their lives and the life of their community. As Linda Darling-Hammond (1996) states: "What teachers know and can do is the most important influence on what students learn."

Development of Conceptual Framework

The unit's conceptual framework was originally developed in the mid-1980s to reflect SIUC's commitment to prepare effective educational professionals who are reflective in their approach to teaching. The proposed conceptual framework was discussed and debated by panels of faculty and administrators from the university and public schools. Over the past twenty years, the framework has been utilized to guide the development of the Teacher Education Program. During that period, it has been refined to be in alignment with NCATE and Illinois standards at the initial and advanced levels as they have emerged and changed. Various committees and task forces have examined the conceptual framework as they have considered modifications to the program. All revisions of the conceptual framework must first be discussed and approved by the Teacher Education Advisory Committee. Currently, SIUC's conceptual framework addresses the five elements of mission, philosophy, knowledge base, performance expectations and unit assessment.

Introduction to the Conceptual Framework

Southern Illinois University Carbondale's Teacher Education Program considers teaching to be a reflective practice. Mary Kennedy (1989) states that reflective practitioners have a thoughtful, contextualized sense of teaching and must ultimately make their own choices about preferred goals and practices. They construct working knowledge out of various frames of reference and alternative viewpoints. This working knowledge, which includes theory, experience, research, values and beliefs, is utilized to critically analyze and continually improve teaching. Osterman and Kottkamp (1992) consider reflective practice to be an integrated approach to thinking and acting focused on learning and behavioral change; it is individuals working to improve organizations through improving themselves.

Building upon the work of such scholars as Berliner (1988), Cruickshank (1981), Dewey (1933), Schon (1983, 1987), Tom (1985), Valli (1992), Van Manen (1977), and Zeichner (1981-82, 1996), SIUC's conceptual framework views the professional development of teachers and other educational personnel to be an evolutionary and maturational process. The goal of the SIUC Teacher Education Program is to prepare a competent, dedicated and caring beginning teacher. A competent beginning teacher is ready to assume the responsibilities of educating individuals but with full awareness that his or her induction into the profession continues throughout the duration of their professional career.

The College of Education and Human Services considers the process for becoming a reflective educator as beginning during a teacher's undergraduate preparation for initial teacher certification and continuing throughout his or her professional career. Effective teaching is characterized by interactions with students to present subject matter, followed by informed reflection on these interactions and presentations. Teachers should make decisions among methods and content based on their competence.
in both subject matter and pedagogy, rather than acting as technicians following a predetermined curriculum.

The first component of the Teacher Education Program, which begins during one's initial certification program, focuses on the basic skills and knowledge required to perform the act of teaching. The knowledge base provides prospective teachers with an intellectual anchor from which to become more reflective in their thinking and teaching. It includes the university's core curriculum with courses in humanities, arts, social sciences and science. Further, it includes content and methods courses within a student's major. Prospective teachers gain knowledge and skills within the areas of instruction, planning, classroom management, technology, educational psychology and foundations of education. The knowledge base provides prospective teachers with an intellectual anchor from which to become more reflective in their thinking and teaching. It includes the university's core curriculum with courses in humanities, arts, social sciences and science. Further, it includes content and methods courses within a student's major. Prospective teachers gain knowledge and skills within the areas of instruction, planning, classroom management, technology, educational psychology and foundations of education. 

The knowledge, skills and dispositions expected of beginning teachers are aligned with the Illinois Professional Teaching Standards (INTASC) and with the content standards adopted by various professional organizations (e.g., NCATE, NCTE, ACEI, NCTM, etc.). These standards are evident in both curriculum and assessment processes. Diversity and technology also are consistent strands interwoven throughout the Teacher Education Program. Program faculty are expected to integrate content related to culturally diverse student populations into their coursework. All students enroll in a course that focuses on planning and delivering instruction and training for exceptional children. In addition, students are placed in culturally diverse and inclusive school settings throughout the teacher education program. Technology, including the use of computers, video, audio, and multimedia technology, is modeled in coursework as well as in field experiences. All students have access to several computer and video laboratories. Both diversity and technology are assessed through the application of the Illinois Professional Teaching Standards.

The second component of the SIUC TEP conceptual framework encourages students to critically analyze and reflect upon a basic rationale for specific educational practices being utilized in the classroom. This reflection occurs throughout courses in methodology and theory, but also through various microteaching experiences and all levels of field experiences, including practicum and internships at the advanced level. At the advanced level, one's ability to analyze and reflect is not only addressed throughout coursework but also assessed through action research projects, preliminary exams, theses, and dissertations. Such experiences are designed to encourage students to critically examine and reflect upon their own attitudes, behavior and performance, and to be active decision-makers in their classrooms and schools.

The final component finds teachers making connections between what happens in the classroom and their impact on broader social structures, such as work, a community's moral, ethical and political principles, and the cultural experiences that impinge on a classroom. Typically, the ability to view teaching and learning through a wider economic and social lens begins to occur during student teaching and culminating coursework and continues throughout a professional career in teaching, including advanced coursework. Furthermore, it is recognized that prospective teachers mature and develop at varying rates. Thus, the relationship between education, teaching, community and society is continually emphasized throughout both initial and advanced programs at Southern Illinois University Carbondale. In several cases, this critical analysis and reflection on the teaching/training, learning and application processes encourages teachers to pursue National Board Certification. It is also built into SIUC's plan to assist teachers to move from initial to advanced certification.

The candidates' knowledge, performance and dispositions are routinely assessed throughout their programs by applying state and national standards. Performance is typically assessed in campus
Professional Commitments and Dispositions

The National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (2002) defines dispositions as:

"The values, commitments and professional ethics that influence behaviors toward students, families, colleagues, and communities and affect student learning, motivation, and development as well as educator's own professional growth. Dispositions are guided by beliefs and attitudes related to values such as caring, fairness, honesty, responsibility, and social justice. For example, they might include a belief that all students can learn, a vision of high and challenging standards, or a commitment to a safe and supportive learning environment."

The dispositions espoused by Southern Illinois University Carbondale's Teacher Education Program reflect the values, attitudes and beliefs we believe should be demonstrated by our candidates whether they be a teacher, administrator or school counselor. These dispositions were determined through discussions and conversations within our professional community including university and P-12 faculty and administrators. Ultimately it was decided that the dispositions expected of our candidates would be viewed through three lenses: professionalism, diversity and reflection.

These dispositions are:

1. The candidate demonstrates professionalism:
   - dependability and reliability
   - honesty, trustworthiness, ethics
   - enthusiasm, love of learning and commitment to the profession

2. The candidate values human diversity:
   - shows respect and sensitivity to the learning needs and abilities of all individuals
   - shows respect and sensitivity to the diverse cultures, languages, races, and family compositions of all individuals
   - strives for best practices to address diverse learning needs and abilities of all individuals
   - strives for best practices to address diverse cultures, languages, races, and family compositions of all individuals
   - collaborates with diverse peers, professional colleagues, staff and families

3. The candidate develops professionally:
   - engages in ongoing acquisition of knowledge
• engages in development of research-based practices
• assesses own performance and reflects on needed improvements

Whereas educators have much experience in assessing knowledge and skills, dispositions, on the other hand, are more difficult to measure. Numerous educators have grappled not only with the definition of dispositions and but also have searched for a venue(s) to effectively assess a candidate's dispositions. SIUC's Teacher Education Dispositions will be assessed through a variety of venues including portfolios, observation, interviews, teacher assessment, etc. These processes will be more fully explicated within the discussion of the TEP's assessment system.

Diversity

Southern Illinois University Carbondale is committed to preparing educators who possess the dispositions, skills and knowledge that enable them to work effectively with diverse student populations. Sonia Nieto (1992) has argued that preparing educators to work with diverse children, youth, and families is one of the biggest challenges in today's society. The inclusion of dispositions that specifically focus on diversity reflects SIUC's commitment to preparing educators to meet this challenge.

SIUC's reflective educators are prepared to serve in diverse classrooms and communities by infusing diversity throughout the unit's programs. We define "diversity" broadly to include race, language, social class, gender, disability, and sexual orientation (as suggested by Sleeter & Grant, 2003). For the most part, diversity is infused throughout our programs and field experiences. However, all teacher education candidates must successfully complete a course, "Characteristics and Methods of Teaching Exceptional Children," as part of the Teacher Education Core course sequence. At the master's degree level, candidates take a variety of courses within their program that emphasize the multiple layers of diversity. All doctoral students in the College must enroll in the Cultural Foundations of Education course that has a strong emphasis on diversity.

Technology

The effective use of educational technologies in the classroom is a goal for all SIUC candidates at both the initial and advanced levels. As a result, the Teacher Education Program is committed to providing its candidates with the skills, knowledge, and dispositions needed to use technology in their own professional development as well as to advance the learning of all their students.

The Teacher Education Program's vision for and use of technology continues to evolve. All teacher candidates must learn about appropriate software and how to use various types of technology as part of their coursework in organizing and directing instruction. In addition, technology is taught and modeled to varying degrees in all programs. In their field experiences, candidates must effectively incorporate technology into their lessons in order to meet the Technology Standard of the Illinois Professional Teaching Standards. Students are encouraged to use technology in ways that promote reflection and serve the learning needs of diverse students.

The College of Education and Human Services has received a number of grants that have helped to enhance opportunities for initial and advanced level students gain additional knowledge and skills in the area of technology. Several recent grants, Blazing Learning Trails, PT3 and Teacher Quality Enhancement, have enabled programs to improve the technology available to undergraduate and graduate students as well as professional development opportunities for faculty. The American Memory
grant through the Library of Congress has helped us to upgrade the Multimedia Center for Teaching and Learning and to provide training for teachers and teacher candidates on how to digitally incorporate archives from the Library of Congress into their curriculum.

The College has a Technology Committee that helps to monitor the current technology curriculum as well as to advise the Dean on our technology infrastructure. Recently, the College's Microcomputer Laboratory has been upgraded, Smart Classrooms have been installed, the building has become wireless, the Math Lab has been upgraded technologically as well as other modifications that will assist our advancement in this area.

Language Arts

The state of Illinois requires that all teacher education candidates be proficient in speaking, reading and writing. The Teacher Education Program at SIUC supports students in developing the required language arts skills at all levels of the program. Beginning in the introductory courses, extensive reflective writing is required and spoken English is evaluated in the field evaluation. Emphasis is placed on editing all public documents - letters to parents, lesson plans, etc. and student teachers are held accountable for improving their grammar. There is a separate student teaching performance standard for effective communication with students, which defines language more broadly, including nonverbal and visual communication.

Relationship of the Conceptual Framework to Standards

Professional standards for educators have emerged as one of the guiding forces in determining curriculum and experiences in today's teacher education arena. Whether the standards are focused on knowledge, performance and/or dispositions, it is our belief that the need to prepare reflective professional educators to work within these standards reinforces the relevance of our conceptual framework. Recent professional literature points to the need for reflective decision-making in such diverse educational challenges as providing curricular adaptations for students with disabilities (Udvari-Solner, 1996) and effective school administration (Hart, 1990).

All unit programs are aligned to the state teaching standards from their respective content areas as well as the standards adopted by their professional learned societies. This includes our school administration as well as school counseling programs. Candidates must also meet the Illinois Professional Teaching Standards (IPTS) that are based on the INTASC standards. In addition, all field experience assessment forms are aligned to the IPTS.

Recently the unit subscribed to LiveText, an electronic assessment system that allows students to develop electronic portfolios and submit assignments on-line. LiveText enables the unit to align all forms, syllabi, assignments and portfolios to the IPTS and national content standards. As a result, the unit will be able to electronically access this data in order to generate reports regarding individual candidates and programs.

In conclusion, Southern Illinois University Carbondale's Teacher Education Program is committed to meeting the standards established by NCATE for the purpose of preparing effective educators at both the initial and advanced levels. As a result, our commitment focuses on the preparation of candidates, who are grounded in the knowledge base of their content area, skillful in the methodology required by their program, deeply committed to diversity in classrooms and schools, and reflective about their performance as and role of a professional educator.
References


