



**Enhancing The Future
Through Educator Preparation**

Conceptual Framework

The Conceptual Framework of Sam Houston State University SHSU College of Education is based on theoretical models, research, and sound educational practice identified by faculty, candidates, and public school stakeholders. Just as our programs undergo constant review for effectiveness, the Conceptual Framework also is revisited to ensure it continues to reflect the nuances of our program. We are a college dedicated to the instruction and preparation of PreK-16 teachers, counselors, administrators and support faculty and staff. We believe that knowledgeable candidates leave our institution prepared to make a difference in the lives of those with whom they work, teach and interact. Through our excellent programs, candidates graduate with the knowledge, skills and dispositions necessary for their particular roles within institutions dedicated to educating, nurturing and supporting our future citizens.

Sam Houston Normal Institute or School was created by an act of the Texas Legislature in 1879 "to elevate the standard of education throughout the State, by giving thorough instruction and special training to our present and future teachers". It became the first Normal Institute west of the Mississippi River and began shaping education in Texas for generations. Sam Houston Normal College became a member of the American Association of Teachers Colleges in 1922. In 1923 the curriculum to prepare teachers for elementary schools was expanded to prepare teachers at all levels in the public schools and Sam Houston Normal Institute became Sam Houston State Teachers College. In 1938 the Sam Houston Catalog was altered to reflect a broader horizon and an expanding concept of its educational mission. Courses contributing to the preparation of those students who wished to enter the professions such as dentistry, medicine and law were offered as preprofessional courses. In 1965 the word "Teachers" was dropped from the name of the institution and in 1969 the institution became Sam Houston State University.

The College of Education is one of five colleges that make up the University and there are five departments directly or indirectly involved in public education contained within the College of Education. Our commitment to the education of students from Pre-K through Grade 12, the preparation of practicing professionals in a variety of education related fields, and the continued development of practicing professionals through our graduate and certification programs shapes the program decisions made to this day.

Mission and Goals

The mission and goals of the College of Education contribute to and serve as the foundation for our Conceptual Framework. The mission statement details our commitment to excellence.

Mission

Through excellent collaborative instruction, research, and field experiences, the Educator Preparation Programs of Sam Houston State University provide

candidates with opportunities to develop dispositions, skills, and knowledge that enable them to create an environment in which they plan, implement, assess, and modify learning processes, while serving effectively in diverse educational roles, reflecting meaningfully on their growth, and responding proactively to societal needs.

| The strategic goals of the College of Education are:

1. Enhance quality and effectiveness in academic programs by:
 - Providing credible evidence of candidate preparedness for the field,
 - Securing and maintaining accreditation in every program,
 - Matching curriculum to national, regional, state and specialty program standards, and
 - Providing resources to support program growth.

2. Promote faculty excellence in teaching, scholarship and service, through
 - Providing resources for professional development,
 - Recruiting and hiring high quality faculty and lecturers,
 - Addressing diversity among faculty and the students we serve, and
 - Clarifying expectations for career advancement.

3. Ensure satisfaction among the various constituencies served by the College, through
 - Providing accurate and timely program information to students,
 - Providing personalized service,
 - Building capacity in unit staff and student workers, and
 - Providing opportunities for staff collaboration and knowledge-sharing.

4. Promote quality programs and developing partnerships through
 - Developing partnerships through improved communications,
 - Enhancing state, regional, national and international recruiting and advertising

5. Promote Institutional effectiveness and operational excellence by
 - Collecting and sharing data that is measureable, time-bound and actionable,

- Systematic evaluation and improvement of procedures and processes,
- Analyze and improve delivery systems,
- Recognize faculty and staff service to the College, the University and the Profession

This mission statement and goals are addressed by instructional programs based on our conceptual framework and implemented by concerned and well prepared professionals serving as Dean, Associate Dean, Department Chairs, Program Directors and Faculty in the College of Education. Ongoing data collection leads to program evaluation and change where needed.

Conceptual Framework: Historical Perspective

Our current Conceptual Framework draws heavily from the framework developed in the 2002/2003 academic year. It reflects our continued understanding and attention to the need for our candidates to make a difference in the public schools where they will be employed as teachers, administrators or counselors. In 2005, the Conceptual Framework was circulated among faculty for comment. At that time, the faculty communicated support for the existing model and indicated it still reflected the mission of our preparation programs. Additional meetings were held by the Conceptual Framework committee during the fall and spring of 2006 and 2007 to update the narrative that accompanies the model. Additionally, stakeholders from outside the university were given the opportunity to comment on the framework through their participation in the Sam Houston Innovative Partnership with Schools (SHIPS). SHIPS is a consortium of area school districts participating in field experience opportunities for our preservice candidates. Additionally, administrators and teachers from SHIPS give input into program and assessment decisions and participate in scoring the teacher work sample (one of our assessments of program effectiveness). During the fall of 2007, substantive changes were made to the Conceptual Framework narrative to insure it reflected the most current understanding of our program goals and objectives by stakeholders in our program areas.

Summary of the Sam Houston State University Conceptual Framework

The Sam Houston State University Educator Preparation Program, through collaborative instruction, field experience, and research, ensures that candidates have a strong instructional decision making foundation as they acquire the knowledge, skills, and dispositions to plan, implement, assess, and modify instruction for diverse learners using all technologies available. Administration, counseling, library services, and other programs are equally devoted to ensuring that candidates graduate with an understanding of their role in the success of PreK-12 students. National, state, and institutional standards help define the knowledge and skills expected of candidates and course outcomes align with all standards (Cochran-Smith & Zeichner, 2005; Darling-Hammond & Bransford, 2005). The common syllabi format adopted by the educator preparation

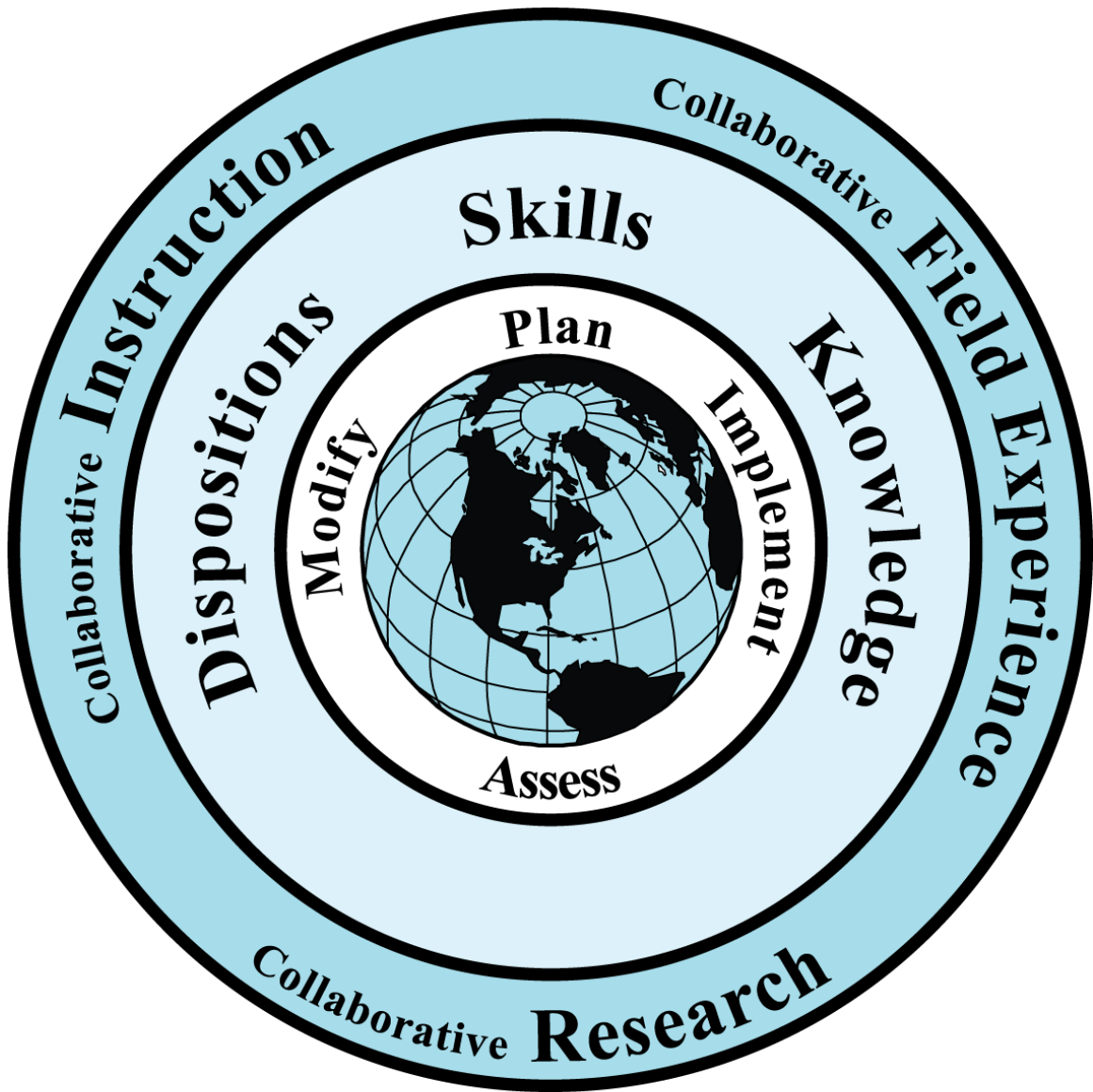
faculty outlines this alignment of candidate proficiencies and national and state professional standards.

The SHSU Educator Preparation Program in conjunction with content program areas from the Colleges of Arts and Sciences and Humanities and Social Sciences and the SHIPS help to develop candidates who can create an environment for learning that uses current and diverse technologies. This commitment to technology is evidenced in educator preparation course objectives and assessments. Candidates are expected to use diverse technologies to enhance instruction and to communicate effectively with colleagues and community stakeholders in education. Classrooms in the Teacher Education Center have technology stations and Ethernet connections.

Through collaborative instruction and effective field experiences, the Sam Houston State University Educator Preparation Program prepares candidates for responding positively to diverse learners and diverse cultures. The Sam Houston State University Educator Preparation Program, with the input of our partners (SHIPS), evidences a commitment to diversity by assuring candidates participate in P-12 school settings with diverse populations and also that candidates plan, implement, and modify lessons for diverse populations during field experiences. Candidates track Level 1, Level II, and Level III field experiences on a computer program that links to field site demographics. Candidates are required to select diverse sites with each experience.

The Conceptual Framework and Model

The Educator Preparation Unit within the College of Education is dedicated to instructional excellence, modeling life-long learning, and sharing a vision and expertise with the surrounding community and has adopted a logo that makes the mission explicit to all stakeholders: “Enhancing the Future Through Educator Preparation”.



Enhancing The Future Through Educator Preparation

Stakeholders associated with the Educator Preparation Programs believe that learning is a science and a developmental process that through reflective experience can become an art. Through the mission of the Educator Preparation Programs, educators grow as learners and develop the craft of teaching, administrating, or school counseling in public P-12 settings. Striving to fulfill the need in our society for quality educators who will advance and positively influence the goals of society, faculty in the Educator Preparation Programs work collaboratively with faculty in the Colleges of Arts and Sciences and Humanities and Social Sciences, with school district personnel, the general public, and with candidates. The Colleges of Arts and Sciences and Humanities and Social Sciences

faculty provide the foundation with content area knowledge and serve as committee members on various committees within the College of Education such as our NCATE committees and the professional concerns committee (the professional concerns committee addresses concerns about the dispositions of our candidates from any of our stakeholders). Additionally, district personnel provide proactive insight in field experience (professional experiences in real world settings are described in depth in other parts of the report) and reflective feedback on the work of our pre-service teachers, counselors, administrators, and educational psychologists. Our candidates plan, implement, assess, and modify their methods and strategies to benefit the children in public P-12 schools who are the ultimate benefactors of all efforts (Weimer, 2002). This instructional decision making is reflected throughout course work and capstone experiences like the Teacher Work Sample. The general public supports our institution with tax dollars and expects accountability so we provide that through the Texas State Board of Educator Certification's Accountability Framework (information about specific institutions is available on the TSBE website www.sbec.state.tx.us). The Conceptual Framework (CF) indicators throughout the framework serve to identify areas tied to course work where there is evidence of Conceptual Framework and goals assessment.

Knowledge Base (CF1)

The purpose, as evidenced by our mission statement and college goals (appearing earlier in this document), of the Sam Houston State University Educator Preparation Programs is to develop a knowledge base that is comprehensive and directed to the candidates' individual needs ; dispositions that enable them to be understanding, respectful, and inclusive in their creation of nurturing learning environments for diverse learners ; and skills which enable them to plan, implement, and assess appropriate instruction (Gagne, Briggs & Wagner, 1988) .This knowledge base, comprehensive in content, and reinforced with pedagogical and learning theory, prepares candidates to be effective instructional leaders responsive to the diverse needs of their students, campuses and learning communities (Darling-Hammond, 2000; Freiberg, 2002) . They will gain this knowledge through course content, faculty modeling, and field experiences. Coaching and modeling by the educator preparation faculty, by content area faculty, and by teachers, administrators, counselors and psychologists in the public school settings reinforce this learning. The educator preparation faculty also integrates opportunities for candidates to collaboratively build an understanding of their vocation (Dewey, 1943, 1975; Schön, 1991; Vygotsky, 1978). Candidates graduate from our programs with the experience of and the theory for effective planning, implementation, assessment, and modification of lessons to insure optimal learning. . Additionally, they understand the importance of reflection and inquiry for their continued professional growth (Dembo, 2001; Hackney & Henderson, 1999; Teitel, 2001).

Technological Learning Environment (CF2)

Candidates immerse themselves in a learning culture framed by information technology. This culture focuses on technological mastery and the more complicated processes, problem-solving, and decision-making necessary in a world with complex standards that are at times abstract and perhaps seemingly contradictory. (Friedman, 2005; Popkin & Iyengar, 2007; Turkle 2004). The candidates learn to create an authentic environment

that encompasses the use of simulation games, research, data assessment, interactive multimedia production, video and audio editing, and the Internet to engage students in the P-16 learning culture (Turkle, 1995).

Candidates use diverse technologies, group activities, and teaching strategies to focus, engage, and lead P-16 students to high level thinking skills in the cognitive, affective, and psychomotor domains (Bloom, 1980; Harrow, 1972; Krathwoh, Bloom & Masia, 1964).

Communication (CF3)

The graduates of the Educator Preparation Programs are effective communicators. Using a variety of media, candidates communicate through their words and thoughts by oral and written methods in ways that further our mission. They are active listeners who are thoughtful before responding. They communicate effectively with a diverse group of stakeholders and strive for the highest levels of professionalism in all their interactions. Several assignments from program course work specifically address communication and are indicated by a CF3 designation in course syllabi.

Assessment (CF4)

Learning to plan and implement learning processes is critical for educators in P-16 settings. However, learning to assess and modify those processes is just as important. Candidates learn how to assess performance and to provide feedback that will lead to growth in their students academically and developmentally and, in the case of administration candidates, to growth in the teachers they will supervise (Chase, 1999; Merhens, 1992). Candidates also learn several formal and informal tools for assessing the development, needs, and strengths of children critical to the professional educator and counselor (Popham, 2000; Stroh & Sink, 2002). Mastering the analysis and uses of learner profiles, our candidates will be able to create tools for measuring and evaluating performance and educational progress to facilitate the success of all students (Glasser, 1969, 1987; Stiggins, 2002). Our faculty is dedicated to helping all candidates gain the skills necessary to be effective evaluators of children, programs, and themselves, and helps candidates make data driven decisions. This includes the components of modeling life-long learning, inquiring into areas where further study is needed, and reflecting on the accountability of the professional educator in the successes and failures of children (Schön, 1991; Schulman, 1992). Knowledge of and about assessment is measured in program coursework and these assignments are indicated by CF4 designation in course syllabi.

Effective Field Experience with Diverse Learners (CF5)

The Educator Preparation Programs immerse candidates in field experiences that help them develop the dispositions of leadership, patience, flexibility, and respect for and acceptance of individual differences. To prepare candidates for diverse cultures found in the schools, the Educator Preparation Programs emphasize an understanding of the issues involved with implementing an anti-bias curriculum (Derman-Sparks, 1989), as well as an awareness of the importance of inclusive education permeating the school experience (Banks & Banks, 1993; Garcia & Pugh, 1992; Hale, 1990; Ladson-Billings, 1994; Paley, 1995). The importance of these field experiences cannot be overstated. It is through these experiences that our candidates develop and test what has been learned in the

university setting in a realistic environment. Building a strong, collaborative, respectful relationship with stakeholders enables the Educator Preparation Programs at Sam Houston State University to gather qualitative and quantitative data (TExES data, portfolios and The Teacher Work Sample are described in other sections of the document) that support our belief that graduates are effective in their chosen fields (teaching, administrating, counseling or coaching). This belief is supported with the quantitative data provided from the state accrediting agencies and the testimonials of area administrators who hire our candidates. This conceptual framework guides the way in which we structure our courses and certification programs. It is also a central theme that is reinforced individually in our classes. In the adoption of this framework, the educator preparation faculty insures that the programmatic direction is in alignment with standards established by the State of Texas for the preparation of professional educators and the standards of relevant professional organizations. This coherent program, course objectives, field experience evaluation, and state assessment insure the preparation of outstanding graduates in the fields of elementary and secondary education, counseling, school psychology, and educational leadership.

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