Seidel School of Education and Professional Studies
Professional Education Unit
Conceptual Framework

2013

Introduction

The key to quality education is outstanding instruction by highly proficient and effective teachers. The last two decades have produced numerous research studies that link teacher effectiveness to student learning and achievement (Darling-Hammond, 2008; Gage, 1985; Goe, Bell & Little, 2008; Brophy & Good, 1996; Sanders, 1998; Wright, Horn and Sanders, 1997; Mendro, 1998). Moreover, it is becoming increasingly clear that teacher quality or lack thereof, impacts students for years to come long after their direct contact with an individual teacher (Sanders, 1998; Mendro, 1998). Fundamental to teacher preparation at Salisbury University is the understanding by both faculty and teacher candidates that above all else, it is the teacher who makes the difference.

Through this belief that teachers make a difference, Salisbury University (SU) continues its long and proud tradition of teacher preparation. Since its opening in 1925 as a state normal school, SU has focused its educational efforts on producing highly qualified education professionals. Teacher education programs have been recognized as setting a standard of excellence. Education programs continue to be among the most popular majors and tracks on campus. All education programs are committed to preparing "caring, competent and committed" professionals. SU graduates are highly regarded and heavily recruited in the mid-Atlantic region and beyond. Quality candidate preparation has led to an end result with strong performance of Salisbury graduates nominated as state teacher of the year. In 2011, nine of the 24 counties teachers of the year nominations were graduates from a Salisbury University program. Further, in the past decade, three members of the SU community have been honored with the statewide Teacher of the Year title. Two other Salisbury graduates have won the prestigious Milken Educator Award, sometimes called "the Oscars for teaching." Yet another has been honored with The Washington Post's Distinguished Educational Leadership Award, and USA Today has named one among the top teachers in the nation.

The Seidel School of Education and Professional Studies, in collaboration with the arts and science faculty, offer a variety of programs for the initial and advanced preparation of education professionals.

Initial licensure programs at the undergraduate level include:
- Elementary Education
- Early Childhood Education
- Early Childhood and Elementary Education
- Secondary Education with academic majors in science and math from the Henson School, Biology, Chemistry, Earth Science, Mathematics and Physics English French, History, , and Spanish.

- Secondary Education with academic majors in liberal arts from the Fulton School, English French, History, and Spanish.
- K-12 Certification programs with majors in the Seidel School: Health and Physical Education
- K-12 Certification programs with majors in liberal arts from the Fulton School; Music, (Vocal and Instrumental), and English as a Second Language (ESOL)

Initial licensure programs at the graduate level include:
- Master of Arts in Teaching (MAT) for secondary and K-12 programs, with University of Maryland Eastern Shore
- M.A. English, Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL) with the Fulton School of Liberal Arts

Advanced certification graduate programs include:
- M. Ed. Education Leadership
- M. Ed. Reading Specialist

Advanced non-certification programs
- M. Ed. in Curriculum and Instruction
- M.S. in Math Education with the Henson School of Science and Technology

The professional education unit is composed of faculty and administrators from the Seidel School of Education and Professional Studies, the Fulton School of Liberal Arts and the Henson School of Science and Technology. The conceptual framework was developed through an iterative process that involved education faculty, arts and sciences faculty, preK-12 school and community college partners, teacher candidates and candidates in graduate programs (including both teachers and school administrators), as well as other stakeholders from the business and greater community.

The conceptual framework includes the knowledge, skills and dispositions to be acquired and fostered in the professional education programs at Salisbury University. During professional preparation, candidates acquire knowledge, develop and practice their skills, and learn to value and appreciate the diverse challenges that face educators today. The goal is to articulate and make explicit what are considered to be the essential knowledge, skills and dispositions for candidates. Course syllabi, class instruction, internship requirements and individual program outcomes reflect these efforts. At Salisbury University, the professional education unit has articulated a conceptual framework that serves as a guide to all education programs and to program policies, procedures and curricula.

Development of the Conceptual Framework

As part of the process of preparing for the initial NCATE institutional review (1999), we articulated a conceptual framework for all and aligned it to national standards, best practices and the

mission of the University. Revisions to the original conceptual framework occurred regularly to reflect local and national initiatives. In 2003-2004 the conceptual framework was formally revisited and updated. Through faculty discussion the unit reached a consensus to add an organizing theme to better represent the work of Salisbury University teacher education graduates. This theme, **Caring, Competent and Committed,** replaced the original **"A Tradition of Caring"** was timely in the sense of educational change related to the social and political context of schooling based on new research and publications in the field, The Redesign of Teacher Education Performance Criteria (2001) and No Child Left Behind (NCLB) legislation (2001). In addition, much of the discussion surrounding the revisions to the original conceptual framework emerged as a result of SU's expanded collaborative relationships with schools. The 2005 version of the conceptual framework was a result of similar discussion with collaborative partners and stakeholders as the original 1999 conceptual framework. Discussions began in 2009-2010 to review the conceptual framework in light of both local and national changes that had occurred since 2005. In 2011, the document was again revisited and revised, in an effort to encompass more recent trends and changes due to the ever changing context of teacher education in the United States and Maryland. In addition, significant changes had been made to advanced preparation of teacher candidates. Faculty were committed to revising the existing framework with advanced candidates in mind. The revised conceptual framework 2013 retains much of the focus of the original document and retains the values of: **Informed and Reflective Practice; Enhanced Student Learning; Scholarship; and Collaboration**.

Revisions to the 2013 conceptual framework were made through a deliberate process that began in 2009 and continued through the fall of 2012. The major revision to the conceptual framework was to add more specific outcomes and expectations related to SU's advanced program in Curriculum and Instruction. After intensive conversation regarding advanced preparation of teachers, a full revision of the Masters of Education in Curriculum Instruction program was accepted in spring, 2010. Based on that work and a focus of the program from elective tracks to specialty concentration areas based on Shulman's (1987) "Knowledge Base" categories, the conceptual framework was revised to include those changes. Further, the value **Informed and Reflective Pedagogy** was altered to better reflect the beliefs in the unit. **Informed and Reflective Pedagogy** was reworded to become **Informed and Reflective Practice.**

Role and Purpose of the Conceptual Framework

The philosophy and attributes reflected in the conceptual framework indicate the emphasis that

all unit programs place on learning and the learner. The professional education unit continues to value the concept of professional preparation that is student centered. Education programs that prepare **Caring, Competent,** and **Committed** teachers is a long-established tradition. Education programs are delivered with an emphasis on candidate preparation leading to his/her ability to actively construct learning for P-12 students. This value is modeled by faculty and programs through class size and design arrangements that provide for active candidate learning. A well-established climate of caring continues to serve as the hallmark for what is most characteristic about the preparation of education professionals at Salisbury University. In addition, sequenced programs of study and field experiences build upon a foundation of content and pedagogical knowledge to prepare students for entry into teaching or continued professional development. The unit's focus on practice in the field is based on a long history of extraordinary partnerships with schools and practitioners. At SU, candidates complete extensive field experiences culminating in a 100- day final internship in a Professional Development School (PDS) site. Through these experiences, our candidates gain the skills necessary to be successful in meeting the challenges for teaching in the 21st century. In accord with the Blue Ribbon Panel on Clinical Preparation and Partnerships for Improved Student Learning (2010) recommendations, Salisbury University continues to prepare candidates in rich extensive clinical experiences. The focus for field and clinical practice experiences in Professional Development School sites is a priority. SU candidates through these experiences find consistently supportive and productive environments in which to learn their craft. And, SU faculty continue to establish valuable partnerships for collaboration with mentor teachers and central office administrators. Through this collaboration, SU continues to help schools fulfill their mission.   Besides ensuring a supply of desirable candidates for employment, the Salisbury University faculty embrace its outreach obligation to assist local schools in meeting the challenge of educating an increasingly diverse school population. Our regional PDS network is the primary focus of these efforts, with the expectation that initiatives in PDS sites will extend to the benefit of other schools in the region and beyond. A noteworthy focus of our program is performance-based accountability, leading candidates to demonstrate their emerging abilities as professional educators in authentic settings with P-12 student learners.

Themes of the Conceptual Framework

As a professional learning community, our charge is to serve candidates and local school partners. This mission is grounded in shared professional dispositions and in a tradition of caring that can be traced to the University's origins as a normal school founded in 1925. Four interdependent themes in

this tradition provides the foundation for current practice and future growth:

- **Informed and Reflective Practice:** We believe in teachers as decision-makers. Through careful preparation and a thorough grounding in research and best practices, we support candidates and collaborative partners who are disposed to question and reflect continuously in the pursuit of sound educational judgments.
- **Enhanced Student Learning:** We celebrate human diversity and we are passionately committed to the belief that skilled and caring educators enhance learning and achievement when they recognize, appreciate and build on the individual strengths and differences of every learner.
- **Scholarship:** We are committed to academic excellence, ongoing scholarly inquiry, and integrity – in our own work, in the efforts of our candidates, and by extension, in the primary mission of student learning in local schools.
- **Collaboration:** We believe that the integrated mission of preparing teachers, advancing the knowledge base, supporting teachers' professional development and improving student achievement in P-12 schools can best be accomplished through synergistic partnerships. These partnerships must include all stakeholders in the greater educational community.

The four themes of the conceptual framework shape the curricula. Professional education programs are constructed based on a knowledge base grounded in professional theory and current research applied to education settings (Murray, 1996; Sikula, 1996; Donovan, Bransford & Pelligrino, 1999; Bransford, Brown & Cocking, 2000; Darling-Hammond, 2005; Shulman, 1987). Our practice is guided by the belief that a candidate's acquisition of knowledge, skills and dispositions are central to the preparation of professional educators (Dill, 1990). The combination of knowledge and skills once established, must be applied to an educational setting to ensure that candidates acquire the skills necessary to positively influence student achievement (Resnick, 1987). Further, professional dispositions that allow candidates to value and support achievement and lifelong learning are critical components of the educational process and a central consideration of SU teacher education programs and outcomes (Yost, 1997; Darling-Hammond, 2005).

Knowledge

Effective educators must possess a meaningful knowledge base (Christensen, 1996; Holmes Group, 1986; Shulman, 1987) and know subject matter (Buchman, 1984). Consistent with the Maryland Higher Education Commission report (1995), SU candidates must possess content knowledge from an academic major or minor. An educator's knowledge base, however, includes not only knowing one's content, but also pedagogical knowledge in the context of content and application (Shulman, 1986; Darling-Hammond, 2005). We contend that teaching should be viewed as a complex process where education professionals' decisions are contingent on students' needs, students' developmental level, and instructional goals. Effective educators guide student learning and continually modify and revise

learning experiences based on student responses. Responsiveness to student learning requires much more than simply implementing a set of strategies (Darling-Hammond & Cobb, 1996). Effective teachers apply pedagogical knowledge that enable them to take into account the multicultural influences, multiple intelligences, and diversity that comprise today's student body (Darling-Hammond, 2005; Banks, Cochran-Smith, et. al 2005). Accordingly, the conceptual framework addresses the importance of:

- knowledge of content grounded in the arts and sciences;
- pedagogical knowledge including knowledge of learning, behavior, and development;
- knowledge of diversities;
- reviewing and analyzing data to inform and instructional decisions

To support the continual acquisition and updating of knowledge, the conceptual framework emphasizes a lifelong process of scholarly learning and addresses the underlying theme of **Competent** professionals.

Skills

Skills, behaviors, and processes that are used to facilitate student learning and achievement are acquired through practice and experience. Knowing what to teach, when to teach, and how to teach are a set of procedures used by education professionals (Grossman, 1990). The development of skills, such as lesson planning, implementation of instructional strategies, continuous assessment, data driven decision-making, and classroom management, are essential for effective instruction and speak to the importance of educational pedagogy and the underlying theme of **Competent** educators, (Darling Hammond & Grossman, 2005).

Dispositions

The attitudes and beliefs that educational professionals apply to practice continue to be a valued attribute for candidates entering the education profession. A moral and professional commitment to students and their learning is as important as skills and knowledge. Education professionals must understand learners in a way that allows them to identify different strengths, intelligences and approaches to learning. Today's professionals must value a lifelong commitment to learning and reflection in order to meet the needs of the diverse student body. Positive, personal student relationships are an important part of a teacher's responsibilities. Teachers develop ethical and caring relationships with students to promote academic success (Noddings, 1988; 1992; 2002). Recognizing that educators balance high performance expectations with sensitive awareness of affective needs (Jones, 1996), we have identified expected dispositions within our conceptual framework. The organizing themes of **Caring** and **Committed** provide the foundation for the specific dispositions

identified and assessed in our overall assessment of teacher candidates.

The conceptual framework anchors us and insures that curriculum development and program revisions continue meet our values. Yet, while it keeps us true to our mission, it must also evolve in response to a wide range of factors that impact us, including social, political, economic and cultural forces and events. The conceptual framework guides curriculum development and program revision. Changing needs of the profession, national standards for teacher education, standards of professional associations, state and community initiatives, and the faculty desire to provide programs that produce high-quality graduates provide a catalyst for ongoing curriculum review. Careful analysis of existing programs occurs annually through a myriad of program and unit assessment measures. Although many different emphases are possible for the preparation of educational professionals, the unifying themes of the conceptual framework provide direction, coherence, and continuity to programs as well as changes in context.

Theoretical Foundations of the Conceptual Framework Themes

The conceptual framework, developed across four themes includes the knowledge, skills and dispositions promoted throughout the programs. Furthermore, each theme is linked to specific assessable outcomes expected of all program completers. The conceptual framework developed from discussion and analysis of coursework, classroom experiences, content, field experiences, and methods of evaluation for all programs. The framework emerged from the theory and practice represented in current programs, but also was designed to allow for continued development to meet curricular needs for improvement. Grounded in the national and state standards articulated by the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards, the Interstate New Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium, the Maryland Professional Development School Standards and the Maryland Teacher Technology Standards, the conceptual framework themes are consistent with national standards as well as practice within the professional education unit. The themes also closely tie with the standards and outcomes promoted by program area specialty organizations.

Informed and Reflective Practice

The first theme in the conceptual framework is **Informed and Reflective Practice**. Salisbury University is dedicated to producing teachers who are knowledgeable, informed, and reflective about educational issues and practices to ensure continuous professional growth. According to Shulman (1998), teaching is a profession requiring continuous decision making and reflection on one's own performance. The diverse range of learner needs demands that teachers apply professional experiences

and knowledge to reflect and modify instructional practice. At Salisbury University this occurs in a collaborative environment involving candidates, their peers, faculty, mentors, supervisors, and the larger community in various partnership settings.

Salisbury University teacher education initial and advanced programs base decisions on professional and ethical judgment. As a result candidates:

- Critically examine teaching practice to make informed decisions which positively impact student learning
- Apply pedagogical theory, continuous reflection, and assessment to enhance instruction for diverse populations in various educational settings including high poverty schools
- Reflect on culturally relevant and globally informed pedagogy
- Utilize technology to foster critical thinking, inquiry, teaching, collaboration, and communication to enhance learning for all students
- Present content in clear and meaningful ways
- Apply professional knowledge, research, information, and data to instructional decision making
- Maintain professional practice for teacher retention
- Use technology to develop digital citizenship

Additionally teacher education candidates in advanced programs:

- Develop skills and dispositions to provide leadership in a variety of professional roles
- Conduct research to inform practice and professional development for self and others
- Continuously deepen content, and pedagogical knowledge to inform practice

Knowing subject matter alone does not guarantee effective teaching (Evertson, Hawley & Zlotnik, 1985). Subject matter must be translated effectively to the learner. We believe that educational professionals should be informed decision-makers who use effective strategies to promote exemplary teaching practices. Such practices may include careful selection of appropriate learning experiences, clear and enthusiastic presentation of content, effective integration of technology, ongoing assessment, and classroom management skills. Personal attributes such as time management, wellness and resiliency, allow teachers to maintain positive learning environments (Gorrow & Muller, 2008) . These characteristics of effective educational systems provide a useful framework for teaching a diverse student body and promoting student achievement Gibbs 2006, Smith, 1983; Brophy & Good, 1986; Rosenshine & Stevens, 1986; Evertson, 1989; Darling-Hammond, Banks, Zumwalt, Gomez, Shervin, Griesdorn & Finn, 2005; Mishra & Koehler, 2006.

Educators are decision makers who determine *what* students will learn and *how* they will learn. Through initial and advanced programs that enable candidates to learn and practice a variety of approaches to decision making, they can respond appropriately to issues which arise in the complex

organizations of schooling (Estler, 1988; Senge, Cambran-McCabe, Lucas, Smith, Dutton & Kleimer, 2000). Educational leaders must possess skills in analyzing organizations, existing contexts, and national, state and local standards. Recognizing decision making as an essential element of teaching, our programs provide candidates with the knowledge and experience to become reflective decision makers.

Excellence in education is not routine and cannot be scripted. Salisbury University initial program candidates learn to observe classroom interactions and reflect on the appropriateness and outcomes of these interactions. Early pedagogy courses with accompanying field experiences require candidates to engage with students and reflect on the instructional practices in classroom settings. As candidates progress through the program they are increasingly required to justify what and how they are teaching. Candidates are strongly encouraged to ask themselves "Why would I employ a particular classroom procedure or methodology? How will I engage and motivate my students? When is it most appropriate to do so?" Candidates are required to reflect continuously on teaching events and to assess the effectiveness of their instruction. A key focus of the required 100-day internship is continuous self reflection.

John Dewey (1938) proposed that reflective teachers should be able to make informed and intelligent decisions about the subject matter they teach. More recently, Schon, 1987; Lujttenberg & Bergen. (2008) and Fazio (2009), stated that teachers must reflect in order to adapt to the differing situations faced each day. An ability to reflect allows the educator to constantly self-evaluate and improve practice allowing educators to bridge the gap between everyday experiences and educational theory (Sharan & Sharan, 1987). We contend that our candidates should not only be knowledgeable, but that they should be informed decision makers who reflect on their own practice as a form of continuous, formative self-evaluation and professional growth. In addition, we encourage candidates to make time for reflection and personal growth.

Much of informed and reflective practice centers on the concept of metacognition. Metacognition includes knowledge about learning, knowledge of one's own learning strengths and weaknesses, and the demands of the learning tasks at hand. Metacognition also includes self-regulation and most importantly, the ability to reflect on one's own performance (Bransford, et al., 2000). Teachers need time and incentives to reflect on their practice, as well as opportunities to use that time to learn about new research and curricula (Donovan, Bransford & Pelligrino, 1999; Van Sluys, 2007).

At Salisbury University, the concept of informed and reflective practice is woven throughout the fabric of the program; from the first courses in the professional teacher preparation program to the 100-

day internship. Candidates have multiple opportunities to practice selection and delivery of instruction for a rich variety of teaching situations and to adjust that instruction for varying profiles of students. With class assignments and internship experiences, SU candidates are urged to ask themselves, "What am I teaching? Why am I teaching this content or process? How might I teach this? What are my students learning? What did I learn about myself based on my teaching? How might I adjust my instruction?" As Donovan et al. (2003) point out, "To provide a knowledge-centered classroom environment, attention must be given to what is taught (information, subject mastery), why it is taught (understanding) and what competence or mastery looks like." (p.21)

Teachers who can think critically about issues of diversity in a global society and who can apply that knowledge to the local context is vital to SU programs (Hill, 2009; Irvine, 2010; Delpitt 2010). At Salisbury University diverse voices are understood as a source for learning in our efforts to build globally informed pedagogy. (Bellefeuille, 2008) We strive to help teachers reflect on creating classrooms that will maximize learning for all of the students in their future classrooms. A culturally relevant pedagogy relies on understanding that "how people are expected to go about learning may differ across cultures. In order to maximize learning opportunities, teachers must gain knowledge of the cultures represented in their classrooms, then translate this knowledge into instructional practice" (Villegas, 1991, p.13).

Further, to empower P-12 students candidates must provide effective and relevant pedagogies. Today, the informed use of technology continues to be an vital part of teacher preparation. In his book "The World is Open" Curtis Bonk explains that "technology by itself does not empower learners. Innovative pedagogy is required" (p. 33). At Salisbury University, candidates and faculty use technology in innovative ways to support instruction and to increase teacher productivity. To prepare our teacher candidates for today's emphasis on assessment, initial candidates, advanced candidates, and faculty use a variety of technologies as tools for accessing information, analyzing information, and applying and sharing information with others. Likewise, new social media tools enable SU candidates to work, learn, and share in online collaborative environments. Several initial and advanced program courses are offered in hybrid and online format, incorporating Wikis, Blogs, Glogs, VoiceThreads, Vokis, Podcasts, and other collaborative online tools that allow faculty and candidates to become more active participants in the learning environment. Technology use has been shown to be a pedagogical tool which increases the development of skills in decision making, observation and analytic thinking (Merseth, 1992). Even with technology, however, decisions of what technology to use, when to use the technology, and how to use technology to optimize learning and instruction is part of the everyday

equation of the informed and reflective practitioner. Educators must consider the role of technology when designing instruction (Mishra and Koehler, 2006, Shulman, 2006). Salisbury University candidates and graduates embrace the role of technology in today's classrooms by understanding its positive impact on acquisition of knowledge, student motivation, self-esteem, collaborative learning, and higher order thinking skills.

University faculty, mentor teachers and teacher candidates all engage in informed and reflective practice. Indeed, SU nurtures and celebrates this theme in the conceptual framework. The importance of Informed and Reflective Practice can be seen not only by the number of scholars who have written about it, but also by the inclusion of knowledge and skills found in local, state and national standards.

Enhanced Student Learning

A second theme in the conceptual framework is **Enhanced Student Learning** reflects our firm belief that recognizing and building on individual differences improves learning. All SU education programs incorporate multicultural and global perspectives so that teacher candidates understand and appreciate diversity. Programs are delivered with an emphasis on candidate involvement leading to active construction of learning and require recognition of the differences inherent in children and youth in our schools: physical, cognitive, socioeconomic, emotional, religious, cultural, racial, gender and language. Field experiences and clinical practice in economically and racially diverse settings prepare students for practice in diverse school settings. The focus on **Enhanced Student Learning** includes high expectations for candidates that involve:

- Understand how learning occurs
- Apply knowledge of human development and cultural context to the planning, instruction and assessment of all learners
- Respect the cultures, values, beliefs and talents of all persons
- Incorporate cultural and other diversities within classroom instruction
- Recognize that self-esteem influences achievement
- Value cultural dimensions of interpersonal interaction and communication
- Use multiple forms of assessment data to inform instruction for all learners

In addition, teacher education candidates in advanced programs will:

- Articulate and pursue content, pedagogical content, curriculum, diverse learner and contextual knowledge that promote student learning
- Bring their skills to bear in national, regional, and school leadership contexts
- Apply theory and research to instructional practices
- Participate in disciplined inquiry grounded in the field of study
- Enrich professional study using culminating professional experiences

- Advocate for positive educational change to increase student learning
- Direct their own professional learning and development as master educators

The candidate's ability to teach "all" students -- **Enhanced Student Learning**—is fundamental to the preparation of effective educators and school professionals. The Carnegie Task Force (1989), Goodlad (1991), and the Holmes Group (1986) identified the ability to teach all students as fundamental to effective teaching. Currently, student learning has become increasingly paramount. A recent NCATE report states: "P-12 student learning must serve as the focal point for the design and implementation of clinically based teacher preparation, and for the assessment of newly minted teachers and the programs that have prepared them" (NCATE, 2010, p. 6). The No Child Left Behind Act (2001) challenged educators to address the needs of all children learning and achieving. The more recent Race to the Top (RTTT) initiative increases this challenge by focusing on students' achievement through results oriented pedagogy inherent in Common Core State Standards (Common Core State Standards Initiative, 2012). Race to the Top's initiative to turn around failing schools and to improve the use of data to improve instruction for at- risk students, articulates a national policy aimed at results for all children, including those whose learning is adversely affected by poverty, linguistic difference, or disability.

Well prepared teachers, ready for their first year or advancing their skills through advanced degrees, can understand and respond to the complexities inherent in teaching in order to produce student learning (NCATE, 2010). Teaching is complex work done in uncertain conditions (Skrtic, 1995). Ball and Forzani (2009) articulate the complexities of the profession as they define its work: "The work of teaching includes broad cultural competence and relational sensitivity, communication skills and the combination of rigor and imagination fundamental to effective practice. Skillful teaching requires appropriately using and integrating specific moves and activities in particular cases and contexts, based on knowledge and understanding of one's pupils and on the application of professional judgment" (p. 497). At Salisbury University, we prepare our teacher candidates to know and apply sound learning theory, to appreciate the developmental characteristics of their students, to deeply understand their content disciplines, to appreciate the diversity of school children and to commit to learning how to effectively teach all learners. Effective teaching occurs when teachers possess the attitudes and teaching methods to facilitate the development of self-worth and self-efficacy in each child, to adroitly communicate with every learner, and to foster learning in all children. To accomplish this, our professional education programs address candidate dispositions and beliefs about learners, the teaching-learning interaction, and teaching practices that lead to improved student learning (Edwards &

Young, 1996; Haberman, 1996; Cochran-Smith and Lytle, 1999). In addition to the pedagogies associated with content disciplines such as English language arts, mathematics, and science, approaches that enhance achievement of diverse learners such as Universal Design for Learning (UDL) (Rose, Meyer & Hitchcock, 2005), differentiation (Tomlinson & Allan, 2004; Tomlinson & Imbeau, 2010), Understanding by Design (Wiggins & McTighe, 2005), and many others are integral to the preparation of our teacher candidates.

Teacher preparation programs that directly engage candidates in the specific practices of teaching improve the first year of teaching performance (Boyd, Grossman, Lankford Loeb, &Wyckoff, 2009). Boyd and his colleagues (2009) also found that teacher preparation "grounded in the practice of teaching" is linked to better student achievement in the first year of teaching, and depth of content learning is likewise linked to improved student learning in the second year of teaching. Further, increasing evidence that teacher candidates positively impact student achievement pre-professionally has been found(Pine, 2004). Pine (2004) describes a PDS initiative where P-12 student scores in math and reading increased significantly over a three year period. Pine writes, "Concern for student learning permeated the teacher education program" (p. 44). Likewise, SU is well known for its commitment to strong Professional Development School partnerships. Recently, one partner school, Snow Hill Elementary and Salisbury University were recent winners of the 2011 Exemplary Professional Development School Achievement Award from the National Association of Professional Development Schools (NAPDS). The NAPDS award recognized SU for "creating and sustaining genuine collaborative partnerships" with Pre-K-12 schools. Noteworthy accomplishments cited by the award included the establishment of a co-teaching model for internships and the dissemination of this model nationally, the exceptional buy-in by Worcester County teachers to the SU education program, and the strong linkage of intern involvement with student achievement. Enhancing student learning is our highest priority and our professional education programs promote the realization that learning occurs in the total context of the child's life. Valuing and respecting cultures, beliefs and talents of all learners is demonstrated through the program curricula, field experience and clinical practice, and the practices and behaviors of the unit faculty. Consistent with learner-centered principles related to student achievement, we believe that a student's self-concept and self-appraisal affect learning (Hattie, 2009). Students who approach learning with positive beliefs, motivation, and expectations of success are more likely to have high academic achievement than students who are influenced by negative thoughts about self, fear, insecurity, or anxiety. Thus, our candidates have opportunities to study and practice learner- centered

psychological principles and strategies which encourage positive student achievement (American Psychological Association, 1997; Cornelius-White, 2007).

Candidates are provided opportunities to develop a philosophy that embraces a genuine respect for a pluralistic society. We believe that a student's sense of belonging impacts the student's receptiveness to (and participation in) the learning environment and can affect academic achievement (Kunc, 1992; Nieto, 1992; Noguera, 2008). Therefore, our candidates are prepared to establish a sense of belonging for all students beginning in the early grades and continuing throughout the school experience. We also believe that it is critical that educators learn to communicate effectively with students with diverse abilities and from diverse backgrounds to foster a sense of student belonging (Gersten & Jimenez, 1998; Kunc, 1992; Noguera, 2008).

Education professionals must possess the knowledge, skills and dispositions to educate all learners. By the end of the 20th century, students of color comprised one-third of the public school population, and from 1990 to 2010 the proportion of white students decreased from 67% to 54% of school aged children (Aud, Hussar, Johnson, Kena, Roth, Manning, Wang, and Zhang, 2012.). Furthermore, in 2010, 21.6% of school children lived in poverty (Crouch & Zakariya, 2012), and poverty disproportionately affects children of color. Compared to white (12%) and Asian (14%) children, greater percentages black (37%) Hispanic (34%), American Indian/Alaska Native (33%), and children of two or more races (20%) live in poverty (Aud, et. al, 2012). How will teachers deal with the increasing diversity of the students they educate? To work effectively with diverse and disadvantaged populations, educators need to understand the cultural settings of schools (Gollnick & Chinn. 2012). Candidates must not only examine their cultural assumptions about individuals' differences and their role in schooling, they must also examine their own cultural perspectives and how these interact with their work with children (Howard & Aleman, 2008).

Candidates must acquire the knowledge about families, parents, communities, their demography and how they influence learning in school settings (Gollnick & Chinn, 2012; Edwards & Young, 1996; LePage, Darling-Hammond & Akar, 2005). Given the increasing diversity of students, candidates entering the education profession must consider the social context as well as the cognitive and psychological development of each child while providing appropriate learning experiences (Cartledge & Kourea, 2008). Professional preparation programs provide experiences across the programs that allow candidates to develop knowledge, skills and dispositions that are necessary to address diverse student needs. Recognizing that educators who extend their own thinking by seeking to

understand others also benefit themselves (Cazden & Mehan, 1989), it is our goal at Salisbury University to enable candidates to connect positively to other cultures, to other social classes, to other family structures and to other races and ethnicities. Furthermore, we believe that quality instruction must go beyond recognition and acceptance of diversity; it must result in high quality learning and student achievement. Student-centered learning results in successful achievement when students are engaged in active learning, problem solving, and exploration. Therefore, professional programs emphasize preparation grounded in the conviction that educators must foster a climate conducive for inquiry and active construction of knowledge (Brooks & Brooks, 1993; Bransford, Brown and Cocking, 2000). Teacher candidates at SU learn the knowledge, skills and dispositions to enable them to create both culturally responsive and inclusive practices as described by Banks, Cochran-Smith, Moll, Richert, Zeichner, LePage & Darling-Hammond (2005).

At Salisbury University, initial candidates observe and work in the field in early foundations and human development courses, typically taken in the freshman or sophomore year. Following admission to the Professional Teacher Education Program, candidates register for field experience in conjunction with professional program methods course work. The focus of assignments in the field experiences has been expanded from the traditional question of "*What* have I learned?" to "*What* did my students learn because of my teaching and instructional interventions?" This dual theme of candidate learning and student learning continues and is strongly emphasized during the last two semesters of the program when candidates are completing the 100-day internship in a PDS classroom. A student learning emphasis continues in advanced programs through the field experiences associated with each graduate program.

Program preparation allows candidates to develop skills in planning, assessing and modifying instruction based on student progress. The notion of linking pre-professional candidate performance to P-12 student learning is has become an expectation for candidates in professional programs (ATE, 2004; Pankrantz, 2001; Wiseman and Knight, 2003). In Maryland, the annual Teacher Performance Improvement Plan provides examples of student learning outcomes achieved through a collaborative school-intern-faculty Professional Development School (PDS) action plan. In Maryland PDS schools, intern performance through a co-teaching model allows student achievement to be linked to intern performance. Prior to internship, teacher candidates are engaged in on-going formative and summative assessment to inform instruction, in early field experiences as well as clinical practice through professional program field placements. Candidates analyze P12 student data to inform the teaching

process to enhance learning. Candidates scaffold instruction and use multiple instructional strategies to reach each student. A showcase of this work by candidates is displayed annually at the Regional Professional Development Schools conference. Last year, 187 candidates presented action research projects related to student achievement.

While enhanced student learning remains a priority, candidate's use of technology to reach all learners is also a priority. Emphasis on technology skills for educational professionals reinforces and enhances the Maryland Teacher Technology Standards (2002). Teacher candidates complete coursework in educational technology. While candidates are clearly digital natives, coursework provides strategies for the effective use technologies to enhance students learning. Major advances in technology have changed understanding of learning modalities and formats. Technology provides a platform for instruction that allows student to become more engaged. Feedback from mentor teachers indicates that SU candidates' technological skills serve as a catalyst for the effective use of technology.

Scholarship

A third theme of the conceptual framework is Scholarship. Scholarship is central to the commitment to life-long learning, which the University and the Seidel School of Education and Professional Studies strongly promote. The knowledge base related to teaching and learning is continually expanding, and education professionals must develop the disposition to keep abreast of developments in the field even after their formal education has ended. During professional preparation at Salisbury University, candidates:

- Develop academic language and content knowledge that is grounded in the arts and sciences
- Implement effective strategies based on scholarly research, students' learning needs, and the instructional context.
- Engage learners in active and inquiry-based learning
- Commit to a lifelong process of scholarly learning across the domains of professional knowledge:
  - Content knowledge
  - General pedagogical knowledge
  - Curriculum knowledge
  - Pedagogical content knowledge
  - Knowledge of learners and their characteristics
  - Knowledge of education contexts (Shulman, 1987)

Each element is described in detail in this section of the conceptual framework.

Developing academic language and content knowledge grounded in the arts and sciences

The study of content subject matter is an essential component of the professional knowledge of

teachers and other professional educators. Grossman, Schoenfeld & Lee (2005) argue, "We believe that a grounding of inquiry in a particular discipline will help prospective teachers create inquiry-oriented classrooms for their students" (p. 230). Research indicates that teachers must have deep knowledge of the disciplines they teach in order to create effective instruction (Hill, Rowan, & Ball, 2005).

Bransford, et al. (2000) stated that, "To develop competence in an area of inquiry, students must a) have a deep foundation of factual knowledge b) understand facts and idea in the content of a Conceptual framework, and c) organize knowledge in ways that facilitate retrieval and application" (p. 16). Deep interconnected content knowledge consists of:

- o Integration among disciplines
- o Cross-cutting themes – e.g.,
  - o Writing across the curriculum
  - o Environmental Decision making
  - o Reading in the content areas
  - o Financial literacy
  - o Careers
  - o Technology & digital literacy
  - o Knowledge of diverse cultures

Elementary Education and Early Childhood teacher candidates at Salisbury University take a broad array of carefully selected general education courses in the Arts and Sciences, which include the study of Composition and Literature, History, Geography, Biology, Physical Science, Earth Science, Art, Communication and Mathematics as well as additional selected course work from the social sciences. In addition, each teacher candidate must declare a minor area of study with a minimum of 15-18 credit hours of concentration. Candidates may select from more than forty minors, but are encouraged to select a minor in a subject area that is taught in PK-8 schools. Secondary education candidates major in a content area such as English, mathematics, biology, earth science, chemistry, physics, Spanish, French, or history. Candidates in K-12 programs choose majors in health, physical education, music or T-ESOL. Advanced candidates are required to select courses that develop content knowledge as part of the program of study they plan in conjunction with their advisors.

Implementing effective strategies based on scholarly research, students' learning needs, and the instructional context.

Although disciplinary knowledge is a necessary component of the knowledge base for teaching, it is not sufficient. Candidates must also develop general pedagogical knowledge, curriculum knowledge, pedagogical content knowledge, knowledge of learners and their characteristics, and knowledge of education contexts (Shulman, 1987). Each of these aspects of the knowledge base for

teaching is developed in both undergraduate and graduate programs at Salisbury University. Initial candidates are required to complete coursework in general pedagogical strategies, methods courses that build curriculum knowledge and pedagogical content knowledge, and foundations courses that enhance their knowledge of learners and educational contexts. Advanced candidates must select a program of study, in consultation with their advisors, demonstrating attention to each of the aspects of the knowledge base for teaching identified by Shulman (1987).

In education, pedagogical content knowledge has received a great deal of attention as an aspect of the knowledge base for teaching that distinguishes teacher education from education to prepare professionals in other fields. Teachers must not only know content – they also need to know how to make it understandable to children. Candidates at Salisbury University are well grounded in pedagogical content knowledge which allows them to apply specific strategies to best represent subject matter in instructional settings. Salisbury University candidates are grounded in pedagogical practices that first engage learners in addressing their existing knowledge or schema in order to effectively accommodate and integrate the new learning into their knowledge. As Bransford et al. (2000) assert "Students come to the classroom with preconceptions about how the world works. If their initial understandings are not engaged, they may fail to grasp the new concepts and information that are taught, or they learn them for purposes of a test, but revert to their preconceptions outside the classroom" (p. 15). Instances of this phenomenon are particularly evident in mathematics and science education research. Researchers have consistently documented how students, even after formal education, adhere to idiosyncratic principles rather than engaging in normative modes of thinking for the discipline. At Salisbury University, candidates are taught to understand the structure of children's thinking so they may identify idiosyncratic ideas and address them during instruction.

In recent years a solid understanding of the use of technology to support the teaching/learning process has become essential (Darling-Hammond et al., 2005, Bonk, 2009).This has led to the identification of a special type of pedagogical content knowledge: technological pedagogical content knowledge (TPACK) (Mishra & Koehler, 2009). Initial and advanced candidates use essential technologies such as spreadsheets, word processing, Internet, audio and video recording hardware/software, presentation software, and email to teach, learn, and collaborate throughout their program experiences. Because technologies used in today's P-12 classrooms are constantly changing, SU education programs are committed to provide instruction in strategies to effectively integrate the new technologies into instruction in the content areas. Faculty and students utilize technologies such as

interactive whiteboards, Skype, Kindles, iPods and iPads, wikistablets, the Internet, social bookmarking, eReaders, and screencasting to investigate effective strategies for teaching and learning with emerging technologies. Salisbury University is strongly committed to preparing teacher candidates for teaching in a world of technology through required coursework, which addresses the Maryland Teacher Technology Standards (2002) the Maryland Technology Literacy Standards for Students (2008) and the Maryland Technology Standards for School Administrators (2003).

Engaging learners in active and inquiry-based learning

Developing a knowledge base for teaching requires scholarly engagement in the classroom. Boyer (1990) quotes Aristotle as saying, "Teaching is the highest form of scholarship" (p. 23). Salisbury University and the Seidel School of Education and Professional Studies is committed to the Boyer (1990) model of scholarship; namely the scholarship of discovery, the scholarship of integration, the scholarship of application and the scholarship of teaching. Traditionally a university dedicated to excellence in teaching, Salisbury University embraces a comprehensive definition of scholarship. In an era calling for research-based practices and pedagogy, it is critical that university faculty and teacher candidates dedicate themselves to the integration and application of scholarship as well as to the scholarship of teaching. To this end teacher candidates are encouraged to engage in action research projects in classroom settings. Candidates are encouraged to raise questions and explore ways of testing hypotheses during their teaching candidacy. Engagement in action research helps candidates develop the skills of data collection, analysis, and reflection (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 1999; Hollingsworth & Sockett, 1994). Salisbury University strives to produce teacher candidates who welcome and practice the scholarship of teaching as well as in increasing commitment to the integration and application of scholarship to their educational decision making.

Included in the scholarship of pedagogy is attention to classroom management, group dynamics and differentiated instruction (Tomlinson, 1999; Tomlinson & Allen, 2000). This attention to differentiation speaks to the critical issue of diversity and students with special needs. Through coursework and field experiences in inclusion settings in Professional Development Schools, Salisbury University teacher candidates are grounded in the diversity of students and how this diversity makes teaching challenging and more satisfying.

Toward the end of embracing the diversity present in contemporary classrooms, candidates at Salisbury University learn to employ culturally relevant pedagogy to engage all learners. Culturally relevant pedagogy has been described as teaching that empowers students by using cultural referents

as part of the development of content knowledge (Ladson-Billings, 1994). It has the potential to address existing inequities in schooling and other social contexts. Students of teachers who employ culturally diverse pedagogy have shown encouraging growth in their knowledge of content (Gutstein, 2003). At Salisbury University, initial candidates become familiar with diverse cultures in education foundations courses and in their general education courses in history, humanities, and social sciences. They learn to connect that knowledge to teaching strategies as part of their teaching methods courses. Advanced candidates study diversity in education as part of the required core for a master's degree. Candidates at the undergraduate and graduate levels complete field experiences in the diverse local public schools in the region. The strong commitment to teacher preparation in the area of diversity aligns well with the overall goal of the university to encourage individuals to understand and value diverse cultures.

Committing to a lifelong process of scholarly learning across the domains of professional knowledge

We also believe that those who are preparing for a career in education should value the idea of what it means to be a scholar and to possess passion and enthusiasm for learning. Goodlad (1991) identified four dimensions of teaching 1) facilitating enculturation 2) providing access to knowledge 3) building an effective teacher-student connection and 4) practicing goal stewardship.

Thus scholarship serves as the foundation of teacher education and builds a base for reflective practice and ultimately student achievement. We also believe that candidates are more likely to learn from teachers who are themselves learners, who raise questions, attempt to solve problems and continue to find excitement in learning (Brooks & Brooks, 1993). Teacher candidates are strongly influenced by university faculty who value scholarship and who practice scholarship in their interactions with candidates from campus classrooms and PDS sites, to mentoring, advising, supervising interns, and exhibiting an overall commitment to schools and students.

Collaboration

Identifying **collaboration** as a fourth theme is axiomatic; the very nature of education presupposes a joint endeavor involving multiple stakeholders. From classroom learning encounters among students and teachers to the individual school as a learning community and to schools in the context of community and cultures, collaboration and mutual interdependence lie at the heart of the school experience. Goodlad (1991) in, *Teachers for our Nation's Schools,* states that the preparation of teachers should be determined in part by the corresponding needs and expectations of schools. Thus,

teacher education does not exist in isolation; rather, it is a reciprocal process which ultimately should result in the improvement of schools. The professional collaboration and development processes embedded in the work of preparing teachers and other educational professionals at Salisbury University stems from a clear and thoughtful conception of high expectations for candidates that involves:

- Establish productive relationship with educators, families and communities
- Embrace social cognitive learning theory as a foundation for teaching and learning.
- Understand schools as social and political systems within the larger community.
- Commit to teaching, learning and service through continuous collaborative professional development.
- Collaborate with educators to enhance student learning in Professional Development Schools.
- Use technology tools to expand traditional understandings and methods for collaborating.

In order for these high expectations to be attained, candidates must realize that an on-going relationship and commitment to professional collaboration and development is imperative. These collaborative relationships manifest themselves for candidates through rigorous degree programs that are foundational to on-site classroom interactions including action research, integrated clinical experiences and extensive co-teaching internships in Professional Development Schools.

The development of knowledge about modern schools as social and political systems is grounded in the context of educational foundations that includes the history of education and the socio-cultural ramifications of public policy. Jencks (1972) argued strongly that, "children seem far more influenced by what happens at home than what happens at school" (p. 255). Coleman (1966) concluded that children's achievement is linked directly to the social background in which they live. These two views have provided the impetus for school reform as we know it today. Social and political systems in contemporary society can only be understood from a multi-disciplinary perspective. Family dynamics, value shifts in society, the aging of America, and the demographic changes are salient issues that must be taken into account in order to understand the complexity of schooling in America (Tozer, 1993).

DuFour and Eaker (1998) argue that schools must become professional learning communities with a shared mission, collaborative inquiry, inclusive teamwork, action orientation, a quest for continuous improvement and a willingness to be assessed on the basis of results rather than intentions. Establishing productive relationships with families, educators and other members of the community is fundamental in reaching a commitment to teaching, learning and service. Salisbury University seeks to provide a model of an effective and collaborative learning community for our candidates throughout

their program.

Perhaps the most distinctive manifestation of collaboration is found in Salisbury University's leadership in developing a co-teaching model for interns and mentors during the extensive 100-day internship required of all pre-service teacher candidates.   This approach, which began as a single-classroom experiment conducted by an SU faculty member and a local cooperating teacher in 1998, eventually became the established norm for intern-mentor collaboration throughout SU's network of 34 professional development schools. In the SU model, mentor teachers are asked to remain engaged in instruction throughout the internship, to co-plan lessons with their interns, and to use a variety of co-teaching strategies to deliver instruction. Gradually, the lead voice in the classroom shifts from mentor to intern, while the joint efforts of two teachers allows for more ambitious lessons and increased differentiation of instruction. As Bacharch, Heck and Dalhberg (2010) point out, this model depends on the development of collaborative teaching skills.   The aforementioned researchers documented a statistically significant positive effect on math and reading scores for students who were taught in a collaborative classroom as compared to those classrooms who utilized a traditional student-teaching model. Bacharach, Heck, & Dahlberg (2010) also found that students who were taught collaboratively by intern and mentor statistically outperformed those students whose classrooms where student teachers were not placed and a single teacher worked alone.   The co-teaching approach has a long and rich history in special education (Vaughn, 1997; Dicker & Barnett, 1996) that Conners (2005) with others have modified for SU's PDS settings. SU's PDS program has developed an extensive training program of courses, workshops, videos and reproducible materials that has led to more than 800 local teachers achieving the status of "clinically trained mentor."

Evidence of SU's prominence regionally and nationally in this aspect of collaboration can be found in the more than 20 presentations given at state and national conferences by teams of presenters representing SU and its PDS partners. In 2009, SU was honored with the "Spirit of Partnership" award and two years later it was recognized for "Exemplary PDS Achievement" by the National Association for Professional Development Schools.

Advanced candidates…. The need for collaborative skills for all teachers is further highlighted by the work of Hammerness, Darling-Hammond, and Bransford (2005) when they discuss that learning in collaborative contexts makes teacher candidates and teachers more open to feedback and learning from others.

The emphasis on collaboration manifests itself in several forms across the Unit. The first

example is the emphasis on collaborative planning and teaching during internships. Collaboration across programs occurs particularly in professional courses, where candidates engage in group-oriented activities and projects and collaborative teaching is modeled by course instructors. Second, candidates in both pre-service and advanced programs collaborate to create and implement learning activities within a constructivist framework. Skills learned in initial and advanced programs are translated to collaborative relationships in schools, including teaming and serving on school improvement teams and committees. Collaboration among teachers at school sites and the University are manifest in the creation and development of Professional Development Schools. What undergirds all of these activities and examples of collaboration is the notion that we learn best in cooperation with others; that learning is very much a social constructivist act and mediated by one's culture (Vygotsky, 1978; Bransford, Derry, Berliner, and Hammerness, 2005).

Professional development is contingent on an inclusive process that establishes productive relationships for all who have a stake in the improvement of the educational enterprise. Bellanca (1995) asserts a constructivist theory that professional development resulting in change should not be defined from the individual's point of view but rather, in the context of a planned, comprehensive and systematic program designed by a system to improve all personnel's ability to devise, implement, and assess productive change in each individual and the school environment. Bellanca's theory differentiates among in-service, staff development, and professional development suggesting differences spring from: a) who makes the professional development decisions; b) how these decisions align with the organization's agenda; c) responsibility and accountability issues; and d) the notion of learning for change. Through this comprehensive effort he believes that professional development occurs systematically and the resulting change benefits overall school improvement.

We recognize the important role that Professional Development Schools can play in enhancing teacher education, as well as fostering professional development and collaboration. A growing body of research on the effects of Professional Development Schools provides evidence of improved preparation of pre-service teachers (Neapolitan, 2011; Levine, 2006; Robinson, 2007; Neapolitan, 2005; Wiseman & Knight, 2003). Other studies report that teachers in Professional Development Schools show improvement in the areas of: willingness to take instructional risks, being energized by new ideas, professional growth, an increased sense of professionalism, and improvements in classroom practice (Abdal-Haqq, 1998). Furthermore, our Professional Development Schools afford our students the opportunities to realize productive relationships with parents, educators, and other members of the

community that culminate in a commitment to teaching, learning and service. Continued participation in collaborative professional development activities that are systematic in nature enhance the likelihood of individual development and overall school improvement. The mission of schooling in today's society is to prepare students to meet the opportunities of the 21st century. Increasingly this means providing students the tools to learn and collaborate in new ways fueled by rapidly changing technology. Education professionals are responsible for helping their students meet the challenges and demands of a diverse society as responsible digital citizens. The decisions educators make affect what knowledge students will learn and how they will learn. We believe that consideration of the ethical implications of beliefs and actions is essential to the preparation of education professionals. Darling-Hammond (1996) notes that rather than merely "covering the curriculum" teachers must find ways to support and connect with the needs of all learners. Candidates in initial and advanced programs learn to use technology not only to collaborate with professionals, but also to promote collaborative learning environments.

There is an enormous challenge facing educational professionals as they come to realize and develop an appreciation for the complexity of that responsibility. Thus it is critical that educators see themselves as part of the larger community; acting in collaboration with fellow teachers and knowledgeable others within the professional community of educators as well as with families and the community at large.

Conclusion

The Conceptual framework defines the mission of the Professional Education Unit at Salisbury University. By its very nature, the Conceptual framework must be a document of stability and consistency while at the same time being responsive to the changing priorities, research, new insights and professional mandates of our time. The four themes of **Informed and Reflective Practice, Enhanced Student Learning, Scholarship,** and **Collaboration** remain the four cornerstone themes of our mission and commitment. These themes are articulated in our quest at SU to constantly strive to produce educators who are **Caring, Competent and Committed** to the education of our next generation of citizens.

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