

University of South Carolina Upstate  
Education Professional Program

Conceptual Framework



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# USC Upstate School of Education Professional Program Conceptual Framework

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## **Section I. Introduction**

The School of Education has a well-developed conceptual framework that substantiates the shared vision for the unit's preparation of educators to work in P12 schools and provides direction for programs, courses, teaching, candidate performance, scholarship, service, and unit accountability. The conceptual framework was initially created for accreditation by NCATE in 1998 and has been revised and updated annually as the needs of pre-service teachers, PK-12 schools, and the Upstate community have changed.

In preparation for a continuing visit by an NCATE accreditation team, the Education Professional Program faculty members revisited its organizing themes honing its understanding of and commitment to the development of reflective practitioners and reflective professionals. Keeping these organizing themes as its focus, the members have revised the USC Upstate Professional Program Conceptual Framework to focus and clarify its core values/goals and dispositions, to reflect modifications to its programs, to acknowledge changes and additions to state and national standards, and to incorporate recent research and scholarship in knowledge, skills, and dispositions underlying effective teacher preparation. At present five core values/goals and the dispositions serve as the coherent threads that knit together the Education Professional Program vision, its mission, its philosophy, its undergraduate and graduate competencies, and its undergraduate and graduate assessment systems. These core values/goals and dispositions include reflective teaching practice, learner-centered instruction, performance-based assessment, commitment to diversity, and professional responsibility. Initially developed by the School of Education faculty in collaboration with individuals from arts and sciences, K-12 schools, and the larger upstate community, the original conceptual framework identified “fundamental beliefs about teaching and learning; guiding principles; theoretical underpinnings of those beliefs and principles; organizing themes of teacher education programs; program outcomes, evaluation processes, and a bibliography” (p. 1). The result was a carefully articulated statement of its philosophy, its knowledge base, its mission, its commitments, and its evaluation process.

## **Section II. Vision and Mission of the Institution and Unit**

### **University of South Carolina Upstate (Institutional) Vision**

USC Upstate will emerge as “the metropolitan university of South Carolina” and one of the leading metropolitan universities of the Southeast, recognized as a center of superb teaching, experiential learning, regional partnerships, international opportunity, cultural diversity, and dynamic community activity.

### **University of South Carolina Upstate (Institutional) Mission**

University of South Carolina Upstate aims to become one of the Southeast’s leading “metropolitan” universities ... a university that acknowledges as its fundamental reason for being its relationship to expanding populations along the I-85 corridor. It aims to be recognized nationally among its peer metropolitan institutions for its excellence in education and commitment to its students, for its involvement in the Upstate, and for the clarity and integrity of its metropolitan mission.

As a senior public institution of the University of South Carolina with a comprehensive residential campus in Spartanburg and commuting and degree completion operations at the University Center of Greenville, [and USC Sumter], the University’s primary responsibilities are to offer baccalaureate education to the citizens of the Upstate of South Carolina and to offer selected master’s degrees in response to regional demand.

USC Upstate strives to prepare its students to participate as responsible citizens in a diverse, global and knowledge-based society, to pursue excellence in their chosen careers and to continue learning throughout life. Curricula and services are designed for the University’s students, four to seven thousand in headcount, who are diverse in background, age, race, ethnicity, educational experience and academic goals. Students are drawn in large proportion from the Upstate where many choose to remain for their careers. A broad range of major curricula are provided in arts and sciences and in professional fields of study required by the regional economy, including business, education, and nursing. Through on-site instruction, distance learning, continuing education and inter-institutional articulation agreements, both traditional students and working professionals are served across the region.

Consistent with the international character of the Upstate, the University promotes global perspectives across its programs. Supporting the regional employment objectives of most of its students, it provides extensive experiential learning opportunities.

The University’s metropolitan mission rests upon a foundation of partnerships with the education, corporate and service organizations of the Upstate. The faculty provides leadership in

promoting the Upstate's economic, social and cultural development. This is achieved through its teaching, professional and public service, basic and applied scholarship and research, and creative endeavors.

### **USC Upstate Education Professional Program's Relation to the University's Vision and Mission**

Faculty members and administrators of the USC Upstate Education Professional Program have adopted a conceptual framework, focused mission, and a performance-based assessment system which are consistent with the University's vision and mission statements and which clearly describe beliefs and competencies supporting its Professional Program-- teacher education programs which prepare teachers who are reflective practitioners and reflective professionals. By undergoing the rigorous processes of self-analysis and external review required for NCATE accreditation and state program approval, the USC Upstate School of Education assures excellence in its programs as well as steadfast commitment to its candidates and to the well being of P12 students and teachers in its service area and beyond. Candidates completing the Education Professional Program possess the knowledge, skills, and dispositions necessary for effective teaching and reflective professionalism.

The USC Upstate Education Professional Program serves students primarily from a region of South Carolina encompassing Spartanburg, Greenville, Cherokee, Sumter, and Union counties. As the most important part of its mission, the School of Education prepares teachers for the future. It is well known that most of these program graduates teach in the University's service area, commonly referred to as "Upstate South Carolina."

An important aspect of the mission of the Education Professional Program is to serve the needs of schools in the state of South Carolina, particularly the Upstate region. This service involves working cooperatively with local teachers, P12 students, superintendents, instructional supervisors, and principals in professional development schools, partner schools, and in other cooperative working arrangements. In addition, faculty serve schools through curriculum development initiatives and various projects designed to meet specific needs of particular schools or school districts. Faculty members lead the development of curricula and summer institutes; they disseminate information on and demonstrate state-of-the-art methods of teaching; they provide in-service training, teacher effectiveness assessment training, and staff development activities; they share instructional materials and provide forums for the discussion of issues and trends in the field of education.

### **Education Professional Program (Unit) Vision**

The USC Upstate School of Education/Unit aims to be recognized nationally for its comprehensive, outstanding teacher preparation programs, the graduates of which are exemplary educators on the basis

of their student-centered pedagogy, commitment to reflective teaching practice, and advocacy of positive change in education.

### **Education Professional Program (Unit) Mission**

To facilitate achieving its vision, the Education Professional Program has a three-fold mission--to prepare effective teachers who are reflective practitioners and professionals, to serve the diverse needs of public schools in the state of South Carolina, particularly the Upstate, working collaboratively with P12 school personnel, and to advance understanding of how teaching and learning occur effectively.

The primary aspect of the Education Professional Program's mission is to prepare effective early childhood, elementary, special education, secondary, art, middle level, and physical education teachers through both the undergraduate and the graduate programs. Teacher preparation at USC Upstate is guided by a set of principles, values, and dispositions consistent with the University's vision and mission statements. As stated clearly in its philosophy, faculty members use these principles, values and dispositions to guide program development and related field experiences. The list of performance-based goals and objectives of the unit (see "Candidate Proficiencies" and "Assessment System"), further specifies the nature of the Professional Program at USC Upstate by identifying those things reflective practitioners and professionals must believe about teaching and learning, must know, and must be able to do. *Succinctly put, teachers prepared at USC Upstate possess a broad knowledge of the liberal arts and applicable content areas and are knowledgeable of the latest developments in curriculum and instruction as well as the foundations of education. They understand and respect cultural diversity and place the welfare and educational needs of their students first. They are reflective practitioners and professionals who are committed to service built upon professional standards and ethics.*

A second aspect of the mission of the Professional Program in Education is to serve the needs of schools, especially in Upstate, South Carolina. This service involves working cooperatively with local teachers, students, superintendents, instructional supervisors, and principals, as well as those from other regions of the state and nation, on various projects designed to meet specific needs of schools and school districts.

Another crucial aspect of the Professional Program in Education mission is to advance understanding of how teaching and learning occur most effectively. This is accomplished through a commitment to the pursuit of scholarly knowledge and creativity on the part of faculty members and through a sharing of this knowledge with all involved parties in the field of education. Faculty

publication in various professional journals within the field of education (and related fields) and presentations at conferences, grant writing, as well as in-service work in schools, sponsorship of conferences, leadership programs, institutes, and seminars at the local, state, regional, and national levels are the forums through which the pursuit and sharing of scholarly knowledge on teaching and learning most frequently take place. This commitment to teaching and learning is also evident in the variety of delivery techniques employed in coursework, particularly ones that involve original, participatory learning experiences, investigation, critical and creative thinking, self-evaluation, and small group work in which candidates interact with others who may think and value the world differently. Teachers prepared at USC Upstate understand and respect all forms of diversity including but not limited to ethnicity, class, gender, sexual orientation, age, religious beliefs, learning styles and special needs, and place the welfare and educational needs of their students first.

### **Section III. Unit Philosophy, Purposes, Goals, and Institutional Standards**

#### **Education Professional Program Philosophy**

The faculty members and administrators of the USC Upstate Education Professional Program, in describing the nature of its programs, have developed a set of consistent principles and values that serves as the foundation of the Program's approach to curriculum, pedagogy, and program development. Teacher preparation at USC Upstate, based on this set of principles and values, is consistent with the University's vision and mission statements. The faculty members state these values and principles clearly in the Education Professional Program philosophy. It is the belief of the faculty that students enrolled in the Professional Program at USC Upstate will become reflective practitioners and professionals if they internalize and act in accordance with the philosophy stated below.

Graduates from a USC Upstate Education Professional Program, either undergraduate or graduate, should possess:

- A. A general exposure to and an appreciation of the traditional liberal arts and sciences of both western and non-western traditions (see Institutional Standards, p. 13).
- B. A specific exposure to the most up-to-date pedagogical theories and practices. This requires mastery of content-area knowledge, skills in planning, instruction, human relations, classroom management, media and technology, as well as knowledge of human growth and development, the foundations of education, and various theories of human learning and motivation. Candidates have the ability to appropriately use performance-based assessment for testing, measuring, and evaluating pupil achievement not only in cognitive, but also in affective and psychomotor learning.
- C. A set of ethical principles, values, and dispositions. Administrators and faculty members model, foster, and reinforce principles of justice and sensitivity toward racial, ethnic, cultural, linguistic, spiritual, and gender differences. Candidates learn through example, reading and discussion those dispositions critical to being an effective teacher--fairness, open-mindedness, a belief that every child can learn, a commitment to excellence, and advocacy for positive change in education. Candidates completing the USC Upstate Education Professional Program continuously reflect upon their values and dispositions, refine these values and dispositions, and make some attempt to determine whether or not these values and dispositions are internally consistent, socially worthwhile, and egalitarian in view.
- D. A commitment to the principle of equality of educational opportunity for all students regardless of race, ethnic background, religious affiliation, sexual orientation, or gender. Teachers prepared in the USC Upstate Education Professional Program are committed to the principle of equality of



educational opportunity and the supporting principles of multicultural education. Faculty members develop candidates' knowledge of, skills for working with, and desirable dispositions toward individuals from diverse backgrounds by placing education majors in a variety of settings for field experiences. The Education Professional Program reflects a steadfast commitment to the principles of equity and fairness.

- E. A commitment to knowledge of both theory and practice and an understanding of how one informs and strengthens the other. The faculty and administration of the USC Upstate Education Professional Program believe that attempting to teach any educational theory without the opportunity for practical application of the theory is fruitless, and that attempting to teach any lesson without an understanding of state-of-the-art theoretical grounding is equally unproductive. A well-prepared teacher understands that teaching is an art informed by science; the well-prepared teacher is guided by the best theory and practice known at a given time.

### **Unit Purpose: School of Education/Unit Organizing Themes**

The faculty of the USC Upstate School of Education has collaboratively constructed an organizing theme to guide the purpose of the Education Professional Program. The unit prepares effective teachers who are reflective practitioners (at the undergraduate level) and reflective professionals (at the graduate level). Under the umbrella of this organizing theme fit the unit philosophy and candidate proficiencies.

**Undergraduate Organizing Theme.** Teachers prepared at USC Upstate are knowledgeable of the liberal arts and applicable content areas, the latest developments in curriculum and instruction, and the foundations of education. They understand and respect human diversity and place the welfare and educational needs of their students first. As reflective practitioners, they are committed to a service ideal, which is built upon the highest professional standards and ethics.

**Graduate Organizing Theme.** Educators prepared in the graduate school at USC Upstate are well-versed in the liberal arts and applicable content areas, the latest developments in curriculum and instruction theory and practice, and the research-based, socio-cultural, and philosophical foundations of education. They understand and respect cultural differences, welcome diversity of opinion and belief, and place the welfare of their students first. As reflective professionals, they are leaders among their colleagues and are committed to a service ideal built upon the highest standards and ethical principles.

### **Education Professional Program Unit Goals/Core Values**

The USC Upstate Education Professional Program emphasizes candidate content knowledge, pedagogical skills, and dispositions for teaching. Each of these elements is essential for the effective

preparation of teachers. Clearly, teachers must possess deep knowledge and understanding of the subject matter they teach. Also, teachers must understand the best ways to present materials to students, assuring that all students learn. And equally, teachers must possess fundamental beliefs about learners, teachers, and teaching. The Education Professional Program “core values” are our goals and are expressed as follows:

*Teacher candidates demonstrate reflective teaching practice,*  
*Teacher candidates demonstrate learner-centered pedagogy,*  
*Teacher candidates demonstrate performance-based assessment,*  
*Teacher candidates demonstrate a commitment to diversity*  
*Teacher candidate demonstrate a commitment to professional responsibility.*

**Goal 1: Education Professional Program faculty and candidates demonstrate reflective teaching practice.**

Reflective teaching is a systematic process to evaluate, analyze and perhaps change what is taking place in the classroom. The teacher begins by questioning his/her own techniques and strategies (with input from students and colleagues) to determine their efficacy. The teacher collects, analyzes, and evaluates information from his/her classroom, which may in turn lead to changes and improvements in teaching.

Reflective teaching is a concept that runs deep in the works of Dewey (1944) who asserted that education is “...that reconstruction or reorganization of experience which adds to the meaning of experience, and which increases ability to direct the course of subsequent experience” (p. 76). Dewey suggested that teachers organize the environment so that their students engage in activities that, when reflected upon, produce experiences. As a result of reflection upon the causes and consequences of the experiences, candidates grow in their ability to shape the course of future experience. Through this educative process, candidates gain intelligence (e.g. the ability to solve problems).

The overarching goal is the achievement of a continuous reflective process. Education Professional Program faculty members believe that modeling reflective educational practice begins with them as they evaluate, question, and revise their own teaching strategies. Through modeling, direct instruction, and course assignments, faculty members guide candidates to become reflective practitioners/professionals.

**Goal 2: Education Professional Program faculty and candidates demonstrate learner-centered pedagogy.**

Teaching and learning comprise a process, at the heart of which is the learner. It is a goal of the School of Education faculty to prepare teacher candidates to instruct students using a learner-centered pedagogy.

Learner-centered pedagogy links directly to the educational philosophy of progressivism, a philosophy grounded in the early twentieth-century work of Dewey with strong historical connections to nineteenth-century child-centered views of education such as those espoused by Froebel, known for the kindergarten movement (Morrow, 2005, p. 5), Pestalozzi (experienced-based, child-centered views of elementary school learning (Biber, 1831); and Mann (Cremin, 1957), known for the common schools movement in the United States. Modern applications and extensions of progressivism include constructivist approaches to learning, interest-based/activity-oriented instructional approaches, and performance-based assessment.

Learner-centered instruction, to a degree, is a working model of a democracy, in which freedom is a mandatory component. As a result, the democratic principles of participatory government, social egalitarianism, and equality of educational opportunity are emphasized in learner-centered school experiences. According to Allison and Barrett (2000) Constructivists see both teacher and student as active in developing knowledge and solving problems. There is a partnership where both the teacher and the student make educational experiences understandable and meaningful.

Because the theories emphasize learner involvement, intrinsic motivation, and the processes in which learners engage, the role of the teacher in the learner-oriented classroom shifts from “disseminator of facts” to “facilitator” or “guide.” In such classrooms, using the scientific method and approaching learning tasks systematically are essential, with the emphasis on the process of learning. Within stimulating learning environments students are more likely to become empowered thinkers (Sullivan & Glanz, 2000).

**Goal 3: Education Professional Program faculty and candidates demonstrate performance-based assessment.**

Performance-based assessment is consistent with reflective practice and learner-centered instruction (Wiggins, 1998). It is applied both as the foundation for the assessment of the Professional Program (graduate and undergraduate) and as an essential component in its preparation of undergraduate and graduate candidates (Rudner & Schafer, 2002).

Authentic performance-based assessments employ evaluative methods such as open-ended questions, exhibits, demonstrations, computer simulations, projects, units, and portfolios (Airasian, 2004). Educators address issues of equity in performance-based assessments as they take into account the diversity of today’s student populations. Candidates must acknowledge that at-risk students bring

to the learning environment background knowledge different than that of mainstream peers; not only are differences taken into consideration in the development of performance-based assessments but also differences are considered in developing criteria for scoring (Arter & McTighe, 2001).

Reflective teaching consists of reiterative cycles of planning, teaching, testing, and reflecting which leads to action and ultimately refines teaching and builds professional competence. Likewise in a learner-centered environment, teachers are committed to hands-on learning that maximizes the success of all students. In order to maximize student success, teachers must be aware of individual differences and make accommodations in their lesson planning and implementation. This requires continuous monitoring of student progress and modification of instruction based on authentic assessment (Stiggins, 1994).

**Goal 4: Education Professional Program faculty and candidates demonstrate commitment to diversity.**

The Professional Program’s organizing theme, mission and philosophy note its affirmation of diversity. Broadening the parameters suggested by the concept “multicultural education,” faculty members of the Professional Program embrace and affirm a broader concept of diversity, as described by Delpit and Dowdy in 2002 and by Payne in 1996, that includes not only racial and ethnic differences, but also language, socio-economic, gender, and learning differences.

Education Professional Program faculty members subscribe to the following set of beliefs about learners and teaching which affirm diversity:

*Reflective teachers believe that all children can learn.*

*Reflective teachers create a learning environment that is anti-discriminatory.*

*Reflective teachers understand and respect each student’s cultural background.*

*Reflective teachers instruct for empathy and tolerance.*

*Reflective teachers instruct for altruism.*

Faculty members of the Education Professional Program realize the importance of instructing in a diverse society; they have the goal to help teacher candidates be prepared to “build upon the cultural strengths and characteristics that students from diverse groups bring to school,” and “help all students acquire the knowledge, skills and values needed to become participating citizens of the commonwealth” (Banks, et al, 2001, p. 5).

**Goal 5: Education Professional Program faculty and candidates are committed to professional responsibility.**

Education Professional Program faculty and candidates demonstrate their commitment not only to the P12 learner, but also to the community and to the education profession. Candidates are

encouraged to embrace responsibilities that transcend the walls of their classrooms and stay abreast of educational reform and new technologies. Being learner-centered, professional teachers recognize that the environment of the school, the community, the profession, and the government significantly influence quality of education available to students. Responsible professionals are involved in all these arenas as advocates for the well-being of students and positive change in education (Glickman, 2002).

Vrasidas and McIsaac (2001) state, “technologies are not the deliverers of content, but tools that educators and students use to construct knowledge and share meaning” (p. 129). Our faculty and teacher candidates utilize technology as a way to meet the distinct needs of students.

### **Institutional Standards**

The Education Professional Program follows a set of institutional standards set forth by USC Upstate. We believe teacher candidates must master appropriate content as provided by USC Upstate through the required general education courses. This content provided, is an important precursor to the pedagogical aspects of the Education Professional Program coursework. The institutional standards provide general exposure to and an appreciation of the traditional liberal arts and sciences of both western and non-western traditions. Among these are included a functional knowledge and appreciation of those disciplines found in:

A. Communication. The USC Upstate graduate should be able to communicate effectively in English, both orally and in writing.

Objective: Specifically, the graduate should speak and write in a coherent, insightful and well-organized manner, using the conventions of Standard English.

Student Learning Outcomes. The student will be able to:

1. Develop, illustrate, and support clear and precise ideas in essays, papers, or speeches.
2. Synthesize, integrate and cite appropriate material in essays, papers or speeches.
3. Write or deliver grammatically correct essays, papers, or speeches for a variety of audiences.

B. Mathematics & Logic. The USC Upstate graduate should be able to reason effectively, understand and solve problems, and communicate quantitatively.

Objective: Specifically, the graduate should demonstrate the ability to analyze and synthesize logically and support quantitative conclusions with appropriate rationale or calculations.

Student Learning Outcomes. The student will be able to:

1. Analyze a problem and formulate a quantitative/ logical description using correct terminology and symbolism.
2. Use the description to achieve a resolution using correct logical or quantitative reasoning.

3. Communicate the conclusions or solutions orally or in writing, supported by reasoning or calculations as appropriate.

C. Information Technology. The USC Upstate graduate should have an awareness of information technologies and the ability to gather and process information as well as to communicate it to others effectively.

Objective: Specifically, the graduate should demonstrate an ability to apply information technologies.

Student Learning Outcomes. The student will be able to:

1. Use basic knowledge of computers and information technology to collect and analyze data, interpret results, and communicate findings.
2. Identify and use information technology resources and evaluate them for accuracy, suitability, and security.
3. Examine the social and ethical issues related to the use of information technology.

D. Natural Sciences. The USC Upstate graduate should understand scientific methods, principles and processes as well as their implications for society.

Objective: Specifically, the graduate should demonstrate knowledge of important scientific models that form a basis for understanding the modern world and an ability to participate in scientific investigations.

Student Learning Outcomes. The student will be able to:

1. Demonstrate knowledge of fundamental concepts from either the life sciences or physical sciences.
2. Demonstrate knowledge of scientific methodology.
3. Conduct experiments in a laboratory setting and support conclusions based on his or her own experimentation.

E. Arts and Humanities. The USC Upstate graduate should develop an awareness of the arts and humanities.

Objective: Specifically, the graduate should demonstrate knowledge of various modes of human thought and artistic expression.

Student Learning Outcomes. The student will be able to:

1. Analyze and evaluate creative works and/or demonstrate an ability to perform works of art.
2. Discuss ways in which the arts and humanities shape and are shaped by culture.
3. Explain the importance of the arts and humanities to the quality of life.

F. Foreign Language/Culture. The USC Upstate graduate should have an understanding of other cultures, including basic communication skills in at least one foreign language.

Objective: Specifically, the graduate should demonstrate an understanding of foreign culture or cultures combined with basic reading, writing, speaking and listening skills in at least one foreign language.

Student Learning Outcomes. The student will be able to:

1. Engage in simple conversations in a language other than English.
2. Demonstrate basic reading and writing skills in a language other than English.
3. Demonstrate knowledge of the distinctive features of the culture(s) associated with the language he or she is studying.

G. History. The USC Upstate graduate should understand the development and significance of historical events.

Objective: Specifically, the graduate should demonstrate knowledge of the history of at least one culture/society.

Student Learning Outcomes. The student will be able to:

1. Demonstrate knowledge of at least two of the following historical dimensions: political, cultural, intellectual, economic, and social.
2. Demonstrate an understanding of causal relationships between historical events.

H. Social and Behavioral Sciences. The USC Upstate graduate should possess a scientific understanding of the complex determinates of human interaction.

Objective: Specifically, the graduate should demonstrate knowledge of internal and external influences that affect human behavior.

Student Learning Outcomes. The student will be able to:

1. Identify and define discipline-specific terms, facts, concepts, and major principles of the social sciences.
2. Identify the advantages and limitations of basic research techniques used in the social sciences.
3. Apply selected concepts of the social sciences to real social situations.

## **Section IV. Knowledge Bases that Support the Work of the Unit**

### **Progressivism**

The philosophical orientation of the Education Professional Program is toward Progressivism. Early progressive educators wanted to teach the whole person, the intellectual, physical and emotional aspects. John Dewey took the original definition of Progressive Education and broadened it to include the student as an active participant in his/her education, prepared to contribute to a democracy.

Faculty members in the Education Professional Program operate within this progressivist framework as they prepare undergraduate students to be reflective practitioners and graduate students to be reflective professionals. Progressivism permeates both the undergraduate and graduate curriculum. In foundations courses, information about Progressive philosophy is both taught and modeled during class activities. Methods courses and field experiences in every certification area emphasize techniques and strategies consistent with the Progressive and Constructivist philosophies as students engage in active, cooperative learning.

One of the primary functions of schools, according to progressivists is to prepare citizens for full participation in democracy (Dewey, 1944 [1916]). In describing progressivism, Ornstein and Hunkins (1993) state,

According to progressivist thought, the skills and tools of learning include problem-solving methods and scientific inquiry; in addition, learning experiences should include cooperative behaviors and self-discipline, both of which are important for democratic living. Through these skills and experiences the school can transmit the culture of society while it prepares the students for a changing world.... Progressivism...place[s] heavy emphasis on how to think, not what to think.... [T]he curriculum [is] interdisciplinary in nature.... The teacher serve[s] as a guide for students..., “the leader of group activities” (38).

Progressivists find support in the work of developmental, ecological, and humanistic psychologists such as Piaget, Ausubel, Elkind, Bronfenbrenner, Vygotsky, Erikson, Rogers, Maslow, and Kohlberg. These theorists believe that humans seek to learn through interaction with others as well as their environment (LeFrancois, 1975; Vygotsky, 1978; Bronfenbrenner, 1979). Their theories depict humans as inherently inquisitive, natural learners (LeFrancois, 1995; Rogers, 1951). Consequently, experiences structured to tap into this inquisitive nature bring about the best learning (Rogers, 1951; Han & Bhattachara, 2001). Bolstered by cognitive, ecological, and humanistic learning theories that emphasize active learning, Progressive Education places a premium on active learner involvement in “hands-on, minds-on” learning experiences (Bruner, 1961; Piaget, 1970, 1973). Pedagogically, it is also necessary to build conceptual conflict by challenging current understanding



and to provide opportunities to test new ways of thinking (Sullivan & Glanz, 2000). Because these theories emphasize learner involvement, intrinsic motivation, and the processes in which learners engage, the role of the teacher in the progressive-oriented classroom shifts from “disseminator of facts” to “facilitator” or “guide” (Ornstein & Hunkins, 1993; Allen, Splittgerber & Manning, 1993). In progressivism, a scientific-method oriented approach to learning is essential, with emphasis on the process of learning. In fact, Progressives are subject to criticism for focusing on process at the expense of product (Johnson, Dupuis, Musial, Hall & Gollnick, 2002).

Theories of curriculum organization, development, and change that have bases in cognitive/developmental psychology are consonant with progressivism. The curriculum of a progressivist-oriented school is characterized by a high degree of relevance to the learner (Tyler, 1949; Alexander & George, 1993; Ornstein & Hunkins, 1993; Wiles & Bondi, 1989, 1993). Additionally, the curriculum is interdisciplinary in nature--points of connection between discrete subject disciplines become the focus of the curriculum (Alexander & George, 1993). Whether interest-based or based in the real world of daily living--family/home life, community life, the world of work--a heavy proportion of the curriculum should be directly related to the experiences of learners (Tyler, 1949; Alexander & George, 1993; EEDA, 2005).

Particular core values are consistent with a Progressive approach. According to Katz (1993), dispositional considerations are important because the acquisition of knowledge and skills does not guarantee that they will be used or applied; skill and drill methods of instruction may damage or undermine the disposition to use knowledge and skills; and dispositions are less likely to be acquired through didactic processes as opposed to modeling or scaffolding.

Certain dispositions are desirable for the progressive classroom. These include the following: a love of learning, self-esteem, initiative, commitment to diversity, and interest in learning about other cultures (Lipka & Brinthaupt, 1999; Duke, 1984); open mindedness (Fishman & McCarthy, 1998); a commitment to caring, empathizing, nurturing, and building connectedness (McAllister & Irvine, 2002). Carefully chosen field experiences, as well as models in the university classroom, serve as a primary avenue for nurturing and developing dispositions. Progressive teachers can offer appropriate role modeling (Duke, 1984; Hargreaves, 1994) thus providing support and meaning to candidates looking for their “voice.” Hargreaves (1994) describes a preferred disposition as that of ownership (as opposed to dictatorship) that implies caring and responsibility. Other dispositions, within the Progressive framework, considered critical for the effectiveness and success of teachers include a commitment to personal and professional growth through interaction with other professionals (Lipka &

Brinthaup, 1999), and utilizing self assessment techniques (such as reflection) that challenge attitudes, beliefs and values.

In view of the foregoing description of Progressivism, there are many typical educational practices that are antithetical to its orientation toward learning and, as a result, receive little endorsement in the Professional Program. Such antithetical practices include “the authoritarian teacher, excessive reliance on textbook methods, memorization of factual data...by drill, static aims and materials that reject the notion of a changing world, high stakes testing, the use of fear and corporal punishment as a form of discipline, and the isolation of education from...social reality” (Ornstein & Hunkins, 1993, p. 39).

### **Reflective Practitioner/Reflective Professional**

Beginning with Dewey’s definition of education and his writings on experience and reflection, continuing to the present, many educators have advocated that schools of education should promote reflective teaching and develop reflective teachers (Bayles, 1966; Cruickshank, 1987; Schon, 1988; Norlander-Case et al, 1999; Brindley & Schneider, 2002; Loughran, 2002). Summarizing Dewey’s comments on the reflective teacher, Colton and Sparks-Langer (1993) assert that:

Reflective teachers monitor the effects of actions as well as the cognitive processes employed in decision-making. Upon encountering novel situations or planning future lessons, reflective teachers attend to them, make inferences or hypotheses, and mentally check these “hunches” by looking for relationships with prior experiences or other ideas stored in memory. The teachers then make tentative decisions for action and play them out mentally to identify possible consequences. Finally, they choose and implement a course of action (p. 46).

Advocates of reflective teaching describe benefits to both teachers “...and the children they teach, who [are] exposed to human beings engaging in meaningful inquiry, not merely dispensing trivial facts” (Bracey, 1987, p. 233). Posner (1985) describes benefits of reflective teaching for candidates:

Reflective thinking allows the [candidate] to examine critically the assumptions that schools make about what can count as acceptable goals, methods, problems and solutions. Although we all must live within some constraints, often we accept as predetermined by authority or tradition far more than is necessary. In...field experience[s], reflective thinking [allows one] to act in deliberate and intentional ways, to devise new ways of teaching rather than being a slave to tradition, and to interpret new experiences from a fresh perspective (p. 20).

Theorists have developed various categorization systems for reflective thinking/writing (Colton & Sparks-Langer, 1993; Pultorak, 1993). For example, Zeichner & Liston (1985) posit three “levels of reflectivity:”

At the first level... the dominant concern is the efficient and effective application of educational knowledge for the purposes of attaining ends accepted as given.... A second level of

reflectivity...is based upon a conception of practical action where the problem is one of explicating and clarifying the assumptions and predispositions underlying practical affairs and in assessing the educational consequences to which action leads.... The third level...incorporates consideration of moral and ethical criteria into the discourse (pp. 158-159 [emphasis added]).

The task of the USC Upstate teacher educator, then, is to foster in pre-service and in-service candidates the desire and the skills necessary to become reflective practitioners (Clift, Houston & Pugach, 1990; Laboskey, 1994; Sullivan & Glanz, 2000) who engage in critical self analysis, reflecting at the highest possible level upon all that comprises teaching. Reflective writing is the most effective method of developing skill at reflection, and this writing is most effective when it follows a structured format (Posner, 1985; Pultorak, 1993; Eisele, 1989). For both undergraduates and graduates, the use of reflective journals and other reflective writing facilitates their ability to make connections to their personal and professional lives (Bliss, Mazur & Buzzard, 2000) through real life experiences (Loughran, 2002). To promote reflection, teacher educators use proven techniques such as site-based methods courses in partnership school settings, frequent practicum experiences, intensive directed (student) teaching, classroom based research, class discussions, interactive conferences involving both new and seasoned practitioners, and continued professional development through workshops, conferences, seminars, professional organizations, and additional graduate study.

USC Upstate candidates, with the guidance of USC Upstate Professional Program faculty, construct knowledge about students, teaching, learning, and schools as they engage in reflective exercises. A goal of the Professional Program is to prepare undergraduate and graduate teachers who will continue to grow through reflection.

### **Diversity**

The USC Upstate education professional program has as one of our goals “teacher candidates demonstrate a commitment to diversity.” The unit is committed to the enhancement of all aspects of diversity. Various aspects of diversity are infused within the Education Professional Program curriculum. Examples include: a commitment on the part of the faculty to model the disposition that all people should be treated with kindness, patience, fairness and respect; the commitment to teaching our candidates to develop lesson plans using a variety of instructional strategies with appropriate modifications and accommodations for students with diverse needs; and providing field experiences in a variety of diverse settings.

A tangible experience we provide for our students is an annual “Diversity Conference” for student teachers. Each spring student teachers from Upstate’s Education Professional Program and

several South Carolina universities and colleges, including HBCUs come together to hear speakers on diversity related subjects and to interact with their peers from differing backgrounds.

Moll (2002) believes that teachers who have the ability to teach learners from diverse social, economic, and cultural backgrounds are the foundation of successful schools. It is our goal to educate future teachers with an ability to work productively and eagerly in any given situation.

## **Section V. Education Professional Program Candidate Proficiencies**

### **Assistance, Development, and Evaluation of Professional Teaching (ADEPT)**

The Professional Program emphasizes candidate content knowledge, pedagogical skills, and core values needed for successful teaching. Each of these elements is essential for the effective preparation of teachers. Clearly, teacher candidates must possess deep knowledge and understanding of the subject matter they teach. Also, teacher candidates must understand the best ways to present materials to students, assuring that all students learn.

The Professional Program uses these guiding principles based on the Interstate New Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium (INTASC) and the South Carolina ADEPT standards to establish the candidate proficiencies, which must be demonstrated. Candidate performance in these areas is assessed at several points in the program using ADEPT observations of teaching, candidate portfolios, and standardized tests.

Teachers prepared at USC Upstate:

- demonstrate competence as effective long-range instructional planners;
- demonstrate competence as effective daily (short-range) instructional planners;
- demonstrate competence in the areas of student assessment, reflective self-assessment and use of assessments in instruction;
- establish high expectations for all learners;
- demonstrate knowledge of and capability in implementing a variety of instructional strategies to include utilizing state-of-the-art instructional technology;
- possess thorough and accurate knowledge of the content they teach;
- effectively monitor student learning, provide meaningful feedback to students, and enhance students' learning;
- maintain a classroom environment that promotes and facilitates learning;
- manage their classrooms effectively with equity, fairness, and firmness;
- develop as teachers both professionally and personally and fulfill professional responsibilities.

### **Dispositions**

The USC Upstate Education Professional Program prepares individuals for admittance into the professional field of education. This field is a profession, and as such, has certain standards of conduct expected of its members. It is the Education Professional Program faculty members' responsibility as candidates prepare for a career in teaching to ensure that they are of good character and are dedicated to the best interests of the students they will serve. The USC Upstate Education Professional Program

expects that candidates agree to uphold the Teacher Education Standards for Conduct and Dispositions listed below.

The candidate:

- Shows sensitivity to all students and is committed to teaching all students.
- Demonstrates fairness to all students.
- Is committed to and believes that all students can learn.
- Recognizes and respects diversities that exist in the classroom and plans accordingly.
- Creates and maintains a safe physical and emotional learning environment.
- Shows ability to speak and write with clarity and fluency.
- Uses Standard English in writing and speaking.
- Works collaboratively with others, e.g., students, teachers, parents, administrators, and peers.
- Establishes positive rapport and appropriate relationships.
- Is able to express attitudes and feelings in a professional manner.
- Is willing to accept responsibility for his/her own actions.
- Is flexible and adaptable.
- Exhibits dress and grooming appropriate for the setting.
- Exhibits professional respect in the USC Upstate classroom and in field experiences.
- Demonstrates initiative in the classroom.
- Is confident, poised, and courteous.
- Demonstrates enthusiasm.
- Accepts constructive criticism.
- Demonstrates and supports academic integrity as specified in the guidelines stipulated in the USC Upstate Undergraduate Catalog.
- Respects the privacy of students and confidentiality of information.

### **Multicultural/Diversity Perspectives in the School of Education Professional Program**

Its mission, philosophy, principles and organizing themes drive the USC Upstate School of Education's commitment to multicultural/diversity education. As reflective teachers, graduates of School of Education Professional Program:

- Believe that all children can learn;
- Create a learning environment that is anti-discriminatory;
- Understand, respect, and accommodate for group and individual differences;
- Instruct for altruism, empathy, and tolerance; and
- Promote justice.

## **Technology in the School of Education Professional Program**

Guided by the standards of the International Society for Technology in Education (ISTE) USC

Upstate teacher education majors at both the undergraduate and graduate levels:

- Demonstrate a sound understanding of technology operations and concepts;
- Plan and design effective learning environments supported by technology;
- Implement curriculum plans that include methods and strategies for applying technology to maximize student learning;
- Apply technology to facilitate a variety of effective assessment and evaluation strategies; and
- Understand the social, ethical, and legal implications of technology

## **Part VI. Unit Assessment System**

The USC Upstate Education Professional Program unit utilizes an assessment system designed to bring consistency across its various degree programs as well as to provide a systematic approach for aggregating and analyzing the data for both its undergraduate and graduate programs. These systems evaluate individual candidates while providing information concerning the effectiveness of the various programs. Along with changing state and national standards, these assessments are the impetus for changing the content and structure of existing programs, for adding new programs, and for revising current policies and procedures. More detailed descriptions of these systems, including evaluation instruments and rubrics, appear in a separate publication, the *USC Upstate School of Education Assessment System Manual, 2003*.

### **Assessment of Candidate Performance**

#### **Undergraduate Assessment System**

The Undergraduate Assessment System includes a variety of formative and summative performance-based assessments for evaluating the candidates' professional knowledge, skills, and dispositions during their sophomore, junior, and senior years, as well as beyond. Five common data collection tools are implemented across the multiple checkpoints (or times designated in a program's course sequence) in order to provide each program with a recursive developmental process for monitoring and advancing its candidates' performances over time. This structure also allows the unit to conduct comparative analyses of program outcomes within and across each checkpoint.

The summative assessments (i.e., course grades, final ADEPT portfolio, Teacher Work Sample, and ADEPT Observations) all contain items that examine basic principles of teaching (e.g., planning, teaching strategies, assessments, classroom learning environment, behavior management, and professionalism) as outlined by the South Carolina Department of Education's ADEPT (Assistance, Development, and Evaluation of Professional Teaching) Performance Standards (APS). The candidate performance outcomes are thereby consistent with state-mandated guidelines for first-year teacher induction models used by school districts across the state. Faculty members have further defined these principles or candidate expectations by aligning the assessments' elements with the knowledge, skills, and dispositions identified by the professional accreditation standards affiliated with each specific degree program. Subsequently, the data generated create a two-tiered level of analysis. One supports an explicit examination of



results in relation to the individual degree programs' professional standards and the other serves the unit by indicating the candidates' performances in relation to a common set of outcomes.

Discipline Content Knowledge Unit Assessment. All professional course syllabi identify how instructional objectives, activities, and assignments relate to the ADEPT Standards as well as align with the specific professional standards for the individual degree programs. Course grades from each semester are used to evaluate the candidates' summative performance on exams and learning activities. Candidates must have a 2.5 GPA for acceptance into the Program and obtain a C or better in professional education coursework as well as in classes in their content concentration and support courses in order to remain. Individuals who fail to achieve these requirements are dismissed from the Program but may reapply by submitting a letter of petition for readmission to the Dean of Education for consideration by the School of Education Appeals Committee. Readmitted students who subsequently receive a second grade below "C" in any professional education course will be permanently dismissed from the Program.

Candidate Ability to Plan Instruction Unit Assessment. The ADEPT portfolio is designed to help candidates self-evaluate their strengths and weaknesses and to identify areas that will be further addressed as they progress through their program. At three checkpoints, candidates develop evidence for demonstrating the teaching competencies defined by the accreditation standards associated with their degree program. This evidence is organized into a portfolio and arranged by the ten South Carolina Professional ADEPT Standards (APS): 1) Unit Planning; 2) Lesson Planning; 3) Assessment of Students and Self-assessment; 4) High Expectations for Learners, 5) Instructional Strategies; 6) Teaching Content to Students; 7) Monitoring Student Learning; 8) Maintaining a Classroom Environment that Promotes Learning; 9) Classroom Management; and 10) Personal and Professional Development. For each portfolio section, candidates provide: (1) the philosophical, theoretical, and practical principles underpinning each APS to establish how it is an essential element of good teaching; (2) descriptions of the artifacts included in the category; (3) justifications for the artifacts that they select as evidence to demonstrate competency; and (4) explanations regarding the importance of these practices to their field and professional development.

The ADEPT portfolio is introduced in SEDF 200 Education Colloquium, a required course that is completed before admission to the Education Professional Program. Progress on the portfolio is monitored initially during the junior year by the candidate's advisor, a second

time by the advisor as the candidate applies for directed teaching, and a third time at the conclusion of directed teaching by whoever is responsible for the seminar activities related to student teaching. The assessment of the portfolio at all three points is completed using a common rubric. Also included in the assessment system is a provision for candidates to receive remedial assistance if the portfolio is rated “unsatisfactory” at any assessment point as well as guidelines for the reevaluation of the portfolio.

Each time the ADEPT portfolio is appraised, the candidates complete a Standards of Professional Conduct and Dispositions self-evaluation. During student teaching, the cooperating teacher also rates the candidates on the same behaviors. This assessment’s focus reflects the premise on which the unit’s mission and philosophy is built-- to uphold academic integrity, ethical attitudes, and behaviors for conducting oneself in a professional manner that is positive, open-minded, and sensitive to the racial, ethnic, cultural, and spiritual values of others. Candidates who do not meet these expectations are brought before the School of Education’s Candidate Progress Review Committee, at which time candidates, under the guidance of the Committee, write goals and activities that will effectively lead to the remediation of the specific areas of concern.

Directed Teaching Unit Assessment. Observers (i.e., the cooperating teacher and University supervisor) use the ADEPT Student Teaching Evaluations to rate the candidates’ teaching performance based upon the ten ADEPT Standards at specified points and share this feedback with the candidate. A summative evaluation is completed at the conclusion of each placement and shared with the candidate in a three-way conference, including the cooperating teacher, University supervisor, and candidate. Copies of the evaluations become a part of the candidates’ advisement file.

Candidate Effect on Student Learning Unit Assessment. The Teacher Work Sample (TWS) is a comprehensive assessment with seven components (contextual factors, learning goals, assessment plan, design for instruction, instructional decision-making, analysis of student learning, and self assessment/reflection) that correlate with the ten ADEPT Standards. A project completed during student teaching, the TWS is used to measure the candidates’ effects on student learning and to provide evidence that they are ready to begin their professional career as educators. A faculty member using a rubric that specifies the set of expectations in relation to the degree program’s professional standards completes the assessment of the portfolio. The ratings

(i.e., exemplary, more than satisfactory, satisfactory, and unsatisfactory) match the evaluation levels used in the ADEPT Portfolio assessment. This condition thereby provides the ability to compare candidates' performances on these two instruments. While the ADEPT portfolio is intended to help candidates develop reflective teaching, bodies of knowledge, and instructional competencies that will serve them continuously as they develop professionally as teachers, the TWS serves as an accountability tool for directly measuring the candidates' ability to improve the learning of students.

Content-Based Unit Assessment. In order to qualify for initial teacher certification in South Carolina, all candidates must pass the appropriate grade level Principles of Learning and Teaching exam, and the Praxis II Content Area Examinations mandated by the South Carolina Department of Education for each specific teaching field/teaching major. The unit and individual programs use these scores as an external data collection tool for evaluating candidates' level of proficiency in relation to the scoring standards set by the South Carolina Department of Education. Additionally, these standardized test scores serve as a measure for judging the validity of unit's assessments by indicating discrepancies between the external and the unit's internal assessments' ratings.

Unit Assessment System Checkpoints. The Education Professional Program unit has established a timeline for conducting the five unit evaluations. At each checkpoint other information also is gathered and used to document candidate status (i.e., Praxis I scores, Criminal background checks, Professional Program and Graduation Applications, 100 hours of field experience, and documented completion of required coursework). Additionally, several surveys are included and used to evaluate the unit and program operations and performance outcomes. The assessment checkpoints and the internal and external data collected are displayed in Table 1.

Table 1: Undergraduate Professional Program Assessment System Checkpoints

<b>Checkpoint</b>	<b><i>Data Collected</i></b>	
	<u>School of Education Data</u>	<u>External Data</u>
I. Application for Admission to the Professional Program in Teacher Education  [After 60 hours of general education, concentration, support and/or education foundation	GPA; specific course completion, including SEDF 200: Education Colloquium; two favorable faculty recommendations; attestation of non-criminality; signed Standards for Professional	Passing scores on Praxis I: PPST, 1650 [1100 old version] on the SAT, or 24 on the ACT and the SLED check.

courses]	Conduct & Dispositions form.	
<b>Checkpoint</b>	<i>Data Collected</i>	
	<u>School of Education Data</u>	<u>External Data</u>
II. Candidate admitted to a Professional Program [400-level professional program, support, concentration, and/or content courses]	GPA, ADEPT (initial) Portfolio Assessment I, Standards of Professional Conduct & Dispositions Self-Assessment I.	
III. Application for Admission to Directed (Student) Teaching [90 hours; continued 400-level professional program, support, concentration, and/or content courses]	GPA; ADEPT (pre-student teaching) Portfolio Assessment II; Standards of Professional Conduct & Dispositions Self-Assessment II; and completion of 100 hours of field experience.	FBI Fingerprint; South Carolina Department of Education Clearance.
IV. Completion of Professional Program [Student Teaching and co-requisite courses completed]	GPA; ADEPT (exit) Portfolio Assessment III, Standards of Professional Conduct & Dispositions Self-Assessment III and Cooperating Teacher's Conduct & Disposition Assessment of candidate; ADEPT Summative Evaluations of Student Teaching; Teacher Work Sample; and Application for Graduation.	School of Education Senior Survey (semester of graduation); School of Education Partners' Assessment of Program.
V. Graduation and Follow-up [Application for certification and employment performance]		Recommendation for Initial Certification—program completion; Praxis II passing scores; Employee (every two years); Graduate (summer after graduation); and Alumni Surveys (1 year later).

Graduate Assessment System

The Graduate Assessment System includes four of the five unit assessments (i.e., Grades, Praxis II scores, Graduate Professional Portfolio, and the Teacher Work Sample). Data are collected at four checkpoints.

The initial checkpoint comes at Admission to the Graduate Program. To be admitted, students must: 1. Complete a degree-seeking application; 2. Verify residency status; 3. Hold a valid teaching credential, and thereby have a passing score on the Praxis II content examinations; 4. Maintain a minimum GPA of 2.5 on a 4.0 scale on the most recent degree at a baccalaureate level or above from a regionally accredited university; 5. Secure two letters of recommendation; 6. Complete an interview with the Director of Graduate Programs; 7. Achieve a passing score on the *Miller Analogy Test*, or the *Graduate Record Exam*; and 8. Attend a scheduled Orientation Session (which includes an introduction to the Graduate Professional Portfolio). Once candidates are fully admitted to the program, they meet either with the Director of Graduate Programs or an assigned advisor to create a 'Program of Study' specifying courses required for their degree. This meeting also provides opportunity for further discussion of the Graduate Professional Portfolio. This portfolio, arranged according to the Core Values of the School of Education, is developed throughout the Program and becomes the summative measure of the graduate candidate's knowledge, skills, and dispositions. During the Orientation Session, candidates are provided a copy of the rubric that is used in assessing the Graduate Professional Portfolio.

The second checkpoint occurs during the semester when candidates complete their sixth Program course. Advisors conduct a formative assessment of the candidates' portfolio. The portfolio's components are arranged by the Professional Program's five goals (i.e., reflective teaching practice, learner-centered instruction, performance-based assessment, commitment to diversity, and professional responsibility). Each section's requirements also align with the individual Program accreditation standards. Candidates must achieve a rating of Satisfactory or higher on each category in order to continue in the Program.

Requirements for graduation formalize the third checkpoint in the graduate assessment system. To be awarded a degree, candidates must complete the twelve courses designated on the program of study, achieve a 3.0 GPA or better; and successfully defend, before a panel of professors, master teacher, and peer, the Graduate Professional Portfolio. Candidates complete a survey concerning their satisfaction with the Program at the time of graduation.

The fourth checkpoint of the graduate assessment system occurs one year after graduation. Surveys are sent to the graduate as well as his or her to their employer. Employers rate both the candidate and the program (as reflected by the graduate) as excellent, good, or needs improvement. Graduates evaluate the Program using these same criteria and offer suggestions for program improvement. Graduates' achievement of National Board Certification is also monitored. On the basis of data compiled in the graduate assessment system the success of individual candidates is tracked. Likewise, the data gathered through the graduate assessment system become a catalyst for modifying each of the graduate Programs.

### **Assessment of Program Effectiveness**

The USC Upstate Education Professional Program assesses on a regular basis the effectiveness of its offerings as perceived by faculty members, students, graduates, and personnel in public schools. The formal mechanism for this accomplishing component are the Teacher Education Advisory Committee (comprised of the School of Education (SOE) Dean, College of Arts and Sciences (CAS) Division Chairs, and appointed faculty members representing each division of the CAS and the professional schools and college) and the School of Education Advisory Council (i.e., members include the SOE Dean, Education faculty members, area school superintendents, principals, teachers, parents, business leaders, and candidates). These bodies meet twice yearly (once in the fall and once in the spring) to review, discuss, and consider programmatic changes.

On a continuing basis, the SOE collects candidate input on various surveys (e.g., Advisement, Program, and University facilities) in addition to the information provided on student opinion polls on faculty effectiveness for formative evaluation of the School of Education Professional Program. Information obtained from candidates in response to various surveys is used to improve course requirements, curricula, assignments, student teaching placements, and practicum placements.

USC Upstate student teachers complete a Program Graduate Survey at the conclusion of the experience. Candidates provide opinions about their University supervisor, cooperating teachers, and the directed teaching experience in general. Additionally, each self-rates his/her knowledge, skills, and competency levels achieved across the ten ADEPT Standards. Graduates also evaluate the degree to which the Professional Program fostered their development in those

areas. As a follow-up evaluation of the candidates' performance, the SOE collects data from employer and alumni surveys. The USC Upstate Office of Institutional Effectiveness and Compliance administers, collects, tabulates, interprets, and summarizes this information. Annually, the School of Education faculty members and the various advisory councils review the survey and unit assessment data in order to inform the improvements or modifications made to the unit and or individual degree programs.

Personnel in public schools are also asked to evaluate the effectiveness of the Education Professional Program. The Cooperating Teachers on the basis of their experience with student teachers complete the School of Education School Partners' Assessment of the Program. The School of Education Assessment Coordinator collects, tabulates, and summarizes this information for review by Education Professional Program faculty members and various advisory councils.

The School of Education appoints faculty members to serve as Program Coordinators representing each degree Program. These individuals are responsible for annually submitting a Program Evaluation Report to the University Assessment Committee as well as sharing about its Program activities at the monthly SOE faculty meetings.

Further input concerning the quality of the USC Upstate Education Professional Program is gathered from nationally recognized entities. Standards of accrediting agencies (i.e., National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education [NCATE], and the National Association of State Directors of Teacher Education and Certification [NASDTEC]), information disseminated by professional education organizations (e.g., American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education [AACTE] and the Association of Teacher Educators [ATE]), and current research findings as presented in professional publications guide the design, implementation, and evaluation of the Education Professional Program. No matter the source of the input, all data concerning the quality of the USC UPSTATE teacher education program serve as a basis for program revision and improvement.

#### **Assessment of Effectiveness of the Education Faculty and Administrators**

The Dean of the School of Education, with input from Division Chairs, annually evaluates the effectiveness of each School of Education faculty member on the basis of the following criteria: 1. Teaching effectiveness; 2. Service; and 3. Scholarship and creative activity. (This is referred to as the Administrative Annual Review.) Tenure-track faculty members are

additionally evaluated by the School of Education Peer Review Committee during their first, third, and penultimate year. This committee also evaluates post-tenure files. (See Policy # 5-4: School of Education Promotion and Tenure Criteria and Policy #5-5: Graduate Faculty Selection and Evaluation Criteria). The School of Education Peer Review Committee is a component of the promotion and tenure structure outlined in the *Faculty Manual, USC Upstate*.

The Faculty Senate is responsible for conducting the faculty evaluation of administrators. The Faculty Secretary-elect administers this evaluation during the spring term. In the School of Education administrators covered by this policy include the Dean, the Assistant Dean, and the Division Chairs. They are evaluated following procedures described in the *USC UPSTATE Faculty Handbook*. The purpose of this annual evaluation is two-fold. “For the individual evaluated, it aids in the goals of improvement and development. At the same time, it is a source for the assessment of [administrators’] performance” (*USC UPSTATE Faculty Handbook*, p. 38). Further information on the effectiveness of administrators is gathered in surveys of program graduates and of public school personnel who work with the USC Upstate teacher education program.

### Summary

Faculty members of Education Professional Program, along with input from its constituencies, have articulated clearly its organizing themes, goals and dispositions. The goals and dispositions are evident in the Education Professional Program philosophy, in the expected candidate competencies, and in its assessment systems. As a result, candidates completing both undergraduate and graduate Programs are committed to: (1) reflective teaching practice; (2) learner-centered instruction; (3) performance-based assessment; (4) diversity; and (5) professional responsibility. Through demanding in-class experiences incorporating the opportunities afforded by technology and intensive field experiences in diverse educational settings, teachers prepared at USC Upstate become reflective practitioners and reflective professionals. They are able to meet the challenges of teaching today’s young people and of preparing them to participate in and shape the direction of the nation’s democracy.



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