Florida A&M University

College of Education

Conceptual Framework

of the

Professional Education Unit
The conceptual framework of the Professional Education Unit at Florida A&M University may be described as an integrated approach to providing educational experiences that result in exemplary professional educators. The term "exemplary" describes the kind of graduates the unit strives to produce. Educational experiences include courses, clinical experiences, and support services, all of which are interrelated and integrated and have several strands or emphases that pervade them. The integrated approach of the PEU’s conceptual framework is comprised of the cross-curricular themes and is illustrated in the following diagram:
College of Education
Conceptual Framework Outcomes Table

DIVERSITY

- CF 1
- This focal area, the FAMU professional education candidate will:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Conceptual Framework</th>
<th>Proficiencies</th>
<th>FEAPs</th>
<th>INTASC</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CF: 1.1 (K)</td>
<td>Demonstrate understanding of diverse backgrounds of individuals.</td>
<td>F: 5, 6, 7</td>
<td>I: 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CF: 1.2 (S, D)</td>
<td>Demonstrate diverse student learning through differentiated instruction.</td>
<td>F: 5, 7</td>
<td>I: 3, 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CF: 1.3 (S, D)</td>
<td>Create and foster learning opportunities adapted to diverse learners.</td>
<td>F: 5, 6</td>
<td>I: 3, 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CF: 1.4 (S)</td>
<td>Practice responsive strategies that foster acculturation, mediation, and resolution.</td>
<td>F: 5, 6</td>
<td>I: 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CF: 1.5 (K, S)</td>
<td>Establish a climate that values diversity and supports learning for all students.</td>
<td>F: 5, 7, 9, 10</td>
<td>I: 5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

TECHNOLOGY

- CF 2
- Through this focal area, the FAMU professional education candidate will:

<table>
<thead>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CF: 2.1 (S)</td>
<td>Use a variety of technology tools and software to support student learning.</td>
<td>F: 4, 12</td>
<td>I: 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CF: 2.2 (S)</td>
<td>Use technology to manage, evaluate, and improve instruction.</td>
<td>F: 1, 4, 10, 12</td>
<td>I: 6, 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CF: 2.3 (K)</td>
<td>Demonstrate knowledge of fundamental concepts in technology.</td>
<td>F: 12</td>
<td>I: 1, 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CF: 2.4 (K)</td>
<td>Demonstrate an understanding of concepts related to software, hardware, and applications</td>
<td>F: 2, 12</td>
<td>I: 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CF: 2.5 (S)</td>
<td>Use technology to prepare and teach lessons and promote creativity among students.</td>
<td>F: 12</td>
<td>I: 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CF: 2.6 (S, D)</td>
<td>Demonstrate the ability to access a variety of tools to enrich media communication.</td>
<td>F: 12</td>
<td>I: 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CF: 2.7 (S)</td>
<td>Teach students to use various types of technology.</td>
<td>F: 4, 12</td>
<td>I: 6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
VALUES

- CF3
- Through this focal area, the FAMU professional education candidate will:

<table>
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<th>INTASC</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CF: 3.1 (S)</td>
<td>Work with colleagues in a professional manner.</td>
<td>F: 6</td>
<td>I: 2, 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CF: 3.2 (S)</td>
<td>Use clear and accurate communication with students, families and other stakeholders.</td>
<td>F: 11, 6</td>
<td>I: 9, 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CF: 3.3 (S, D)</td>
<td>Promote perspectives, ideas, people, and culture.</td>
<td>F: 5, 6</td>
<td>I: 1, 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CF: 3.4 (D)</td>
<td>Demonstrate achievement of goals.</td>
<td>F: 3, 9</td>
<td>I: 5, 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CF: 3.5 (D)</td>
<td>Create learning opportunities that foster cooperation, support, and individual participation among students.</td>
<td>F: 7, 2</td>
<td>I: 5, 10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

CRITICAL THINKING

- CF4
- Through this focal area, the FAMU professional education candidate will:

<table>
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<th>INTASC</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CF: 4.1 (K)</td>
<td>Demonstrate an understanding of a variety of instructional / professional strategies to encourage student development of critical thinking and performance.</td>
<td>F: 4, 7</td>
<td>I: 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CF: 4.2 (S)</td>
<td>Demonstrate the use of a variety of instructional / professional strategies to encourage students’ development of critical thinking and performance.</td>
<td>F: 2, 7</td>
<td>I: 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CF: 4.3 (D)</td>
<td>Create and foster opportunities for student learners to demonstrate critical thinking and self-directed learning as habits of mind.</td>
<td>F: 4</td>
<td>I: 1, 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CF: 4.4 (K)</td>
<td>Demonstrate the use of performance assessment techniques and strategies that measure higher order thinking skills of student.</td>
<td>F: 1, 4</td>
<td>I: 1, 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CF: 4.5 (S)</td>
<td>Demonstrate the use of higher order thinking skills.</td>
<td>F: 7, 2</td>
<td>I: 5, 10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
PROFESSIONALISM

- CF 5
- Through this focal area, the FAMU professional education candidate will:

<table>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CF: 5.1 (K)</td>
<td>Know the content.</td>
<td>F: 8</td>
<td>I: 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CF: 5.2 (S)</td>
<td>Use the appropriate pedagogy to provide all students with the opportunity to learn.</td>
<td>F: 7, 9</td>
<td>I: 74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CF: 5.3 (D)</td>
<td>Demonstrate commitment to personal growth and development.</td>
<td>F: 3, 7</td>
<td>I: 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CF: 5.4 (K, S)</td>
<td>Use major concepts, principles, theories, and research related to the development and acquisition of knowledge and motivation.</td>
<td>F: 7</td>
<td>I: 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CF: 5.5 (S)</td>
<td>Construct learning opportunities that support student development and acquisition of knowledge and motivation.</td>
<td>F: 7</td>
<td>I: 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CF: 5.6 (S)</td>
<td>Display effective verbal and non-verbal communication techniques to foster valuable interaction in the classroom.</td>
<td>F: 2</td>
<td>I: 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CF: 5.7 (S, D)</td>
<td>Display appropriate code of conduct including dress, language, and respective behavior.</td>
<td>F: 9</td>
<td>I: 5, 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CF: 5.8 (K, S)</td>
<td>Know and use student personnel services.</td>
<td>F: 5, 10, 12</td>
<td>I: 2, 10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

URBAN/RURAL EDUCATION

- CF 6
- Through this focal area, the FAMU professional education candidate will:

<table>
<thead>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CF: 6.1 (S)</td>
<td>Demonstrate the ability to work in school settings with varied levels of human and material resources.</td>
<td>F: 9, 10, 11</td>
<td>I: 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CF: 6.2 (S, D)</td>
<td>Demonstrate the ability to work in school settings that focus on rural/urban context with opportunities and challenges that these opportunities provide.</td>
<td>F: 11</td>
<td>I: 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CF: 6.3 (K)</td>
<td>Understand the conditions of both rural and urban students and families.</td>
<td>F: 5, 11</td>
<td>I: 2, 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CF: 6.4 (S)</td>
<td>Communicate effectively with students’ parents and the community.</td>
<td>F: 1, 4</td>
<td>I: 1, 8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Overview

Cross-curricular themes shown in the conceptual framework diagram have been identified and are used to build in both rigor and continuous change to the teacher and other professional educator programs. These themes include: diversity, technology, values, problem-solving, professionalism, and urban/rural education. Program themes are shown in the diagram and are fundamental to producing the exemplary professional. Although program themes appear to separate elements, all are dependent on and integrated with each other as to program design, implementation, and evaluation.

The preparation of an exemplary professional at FAMU will be guided and characterized by certain essential measurable qualities (outcomes) as defined in the: Educator Accomplished Practices specified by the Florida Education Standards Commission, Florida Essential Teaching Competencies identified by the Florida Department of Education, and Competencies identified by the Florida Principal Leadership Standards, and other Competencies set forth by the national specialty organizations for each program in the unit. The conceptual framework for the FAMU Professional Education Unit is grounded in a combination of directed, constructivist, developmental, and social learning theories derived from the writings of system theorists, educational philosophers, social scientists, practitioners, and developmental theorists. Concepts from these writers and from learned societies for various areas of education help form the knowledge base from which the unit gets the curriculum components and principles of its conceptual framework.

History

In 1996-1997, while addressing the National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) Standards, the Professional Education Unit's (PEU) conceptual frame was developed. The unit studied the concept of teacher education at FAMU with the goal of developing a stronger, more definable and well-articulated view of teacher education and other professional educator preparation. The theme and conceptual framework were derived through the consensus building activities of several faculty and administrative groups across the Unit. Since its inception, the narrative of the Framework has been revised to ensure that it is clearly understood, ties the programs together and is reflected in all of the Unit's programs.

This conceptual framework has been presented to and evaluated by all stakeholders, including faculty, students, other members of the professional education community, and the Inter-Area Council. In the Fall of 1999, the conceptual framework committee was named for the 2000 NCATE report. That committee developed a way of work that facilitated input from the PEU regarding revisions to the construct. The work of the committee yielded no fundamental changes. PEU faculty members and stakeholders began another review process of the Conceptual Framework in 2008. Revisions were made to simplify the diagram, and updates were made to the themes. Multiculturalism was changed to diversity and educational technology to technology. Proficiencies associated with each CF theme (standard) were revised to reflect what candidates should know and be able to do as a result of course and other educational experiences. Currently, the PEU’s Conceptual Framework is presented to students at all field/clinical, orientation sessions, and venues where school personnel meet to plan and collaborate with university faculty. The framework is illustrated in brochure-style pamphlets and PowerPoint presentations that are available for group and individual review. Each faculty member presents the conceptual framework as part of course delivery.
Formal Introduction

Philosophy

**Philosophy:** The conceptual framework is grounded in a combination of directed, constructivist, developmental, and social learning theories derived from the writings of systems theorists such as Ausubel and Gagne, philosophers such as John Dewey, social scientists such as W.E.B. DuBois, practitioners such as Mary McLeod Bethune, Benjamin Mayes, and developmental theorists such as Piaget. More recent research by Howard Gardner on multiple intelligences, Daniel Goleman, Emotional Intelligence, and James Banks, Multiculturalism has been incorporated into coursework and is a philosophical underpinning of the PEU’s thrust to produce the exemplary professional. Concepts from these writers and from learned societies help form the knowledge base for the conceptual framework.

The PEU conceptual framework draws upon research to integrate knowledge and processes into teaching and learning experiences that incorporate state, national, and subject-area standards. Cross-curricular themes of diversity, technology, values, problem solving, professionalism, and urban/rural education are used to build in both rigor and continuous improvement into the teacher education program. The processes, represented by distinct themes, recognize the importance of student personnel services such as advisement and mentoring to the pre-service component as well as the role of induction as the gateway to a successful and effective professional career. The conceptual framework also recognizes other research-based key processes as essential to the preparation of the "exemplary professional:" general education and specialty/content knowledge; faculty development in research and practice; and professional studies in coursework balanced with well-planned field and clinical experiences. The goal of the PEU's conceptual framework is the development of the "exemplary professional," the professional educator who possesses the requisite content knowledge, pedagogical skills, problem-solving ability, and dispositions necessary for him/her to work with students, parents, and colleagues to significantly impact student learning in positive directions.

Purpose

**Purpose:** The conceptual framework is a model that incorporates an integrated approach to providing courses and experiences that are consistent with state, national and professional standards.

Goal

**Goal:** The conceptual framework reflects the Unit's goal to develop "exemplary professionals:" high quality classroom teachers, administrators, and educational support personnel who can function effectively in a culturally diverse society and who demonstrate a commitment to improving educational practices in culturally diverse and differing ability contexts. The framework's model assists in articulating the Unit's goals to administrators, faculty, K-12 partners and students in its programs. The model encourages professionally sound commitments and dispositions of teacher candidates within its programs.

About the Model
**Explanation of the Conceptual Framework Model**

The fully articulated conceptual framework upon which the Professional Education Unit's programs are based identifies the goal of the Unit, its statement of purpose, knowledge bases, and assessment processes and standards for students and faculty, as well as, for programs. It provides the rationale for course work, instruction, field experiences, clinical practice, and evaluation. The model is complex in that it shows multiple processes coming together in an integrated approach.

**Exemplary Professionals**

The Exemplary Professional: At the center of the model is the "Exemplary Professional." This individual is the finished product that emerges from the Professional Education Unit's program. The exemplary professional is an educator who possesses a broad array of competencies and skills that enables working in urban and rural environments and who can facilitate students' acquisition of a broad knowledge base sufficient enough for them to achieve at a high level and ultimately reach their potentials. The exemplary professional is an effective teacher or other school professional.

**The Orbits**

The model consists of three orbits. At the extreme ends of each orbit is a PEU theme (standard). The orbits are meant to show the interrelatedness of the themes and that they are integrated to produce the outcome of exemplary professional. The processes and experiences of each orbit must function in an integrated fashion to develop the exemplary professional.

**The Themes**

The Six Themes

The Florida A&M University Professional Education Unit’s Conceptual Framework identifies a graduate as the “Exemplary Professional.” The Exemplary Professional acquires knowledge, skills, and dispositions in the cross-curricular themes, diversity, technology, values, problem solving, professionalism, and urban and rural education. These Conceptual Framework themes are focal points for a considerable amount of discussion in today’s educational literature. Indeed, these themes frame key teaching and learning debates and are hot topics in the educational arena.

Candidates preparing for entry into the education profession at Florida A&M University encounter numerous experiences designed to provide them with expertise in all thematic areas. The FAMU Conceptual Framework reflects the prominence of the themes in the literature and the importance of the knowledge base of each in preparation of the Exemplary Professional. The following narrative informs of the relationship of The Florida A&M University Conceptual Framework thematic areas to the educational literature. Candidates course work and experiences are designed to provide students with knowledge, skills, and dispositions relative to the themes.

The six themes represent proficiencies that candidates are expected to possess and demonstrate. The themes are aligned with the Florida Educator Accomplished Practices, the Florida Subject Area Competencies, and Competencies set forth by the Florida Department of Education and national specialty organizations for each program in the Unit. They are used to build in both rigor and continuous change to the teacher and other professional educator programs. The themes include:
Diversity - The exemplary professional understands diverse student backgrounds and has the skills, and disposition to employ this understanding to support student learning. He or she accepts and fosters diversity. The candidate practices strategies such as acceptance, tolerance, resolution and mediation, and establishes a comfortable environment in which all students can learn.

Today, educators face the challenge of preparing students from diverse cultural backgrounds. Over the past 20 years, the face of the American student has changed, which consequently requires a changing curriculum for the new clientele of classrooms. The FAMU Conceptual Framework Diversity theme embraces the research of prominent scholars who have published extensively in the area. While many scholars, Gollnick (2002), Delpit (1995), Sleeter (1996), and Ladson-Billings (1994), have underscored the importance of multiculturalism in education and the teaching and learning process, the work of Dr. James Banks encapsulates the essence of multiculturalism in the FAMU Conceptual Framework. According to Banks (1994), multicultural education assumes that race; ethnicity, culture, and social class are salient parts of U.S. society. It also assumes that ethnic and cultural diversity enriches the nation and increases the ways in which its citizens can perceive and solve personal and public problems. This diversity also enriches a society by providing all citizens with more opportunities to experience other cultures and thus to become more fulfilled as human beings. When individuals have experiences of participating in a variety of ethnic cultures they are more able to benefit from the total human experience.

There are several goals associated with diversity education at Florida A&M University. Again, Banks (1994) summed those goals as:

1. Multicultural education is to help individuals gain greater self-understanding by viewing themselves from the perspectives of other cultures.
2. Multicultural education is to provide students with cultural and ethnic alternatives.
3. Multicultural education is to provide all students with the skills, attitudes, and knowledge needed to function within their ethnic culture, the mainstream culture, and within and across other ethnic cultures.
4. Multicultural education is to reduce the pain and discrimination that members of some ethnic and racial groups experience because of their unique racial, physical, and cultural characteristics.
5. Multicultural education is to help students to master essential reading, writing, and computational skills. Multicultural education assumes that multicultural content can help students to master important skills in these areas.

Technology - The exemplary professional makes use of available technology to support student learning and uses technology to manage, evaluate and improve instruction. The candidate knows, understands and uses fundamental concepts in technology and facilitates access to the use of electronic resources for students. The candidate uses technology to manage, evaluate and improve instruction.

The decade of the 1990’s saw educational technology in schools in various forms, computer, printers, scanners, digital cameras, camcorders, the Internet, LCD projectors, compact disks, laptops, smart boards, distance education, and more. Not only did educational technology find a place in schools but it also located itself in the minds of virtually all stakeholders. Persuaded by educational technology’s capabilities, many came to believe that when used appropriately, it could make teaching and learning more efficient and effective along with exerting a positive effect on student achievement outcomes. Even so, changing teachers’ behavior to embrace educational technology from time tested and traditional methods of instruction were not a smooth process or transition. The Office of Technology Assessment (OTA) (1995) along with other scholars, Picciano (2002), Roblyer (2000), Sharp, Forcier...
(2002), Reksten (2000) and Descy (2002) have pointed out teachers’ difficulty in adopting and using educational technology. However, in today’s environment, the ability of educators to use technology is a requirement as opposed to an option. Thus emphasis is placed on students becoming familiar with and using educational technology to deliver classroom instruction.

Much has changed since educational technology in the form of a computer was introduced in schools. Now, educational technology in its various forms is recognized as effective tools in the teaching and learning environment. Indeed, educational technology is being integrated into teachers’ pedagogy, and students are using educational technology to accomplish many tasks. Several national organizations, in particular, The International Society for Technology in Education (ISTE), has developed computing and competency standards related to what educators should know and be able to do using educational technology. States have also delineated within their borders what educators should know and be able to do using educational technology. Professionals’ expertise and ability to use educational technology in the teaching and learning process is a requirement.

Schools must begin to create a new reality for themselves, one that embraces educational technology as a fact of life rather than a burden (Tunison, 2004). The integration of educational technology into the teaching and learning process is something that requires knowledge and skill to accomplish. Dooling (2004) asserted that the effectiveness of educational technology depends to a great extent on the teacher. How educational technology is used with students is more important than if computers are used at all (Papert, 1999). It is when educational technology is integrated into the curriculum that children demonstrate gains in conceptual understanding, abstract thinking, and problem solving skills (Haughland, 1992). Several scholars have written on the subject providing key information, concepts, and resources to assist educators in integrating educational technology into the teaching and learning process. Resources that are used in courses and to assist candidates to acquire educational technology expertise are Forcier and Descy (2002), The Computer As An Educational Tool: Productivity and Problem Solving, Sharp (2002), Computer Education for Teachers: Integrating Technology into Classroom Teaching, Picciano (2002), Educational Leadership and Planning for Technology, Hirschbuhl and Bishop (2000), Computers in Education.

The Technology theme in the FAMU Conceptual Framework draws upon the work of many scholars. The learning experiences are designed to support candidates’ adoption and use of educational technology. Candidates are provided with technical and pedagogical support, as suggested by Hofer, Chamberlin and Scot (2004) in order to effectively use educational technology. Hands-on learning engagements with technology in the classroom and field clinical and practicum situations support candidates’ acquisition of educational technology knowledge, skills, and dispositions enabling the integration of technology in the teaching and learning process. The PEU candidates are trained to provide student-centered, constructivist ways of learning through multiple experiences.

Values - The exemplary professional values the worth and dignity of every person. She or he works with colleagues in a professional manner and interacts with students, families and other stakeholders in a manner that reflects ethical and moral standards. The candidate shows respect for varied talents and perspectives and is committed to individual excellence. The candidate values the role of the student in promoting each other’s learning and recognizes the importance of peer relationships in establishing a climate for learning.
It has been noted that the degeneration of personal values is a critical issue of this time (Elliot, 2004). Values are the support structures that sustain and strengthen a culture. Individuals make decisions and life choices on a daily basis. A question that should be asked is “what are the dynamics that influence the selection of individual’s decision and choices?” A plausible response is that the teaching and cumulative situations an individual has experienced undergird the selection of choices. Hence, the emphasis on values is an integral part of the FAMU PEU’s pedagogy. It is an important construct with the PEU that all candidates demonstrate the highest level of ethical and moral standards. Values then become an important commodity to be imparting to candidates such that they internalize this essential characteristic. Candidates are expected to become exemplary professionals, which coincides with the demonstration of exemplary values.

Values encompass a broad spectrum of behavior including honesty, justice, trustworthiness, compassion, integrity, patriotism, and respect. The process of acquiring values is lifelong, however, the experiences provided candidates via course work and interactions intends to provide a foundation for which values may be scaffold. Ernest Boyer is an important source of information and inspiration relative to the theme of values in the FAMU PEU. Ernest Boyer has been identified as a Christian, an educator, and curricularist. As the long-time director of the Carnegie Foundation, Boyer taught that there is common ground on which we can all stand and rejoice. “Amidst the diversity [of value commitments]...there is still a great consensus in this nation about appropriate behavior. We can agree on the need to be honest, to respect the property of others, to refrain from physical attacks on one another, to obey laws, to finish a task once begun...” (Boyer, 1988). These are principles candidates are exposed to as they journey through the curriculum at FAMU.

Through course work and other experiences candidates acquire the values that our nation needs and which would ultimately benefit them as citizens in a democracy. The educational processes of the PEU assist candidates to develop individual character that recognizes the multiplicity of race, culture, and faith. Candidates learn that to teach some parts of the community may ingratiate while at the same time may alienate other parts of that community. Candidates learn behaviors that will enhance the worth, dignity, potential, and uniqueness of each individual. This is particularly important in the role of educators where they will meet many children who will comprise tomorrow’s citizens.

In the process of acquiring knowledge, skills, and dispositions candidates are exposed to the teachings of Piaget (1932/1965) Stages of Cognitive Development, Kohlberg’s (1973) Stages of Moral Development, Pre-Conventional and Post-Conventional, Bandura (1977) Social Learning Theory, learning from observation, Lickona (1991) Character Education. This literature provides theories of learning and forms a basis for the development of character and values. Hence, candidates are well informed regarding values through the works of these scholars.

Problem Solving - The exemplary professional understands and uses a variety of instructional strategies to encourage students' development of critical thinking and performance. The candidate values critical thinking and self-directed learning as habits of mind.

Today there is a strong movement in education to make problem solving an integral component of the curriculum. The need for learners to become successful problem solvers has become a dominant theme in many national standards (AAAS, 1993; NCSS, 1997; NCTE, 1996; NCTM, 1989, 1991). The ability to problem solve and to teach problem solving is a critical aspect of today’s teacher’s repertoire. Moreover, the ability to solve problems is a basic life skill, and problem-solving is a subset of critical thinking and utilizes essentially the same strategies. Although the line between the two is not clear-cut, in general, the goal of problem-solving is to arrive at correct solutions to well-structured problems, whereas the goal of critical thinking is to construct and defend reasonable solutions to ill-structured
problems. Basically, problem-solving is arriving at solutions using more than simple application of previously learned procedures.

Schools are being asked to prepare all candidates to become problem solvers and critical thinkers (Pepper & Rowland, 2000). Under the influence of cognitive learning theories, problem solving shifted to represent a complex mental activity consisting of a variety of cognitive skills and actions. Problem solving included higher order thinking skills such as "visualization, association, abstraction, comprehension, manipulation, reasoning, analysis, synthesis, generalization—each needing to be managed' and coordinated (Garofalo & Lester, 1985, p. 169). In this Age of Technology, problem solving skills are an absolute necessity. While there are a number of problem solving models available to candidates to study and utilize, two have prominence for PEU candidates.

The IDEAL problem solving model proposed by Bransford and Stein (1984) and Mayer (1983) provide a process orientation for the PEU and its candidates. The IDEAL model postulates:
1) Identify the problem
2) Define the problem through thinking about it and sorting out the relevant information
3) Explore solutions through looking at alternatives, brainstorming, and checking out different points of view
4) Act on the strategies
5) Look back and evaluate the effects of your activity

Mayer’s model identifies problem solving as a multiple step process where the problem solver must find relationships between past experiences (schema) and the problem at hand and then act upon a solution. There are three steps in this model:
1) Problem solving is cognitive but is inferred from behavior.
2) Problem solving results in behavior that leads to a solution.
3) Problem solving is a process that involves manipulation of or operations on previous knowledge.

Problem solving skills are required in every discipline and all jobs (Dale, Ballotti, Handa, & Zych, 1997). The PEU’s emphasis on problem solving as a thematic area relates to candidates ability to solve problems, make decisions, and understand concepts. To that extent, candidates are exposed to authentic learning situations that require the ability to use their knowledge base in order to produce results, interact with others cooperatively to determine outcomes, seek resolution to real world situations, and apply technology to work. While problem solving occurs on the empirical level, it also occurs in the interaction of individuals and in the context of an environment or organization. Candidates are presented with academic challenges in the teaching arena pre-professional and in the actual classroom setting. Experiences provided by the PEU allow candidates to construct learning, work collaboratively, and contemplate essential matters of teaching and learning.

Professionalism -Exemplary professionals know their content and use appropriate pedagogy to provide all students with the opportunity to learn. The exemplary professional is committed to professional growth and development. The candidate uses major concepts, principles, theories, and research related to development of children to construct learning opportunities that support students' development, acquisition of knowledge and motivation.

Professionalism is intertwined with the quality of practice (Sockett, 1993). Teaching cannot be separated from its ethical and moral components. At the core of teaching are moral or ethical relationships, given that the teacher assumes the responsibility for nurturing children. Inherent in teaching is the fact that teachers face moral and ethical dilemmas (Freeman, 2000). PEU’s concerned with developing quality educators must prepare candidates to negotiate moral and ethical dilemmas that will occur in practice. A number of scholars have written on this aspect of professionalism in teaching,

To become skillful practitioners, candidates must understand and apply the concept of professionalism to their practice as educators. While there are numerous principles associated with professionalism, several are prominent in the programs of study and experiences provided by the FAMU PEU. These principles include, but are not limited to: dependability, flexibility, respect for others, cooperation, and service. Understanding that professionalism has to do with individual deportment, which reflects the acquisition of specific teachings that manifest in behavior, to be exemplary professionals requires candidates to understand and manifest these concepts. Teaching is an honorable profession and requires behavior that is congruent and conforms to high moral standards and exemplary character. As well, it is very important for candidates to understand the legal, professional, and moral responsibilities of teaching given the inevitability that they will be confronted with numerous situations, which will require demonstration of their professionalism. The professional educator must meet high ethical standards as required by national organizations (NCATE, ISLLC, INTASC) and demonstrate in their practice a significant degree of expertise. The PEU strives to provide candidates with the knowledge, skills, and dispositions commensurate with these expectations.

The FAMU PEU recognizes the professional educator as one who (a) engages in lifelong learner, in that he or she continues to grow through engages in professional development, and maintains membership in professional associations, (b) is a role model for students, in that he or she exemplifies honesty, integrity, and respect for others, (c) adheres to manifests the professional educator Code of Ethics, and (d) demonstrates care and concern for children and fosters their development and growth of students through quality teaching, and (e) maintains positive relationships with parents and the community.

Urban and rural education - The exemplary professional is prepared to work in school settings with limited resources as well as settings that focus on rural/urban contexts with opportunities and challenges that these environments provide. The clientele of schools in urban and rural America are quite different. The environments afforded by rural and urban schools are significantly different also. Teacher Education programs that focus exclusively on one or the other risks not preparing teachers who are capable of working in both environments.

### Rural Education

Rural and small town schools educate approximately 40% of the nation’s students. Rural schools have often served as a catalyst for promising education reform and developing innovative strategies useful and effective for all schools, yet rural and small town schools face certain challenges in meeting the needs of their students. Those challenges include receipt of lower salaries and benefits for teachers, lack of access to professional development opportunities, creation of professional isolation, teaching multiple subjects and grade levels, and many extracurricular duties, difficulties in raising revenue and in recruiting and retaining quality teachers. Teachers in rural schools face challenges that are substantively different from those that are a part of urban or suburban districts. The National Education Association (NEA) has concluded that the federal government must place increased emphasis on the needs of rural schools, including targeting resources to help attract, train, and retain quality teachers.

Candidates at FAMU are made aware of specific characteristics of what it means to teach in a rural school. In fact, field clinical experiences and internships are provided in rural settings so that
candidates may experience the meaning of teaching in a rural school setting. According to the NEA (1998), rural teachers are not as well educated as their peers, with 37 percent having earned a Master’s degree, compared with 44 percent of teachers in central city schools and 47 percent in urban fringe schools. Rural school teachers are also slightly less experienced. On average, they have 14.7 years of teaching experience, compared with their colleagues in central city schools (15.1) and urban fringe schools (15.9). Rural school teachers are less likely to have participated in in-service or professional development programs more than eight hours in length on the following topics:

- Education technology
- Teaching methods
- Subject fields
- Student assessment
- Cooperative learning.

With this set of statistics, the professors structure a curriculum that militates against a candidate resembling this particular picture. Moreover, candidates are made aware of other rural school characteristics such as NWREL’s strategic goals for rural education, (1) improving learner outcomes, (2) improving the education profession, (3) achieving equity among diverse populations and settings, (4) assessing disparate and divergent outcomes, (5) improving the adequacy and continuity of public resources, (6) strengthening the vitality of distressed schools and communities, (7) mobilizing community support for children and schools, and (8) emphasizing the transition from school to livelihood. In addressing these goals, the PEU integrates the special concerns of rural educators into course work and field experiences.

Urban Education

Few issues in education evoke greater concern to policymakers, educators, and the general public than the condition of ethnic and racial minority students in the nation's urban schools Cotton, (1988). The intersection of minority students, inner cities, poverty, crime, violence, under funding, poor facilities, teacher turnover and absenteeism, characterize urban education. Combined, these factors create a situation where statistically, too many students achieve at significantly lower levels than their white counterparts and leave school–either via dropping out early or upon graduation--lacking the skills and knowledge required by employers, colleges, and trade schools (Cotton, 1988). This lack of skills presents a national challenge and portends the creation of a class of citizens who do not possess the skills to engage in meaningful employment. It is important that candidates are aware of the environmental conditions existing in urban schools and the host of problems faced by school personnel, particularly teachers. Again, the experiences provided by the PEU are such that candidates receive instruction and information relative to urban education. The PEU curriculum is structured to provide learning experiences whereby candidates acquire knowledge, skills, and dispositions that enable them to meet the intellectual and environmental challenges posed by learners in urban schools. Educating the urban student in the midst of negative circumstances has been the focus of a significant amount of research. Scholars, Edmonds, (1977), Comer (1966), Haberham (1991), through their research have provided fundamental understandings regarding Urban Education. Other scholars who have researched and published information on Urban Education, and which course instruction utilizes are Cotton (1988), The pedagogy of poverty versus good teaching, Lomotey (1989), Educating urban minority youth: Research on effective practices, and Cuban (1989), "At-Risk Students: What Teachers and Principals Can Do?" Effective schools research has an important place in the teacher education curriculum. Effective schools research considers the urban school environment and the ingredients that must be present for students to achieve at a high level. Effective schools research juxtaposes best school practices and ineffective practices so that candidates can incorporate best practices in their teaching
repertoire while eschewing ineffective practices. Edmonds, Brookover, and Lezzotte are major scholars in the effective schools movement. Candidates are exposed to Effective Schools research given that a number actually reside in urban environments.

PEU Programs Conceptual Framework Themes and Standards Alignment

Conceptual Framework and Standards Alignment

Diversity, Technology, Values, Problem Solving, Professionalism, and Rural and Urban Education are six themes embodied in the PEU conceptual framework. Thus, these standards are incorporated into the Unit's programs. Table 1 is a representation of the alignment of the Conceptual Framework themes with other professional programs at the graduate level. At the graduate level, the PEU’s program and national standards differ. Therefore, individual program standards and the attendant Knowledge, Skills and Dispositions differ. (See Individual Program documents for Conceptual Framework and Knowledge, Skills, and Dispositions).

Professional/State Standards

Professional/State Standards Alignment: Over the last year, 2008-2009, all education programs have reviewed their course syllabi to ensure alignment with state and national standards. This process included utilizing a professional education unit assessment grid as a tool to identify information germane to the elements in NCATE Standards and other national standards. (see individual program course and standards matrix). The Professional Education Unit has recently received a large grant through the Carnegie Corporation (Teacher of a New Era) to support the restructuring of programs within the Unit. The new construct will incorporate revised curricula in which courses and other teaching and learning experiences are aligned with professional standards.

State Program Approval

State Program Approval: The program approval process in Florida consists of a five-year review from NCATE/DOE/FLBOG. The University submits annual reports to DOE through the Institutional Program Evaluation Plan (IPEP). In order to address the changes in state program requirements, professional development activities have been provided for the unit faculty. (See individual program course and state standards matrix).

E-Portfolio Requirements of the Professional Education Unit

Professional Education Unit Electronic Portfolio: The Florida A&M University Professional Education Unit (which includes the Elementary/Secondary Education Departments, Department of Educational Leadership and Human Services, Workforce Education Department, Health, Physical Education and Recreation Department, and the teacher certificate programs of the College of Arts & Sciences) has adopted an electronic "Process Portfolio Model," to assist students in meeting the twelve educator standards described as the Florida Educator Accomplished Practices. In 1996 the Florida Education Standards Commission redefined twelve minimum competencies that all pre-service teachers are asked to demonstrate prior to graduation. The portfolio documents the development of pre-service teachers against these competencies, over their matriculation in their program. The FAMU faculty chose the portfolio as one means of assessing students because it is a type of authentic assessment that allows students to illustrate their learning through multiple forms of evidence and connected reflections. The
portfolio is seen as a working document that pre-service teachers can build on as they move into their professional lives as educator. The Professional Education Unit Electronic Portfolio has three purposes: (a) To be a vehicle for thoughtful and knowledgeable reflection on the correlation between the pre-service teacher's work and the Florida Accomplished Practices, (b) to exhibit growth of knowledge and skills that lead to effective teaching. These will be presented in the form of evidence categorized by the Florida Accomplished Practices, and (c) to further understand teaching as a profession and the most appropriate applications of their studies, and demonstrate candidate artifacts alignment with program, state, and professional standards.

Organization

All teacher education candidates organize their portfolios by the twelve Accomplished Practices. For Other Professional Programs, the electronic portfolio is organized around program and national specialized standards. The focus is on development of a process portfolio that demonstrates the pre-service teacher's and other professional educators’ growth in the profession over their time in the program. Each candidate keeps an electronic portfolio on-line and a copy on a personal computer diskette. It is recommended that the portfolio documentation begins with the student's placing evidence online, beginning with the student's first course of field experience, Overview and Orientation to Teaching (in the second semester of the students freshman year) and culminating with the pre-service teacher's student teaching experience in the senior year.

Reflections

Teacher education candidates and other professional educators write reflections for each artifact that is uploaded to the portfolio as evidence of competency acquisition. They describe the evidence and its relevance to the Florida Accomplished Practices, Florida Principal Leadership Standards, and National and other specialty organizations and how the evidence relates to one or more of the six conceptual framework themes and details how the experience will impact their future teaching and work in schools. Other professional program candidates maintain portfolio entries based upon course, program, state, and national standards.

Assessment

For Teacher Education majors, an informal assessment of the Electronic Portfolio [the PEU is migrating from College Livetext to Taskstream] begins with the candidate’s first course that includes field placement (Overview and Orientation to Teaching). At the graduate level, each Other professional program has a specified beginning for the collection of portfolio documents. Once a candidate begins the process, he or she continues to collect documentation towards completion of the portfolio until student teaching is completed the last semester of their senior year. For other professional programs, portfolio document accumulation continues until final semester and graduation. Each instructor gives credence to the candidates work through the formal grading procedures (outlined in the course syllabus). At the end of the senior year, after the student teaching experience, or internship at the graduate level, candidates turn in their portfolios for a final review. Comprehensive evaluations are completed by the College Supervisor. An exit conversation is held between the University Supervisor and the student teacher [other professional educator] to confirm that candidate artifacts, illustrations, and reflections meet competencies.
Evidence

Criterion for the portfolio includes a variety of sources of evidence (formal tests, work samples, writing samples, authentic work products, lesson plans, communications with parents, records of parent conferences, etc.). Candidates are required to include a wide range of formats (graphics, textual material, audio files, and scanned material) in order to fully illustrate their depth of competency. As candidates move through the sequence of classes, different Florida Accomplished Practice competencies are naturally emphasized. This helps candidates include evidence from each of the twelve defined standards over a sequential period of time and provides the Professional Education Unit multiple measures of assessing student progress.

STANDARD 2: PROGRAM ASSESSMENT AND UNIT EVALUATION

The unit has an assessment system that collects data on the applicant qualifications, candidate and graduate performance, and unit operations to evaluate and improve the unit and its programs.

Introduction

The Florida Agricultural and Mechanical University Professional Education Unit (PEU) created an Assessment System that allows it to collect and analyze data on applicant qualification, candidate and graduate performance, and unit operations for the purpose of evaluating and improving the unit and its programs. Since the last NCATE accreditation in 1997, the Professional Education Unit (PEU) functioned using a combination of centralized and department-based assessment mechanisms. The vast majority of these mechanisms, including applicant evaluation, clinical site assessments, and internship documents, are centralized in the Office of Student Teaching [now the Center for Academic Success] in the College of Education. For graduate programs these documents are located in program offices.

Explicit and uniform policies direct candidate evaluations across all departments and programs in the Professional Education Unit (PEU). All programs subscribe to a common model for student teaching evaluation defined by the Office of Student Teaching. However, a few programs use modifications for formative evaluations of student teaching to accommodate unique program requirements. Nonetheless, the intent is toward the standardization of assessment practices across all departments and programs in the Professional Education Unit (PEU).

In light of NCATE 2000 standards, the Professional Education Unit (PEU) continues to re-evaluate its assessment system resulting in several substantial improvements including refinement of performance requirements prior to entry into the teacher education program and into student teaching, and prior to application for graduation. The Professional Education Unit (PEU) also conducts a follow-up of its graduates and uses the input to improve its programs as it builds on its strengths and addresses its challenges and weaknesses.

Element 1: Assessment System

Using the Florida Agricultural and Mechanical University (FAMU) Professional Education Unit (PEU) Conceptual Framework as a springboard, members of the professional community developed collaboratively an assessment system to identify evaluation measures of outcomes to reflect attainment of professional, state and institutional standards. The standards include NCATE Program Approved Standards of Professional Organization, the Florida Pre-Professional Accomplished Practices, the
Sunshine State Standards, the Florida Adopted Area Competencies, and the Florida Generic Competencies.

**Multiple Assessments of Candidate Proficiencies at Stages of Progression.** The Professional Education Unit’s (PEU) assessment system is driven by the Conceptual Framework which identifies proficiencies that candidates are expected to exhibit at strategic transition points in the other professional educator program.

Multiple assessments linked to the state, national and institutional standards were identified as means to produce evidence. The assessments identified in the Conceptual Framework orbits of General Studies/Specialty Studies and Professional Studies/Field Clinical Experience address candidate content knowledge, pedagogical knowledge, professional knowledge, pedagogical content knowledge, dispositions, and candidates’ positive impact on PreK-12 student learning. Assessments are linked to specific standards that they are designed to evaluate. The Unit coordinates the effort so that the overall assessment covers the range of competencies to be acquired by the program candidates and demonstrated through assessment measures across program courses.

The process of linking assessments and standards enables the unit to continuously evaluate its curriculum and instruction practices to improve teaching and strengthen its programs. This process is referred to as continuous improvement and is accomplished in the light of the following:

- Florida Educators Accomplished Practice Standards
- Florida Subject Matter Standards
- National and Professional Standards
- Florida Education Standard’s Commission: Link to INTASC
- Sunshine State Standards
- Program Standards

Assessment measures that sufficiently and appropriately indicate important aspects of candidate progress and performance were identified. These include but are not limited to portfolio artifacts such as research papers, tests, essays, interview data, evidences of professional involvement, candidate reflection reports, GPA, CLAST, FTCE, Comprehensive Examination, and FELE scores; student teaching/internship evaluations from supervising teachers and college supervisors; information on percent teachers hired/rehired; feedback data on graduate job satisfaction; and employer satisfaction surveys.

All teacher candidates and initial certification other professional program candidates are expected to demonstrate each of the Accomplished Practices with at least three portfolio projects and artifacts at an acceptable level in order to graduate. Candidates are beginning to use LiveText to create their E-portfolios as early as the first professional education courses. Each Accomplished Practice standard is expected to be demonstrated by, at least, (1) an artifact to demonstrate an attained skill; (2) a reflection statement to represent disposition; and (3) a documentation of knowledge gained. Portfolio artifacts are assessed according to a set of rubrics. The rubrics represent the nature and level of successful performance in the accomplished practice to be demonstrated.

Portfolios for teacher candidates in either electronic or hard copy formats are reviewed at three intervals as candidates progress through the program: (1) at application for candidacy into the teacher preparation program, (2) during field experiences, and (3) during student teaching. Faculty members
provide formative and summative feedback on all portfolio artifacts. Faculty assessments enable the unit faculty to identify the (1) strengths and deficiencies of the candidates, (2) implications for course improvements, and (3) where assessments and rubrics need to be strengthened. Other professional graduate programs have determined specified intervals for review of portfolios. Normally, a professor will review the portfolio at the conclusion of each course. Review is required at the completion of the internship and prior to graduation.

Unit programs are at various stages of formulating and assessing or reassessing rubrics or criteria that further define the nature and level of successful performance on the assessment measures that are used to evaluate candidate work. Levels of performances indicate what is valued in a candidate’s response and what is expected in order for candidates to be successful.

Candidate completion of program requirements is assessed at various stages to determine admission, advancement, graduation or termination from the program. The requirements are benchmarks that represent the institution’s expectations that the candidate must demonstrate to be fully prepared for licensure, initial teaching, and entry into other professional assignments. The requirements for admission into the Professional Teacher Education Program and into student teaching and graduation, and the criteria for teacher certification are listed in the PEU Undergraduate Student Handbook. Admission to and graduation from a graduate program is specified in program brochures, handbooks, and University catalog. The Assessment System and Unit Evaluation Flowchart shows the stages when the specific data are collected and reviewed for program assessment. The various sources of data for program assessment include:

1. Course Outlines with course objectives linked to NCATE, Preprofessional Educator Accomplished Practices, Sunshine State Standards, and Subject Matter Content Standards for Florida Teachers, and other professional program state and national standards.

2. Grids of Performance-Based Evidenced by program course
   a) NCATE Standards
   b) Preprofessional Educator Accomplished Practices
   c) Sunshine State Standards
   d) Subject Matter Content Standards for Florida Teachers
   e) State Standards
   f) National Program Standards

3. Student Portfolios

4. College of Education Professional Education Unit Undergraduate Student Handbook listing:
   a) Admission Requirements and Procedures
   b) Student Teaching Program and Requirements
   c) Graduation Requirements
   d) Criteria for Teacher Certification

5. College of Education Office of Student Teaching Student Teaching Handbook listing the following evaluation instruments:
a) Appraisal of Student Teaching  
b) Appraisal-Visitation Record for Student  
c) Directing Teacher’s Observation Worksheet  
d) Student Teaching Evaluation Form  
e) Student Teaching Profile Summary  
f) Professional Recommendation for Prospective Teachers

6. Candidate Data:

   a) CLAST Scores  
   b) GPA  
   c) FTCE scores  
   d) Comprehensive Examination  
   e) FELE  
   f) Thesis  
   g) Prospectus Approval  
   h) Dissertation

7. Graduate Data:

   a) Graduate Satisfaction Surveys  
   b) Employer Satisfaction Surveys  
   c) DOE Rehire Data

8. Agenda and Minutes of Meetings including discussions of candidate data, assessment measures and program improvement:

   a) Leadership Team  
   b) Department  
   c) NCATE Committees  
   d) Education Majors  
   e) Program

VALIDITY AND UTILITY OF THE DATA

The assessment system of the PEU measures proficiencies judged by the Unit, state and national accrediting agencies, and professional organizations as useful for predicting teacher impact on student learning. Indicators used were developed from measures developed by (1) the unit faculty and leadership from the Conceptual Framework, (2) NCATE, (3) National Specialty Professional Associations, (4) INTASC, (5) State Education Standards Commission, and the (6) Florida Department of Education.

Florida Statute requires the PEU to implement a process for continued program approval with documentation of program improvements and successful performance of graduates. Data have since been compiled, analyzed and used to evaluate and improve programs and the PEU. Since 1997, the Institutional Program Evaluation Plan (IPEP) was used as the basis for its annual reviews. The IPEPs development and reviews involved primary stakeholders in the review process. The IPEPs have been submitted to, and approved by, the Florida DOE. The IPEP has the following three major elements:
• An Evaluation Section delineating the Unit’s plan for evaluating degree of compliance with the DOE continuing program approval standards;

• A Data Section providing evidence that standards are met; and

• An Improvement Section that lists improvements and describes plans for continuing improvement of program implementation and candidates’ performance.

Although the Unit’s IPEPs have been approved by the state, program approval will be determined by on-site reviews by the DOE in conjunction with NCATE.

The Professional Education Unit (PEU) continuously examines the validity of the assessments to ensure consistency with the professional standards in complexity, cognitive demands, and skill requirements and that assessments accurately represent the competencies, dispositions and performances that are included in the Conceptual Framework cross-curricular themes (problem solving, values, professionalism, urban/rural education, technology and multiculturalism) and the standards. Assessments are formulated to measure objectives within the standards, such as knowledge and comprehension, ability to apply or practice, dispositions or attitudes, capacity to analyze or reflect, and effectiveness of classroom teaching performance.

The Professional Education Unit (PEU) examines the assessments on a continuing basis for fairness and free of bias. Candidates have to demonstrate their knowledge and skills for teaching practice in a variety of instructional contexts (i.e., subject matters, grade levels, locations, socio-cultural contexts, etc.) in field clinical experiences. This component is driven by the Conceptual Framework’s Student Personnel Services/ Professional Induction orbit. Assessment data are collected from a variety of evaluators such as instructors, teacher-mentors, candidates, peers, and future employers for consistent results.

The Professional Education Unit (PEU) uses the assessments to improve teaching, to strengthen its programs and to communicate with future employers, the University, the Department of Education and other agencies. For this reason, it continuously examines the utility of the assessments in providing information on the strengths and weaknesses of the Unit’s programs. In order to accomplish this it determines (1) if the assessments are balanced across objectives in the standards and (2) if there is congruence between assessments and standards in complexity, cognitive demands and skill requirements.

ASSESSMENT SYSTEM AND COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

The Unit’s professional community actively and meaningfully participates in the ongoing development and implementation of the assessment system. The professional community includes: (1) Unit leadership, (2) Faculty, individually or collaboratively through standing committees, (3) Principals and Site-based administrators, (4) School District level superintendents and administrators, (5) Cooperating teachers, (6) Supervising faculty, (7) Alumni, (8) Staff, and (9) Standing university and college committees such as the College-wide Inter-Area Council, and the Florida Future Educators Association.

Members of the professional community participated in the design of the Conceptual Framework. Representatives from the community participated in the development of the assessment plan. The evaluation instruments are continually modified based on the comments, insights, and feedback from
principals, supervising faculty and cooperating teachers not only to meet changing candidate requirements but also in order to report more succinctly the teaching performance of candidates. Evaluation feedback from the principals, supervising faculty and cooperating teachers are shared with education faculty and faculty from the College of Arts and Sciences at the end of each semester who in turn use the information to examine their respective curriculums in light of the standards.

The involvement of the stakeholders is shown in the Table 2.

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<th>Stakeholders</th>
<th>Design and Review Conceptual Framework</th>
<th>Develop Assessment Plan and Processes</th>
<th>Develop Instruments</th>
<th>Assess Curricula</th>
<th>Modify Curricula</th>
<th>Review Surveys and Provide Feedback</th>
<th>Complete Evaluation Instruments</th>
<th>Analyze Data and Implement Changes</th>
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**FAIRNESS, APPROPRIATENESS AND ALIGNMENT WITH STANDARDS**

The Unit’s assessment system is based on criteria judged by the Unit, state and national education professionals and leaders as predictive of future teacher success. For this reason, requirements are subject to a process by which they are revisited, revised or refined, and piloted prior to modifying existing measures. The goal of developing and piloting better-focused assessment measures is to arrive at a comprehensive collection of assessments that is in full alignment with the standards in complexity, cognitive demands and skill requirements.
The system is uniformly applied to all teacher education candidates and faculty. Early in their programs and throughout their programs candidates are made fully aware of expectations as well as program, state, and national standards. Candidates are made aware and reminded of expectations and standards through orientation sessions and monthly meetings of education majors coordinated by the Center of Teacher Preparation and Career Development and in classrooms by faculty members.

Candidates who do not meet the requirements at any of the transition points are denied admission, advancement or graduation. Students who are denied advancement must retake assessments and meet requirements to be reconsidered for advancement.

Element 2: Data Collection, Analysis and Evaluation

The PEU collects and analyzes quantitative and aggregated data from internal and external sources (i.e., faculty, students, University Registrar’s Office, University Computing Center, cooperating teachers, the Florida DOE, and the Northwest Data Center Archives for Student Data, Enterprise Resource Planning) at each stage of a candidate’s progression through the program. These include:

QUANTITATIVE INDICATORS

1. Data on teacher candidates is maintained by the Center for Teacher Preparation. Data on other professional candidates are also maintained in departments.

As new data are acquired, they are shared with appropriate program departments for analysis. Data on candidate performance are analyzed by the respective departments for implications for course and program improvement. Plans for continuing improvement of program implementation are concurrently developed. These data include:

   a) GPA
      • General Knowledge Courses
      • Content Courses
      • Professional/ Pedagogical Education Courses
   b) CLAST Scores
      • Essay
      • English language
      • Reading
      • Math
      • Total
   c) Year Admitted to Teacher Education Degree Program
   d) Year Clinical/Internship Completed
   e) FTCE scores
      • Subject Area
      • Professional Education
      • General Knowledge
      • Year Taken
   f) Year of Program Completion
   g) Year Hired in Florida
   h) Rehired in Florida? (Yes/No)
2. Information on Candidates Demonstrating All Preprofessional Educator Accomplished Practices

Faculty, require students in their respective courses to submit projects for their portfolios. Faculty members evaluate and analyze these projects to determine acquisition of knowledge, skills, and disposition, as well as the strengths to build on and challenges to address in their courses. Upon the introduction of the E-portfolios through LiveText, selected projects are incorporated into the E-portfolios.

Prior to graduation teacher education and initial certification candidates must successfully demonstrate all Preprofessional Educator Accomplished Practices. At least three evidences per Accomplished Practice must be submitted and one must be an artifact of skill attainment, a second must be a reflection statement indicating acquisition of the desired disposition, and the third must be an evidence of knowledge acquired.

Rubrics are used by faculty to evaluate portfolio contents. The 4-point scale is: unacceptable (1), marginal (2), acceptable (3) and (4) favorable. Faculty evaluations of student portfolios are compiled in the Office of Student Teaching for analysis. At the graduate level, candidates submit program portfolios to the program coordinator.

3. Employer Satisfaction

The Teacher Products survey is an employer assessment instrument that the FAMU College of Education conducts every four to five years. Thirty-eight districts responded and seventy-nine percent (79%) of these responded that they hired FAMU graduates in the last four years. Twenty-seven districts rated FAMU graduates a mean of 8 on a scale of 1 (low) to 10 (extremely high). Twenty-six districts described FAMU graduates as proactive, independent, exemplary, and leaders. Twenty-eight of twenty-nine districts recorded that they would recommend the hiring of FAMU graduates to other districts and schools. Two districts or seven (7%) of the districts recorded that they recommended dismissal of a FAMU graduate.

Graduate programs also survey employers of graduates at the same time follow up study is conducted with the graduate. An employer survey is included with the graduate follow-up study with instructions for the graduate to submit to the employer for completion. Program coordinators maintain information received from employer satisfaction surveys.

The results were shared with the PEU program heads for review with their departments to make appropriate inferences for program improvement.

4. Follow-up Survey of Graduates

Survey instruments were mailed to graduates of undergraduate and graduate degree programs to gather information regarding the programs from which they graduated.

Two mailings, one in the fall of 1999 and the second, in the fall of 2000 were made. A total of 1089 instruments were mailed, 502 to bachelor’s degree recipients and 414 to master’s degree recipients. Returned forms included 14.5 percent response rate from bachelor’s degree recipients and 21.0 percent response rate from master’s degree recipients.
Survey data were analyzed on graduates of all programs except graduates from the Educational Leadership Department, which was compiled and analyzed separately. On a scale of 1 to 5 (1 = poor and 5 = excellent) the graduates of Masters Degree programs gave curriculum and instructors a rating of 4.0 or better; and appropriateness of FAMU Graduate Program, 3.8. Graduates of undergraduate degree programs gave curriculum and appropriateness of FAMU preparation a rating of 3.5 or better; and instructors, a 3.9. Both graduates of master’s degree and undergraduate degree programs rated the university facilities approximately a 3.0.

AGGREGATED DATA

The unit accomplishments are represented by assessment results across and within standards. These assessments include:

- Summary Statistics on Candidates
- Summary on State Licensure Tests by Degree Program
- Summary on Preprofessional Educator Accomplished Practices

Comprehensive reviews of continuous improvement activities, aggregated data and other assessment results in light of the institutional, state and national standards are reported in the following PEU reports:

- PEU Institutional Program Evaluations Plan, 1999-2000
- PEU Institutional Program Evaluations Plan, 2000-2001
- PEU Institutional Program Evaluations Plan, 2001-2002

Use of Information Technologies to Improve Assessment System

In light of the increasing demands for documentation of student progress and documentation for continuous improvement, the PEU is pilot testing and developing new strategies to use new information technologies to gather and evaluate information about its candidates and programs.

The Unit had been using traditional techniques for collecting student portfolios and filing candidate data from various sources. It has been getting data from the Northwest Data Center Archives for retrieving student data. As assessment measures and strategies were refined to demonstrate alignment with the institutional, state and national standards, these methods were deemed inadequate and cumbersome. Subsequently, the PEU is pilot-testing and investigating the capabilities of new technologies which include but is not limited to:

1. **College LiveText.** This is a web-based technology site where candidates can (1) customize and assemble electronic professional portfolios that is accessible to instructors, supervising teachers and prospective employers for review and evaluation; (2) design lesson plans aligned to state standards to include in their portfolios for review by instructors, supervising faculty, and principals or to share with their peers; and (3) develop interactive projects aligned to state standards making use of capabilities to upload pictures and link to websites and video servers; and (4) assemble lesson plans, unit plans, reports, research projects, reflections on teaching experiences, etc for evaluation.
College LiveText allows informal review capability as well as formal review process so educators can assess educational materials using rubrics aligned with state professional teaching standards such as the Florida Educator Accomplished Practices or the Sunshine State Standards.

Faculty members post their course outlines in Livetext for easy access by students and educators. Course outlines indicate where objectives are linked to Florida Educator Accomplished Practices, NCATE and INTASC standards, Sunshine State Standards, and Competencies and Skills for Teacher Certification, and English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL).

2. **REGfiles.** The PEU contracted the REGfiles Company to develop a data system to enable the PEU to collect, analyze and interpret data on all candidates in its programs. The data system will consolidate candidate data collected by the different departments in the PEU.

The new data collection system will include candidate data from the date when the student declares as an education major to the first years of practice or withdrawal from the program. It will allow the Unit to readily determine the proportion of candidates reaching transition points. It will allow the PEU to retrieve information readily as needed for program and unit study of strengths and weaknesses and for the development and implementation of continuous improvement plans.

The new technology includes, but is not limited to the following data fields:

- Name, social security number, sex, date of birth, race, local address and telephone number, permanent address and telephone number, name/s of parent/s or guardian/
- Educational background
- Degree sought
- Major
- Date of declaration of major
- Background check (i.e., misdemeanor and/or felony conviction)
- Date of application to teacher education/other professional program
- Required Information on application to teacher education (i.e., cumulative GPA, general education GPA, CLAST scores, Gordon Rule)/other professional educator program
- Number of times CLAST is taken
- Review date of application to teacher education
- Action taken
- Date of withdrawal from program
- Date of re-entry to program
- Date of admission to teacher education/other professional educator program
- Date of application to student teaching/internship
- Required information for application to student teaching (i.e., cumulative GPA, completion of program requirements)
- Semester and year of student teaching/other professional educator program internship
- Date of completion of student teaching/other professional educator program internship
- FTCE scores (subject area exam, general knowledge exam, general knowledge exam)/FELE area exam
- Number of times FTCE exams are taken/number of time FELE taken
- Electronic Portfolio completed
- Semester and year of graduation
• Year hired in Florida
• Year rehired in Florida

**Policy for Addressing and Resolving Student Complaints.** Copies of records stating strategies for addressing and resolving student complaints and action taken are also included.

Candidates at the graduate level follow a process of contact with (a) the professor, (b) chair, (c) Assistant Dean for Academic Affairs, (d) Dean of the College of Education, (e) Dean of Graduate Studies, and (f) Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs. The Office of Student Teaching has a policy and system for addressing student complaints when students are denied advancement to the next transition stage. Student complaints are addressed by the Office of the Assistant Dean of the College of Education. A record of each complaint is maintained. Files include copies of letter(s) denying advancement citing reasons for denial, deficiencies and options for addressing deficiencies at the department level; and records of their resolution.

**Element 3: Use of Data for Program Improvement**

**Alignments with Professional, State and Institutional Standards.**

During the past five years, the PEU was engaged in Unit-wide examination for the purpose of aligning the curriculum and instruction with institutional, state, and professional standards. NCATE standards, Sunshine State Standards, Florida Educator Accomplished Practices, Competencies and Skills Required for Teacher Certification in Florida and Florida Essential Generic Competencies were reviewed and discussed by the Unit faculty to make sure that they are addressed adequately in their respective courses and programs. Minutes of the Leadership Team, NCATE committee, Department, College and Unit meetings provide evidence of dialogues among faculty and with professional community for the purpose of continuous improvement guided by the Conceptual Framework and the standards. Specific Performance Objectives in Course Outlines are coded according to the national and/or state standards that are addressed. Matrices of program courses and the national and state standards such as NCATE standards, Florida Educator Accomplished Practices, Sunshine State Standards, program standards, and Skills and Competencies in the Content Areas were constructed to ascertain that the standards are addressed in the program courses.

The implications of the evaluation data for program improvement are the subject of brainstorming sessions during faculty meetings. Based on the percentage of candidates that meet requirements at each stage in the Flowchart, the PEU determines the strengths of its programs and the challenges to address in the content courses, professional education course, and field clinical experiences.

Faculty developed expected outcomes based on state and national standards, and uses explicit objectives and professional judgment to determine if candidates met expected outcomes. Candidates’ attainment of content knowledge and demonstration of teaching effectiveness are assessed by faculty and third-party evaluations during field clinical experiences and during internship. Candidates demonstrate attainment of the Florida Educator Accomplished Practices by means of portfolio products and artifacts in their education courses. Rubrics were designed to evaluate portfolio products. In addition to interpreting and analyzing candidate performance data, faculty and the representatives from the professional community evaluate the adequacy and quality of the existing requirements in representing the level of student qualifications.

**Efficacy of Courses and Demonstration of Teaching Effectiveness.**
Quantitative data are collected and analyzed to determine the effectiveness of PEU programs. GPA’s in content courses and in professional education courses are among the indicators of candidate progress and qualifications. Candidates’ performance in the classroom, field clinical settings and during internship is constantly observed and documented. Data such as CLAST and FTCE scores, number of candidates admitted] students admitted to the Teacher Preparation Program, other professional programs, and students completing requirements prior to internship, students approved for graduation, graduates that are hired and rehired in Florida are systematically collected, summarized and, upon receipt or compilation, shared with the different departments for analysis and reflection in order to strengthen the PEU and its programs.

Throughout the candidates’ program of study, faculty and members of the professional community evaluate candidates’ performance in order to determine the effectiveness of the curriculums. Candidates’ Student portfolios are evaluated for demonstration of all Florida Accomplished Practices prior to recommendation for graduation.

Faculty members developed and use rubrics to assess the portfolio items developed in their courses and during internship. The rubrics represent the nature and level of successful performance in the Accomplished Practice to be demonstrated. Rubrics assessment enables faculty to identify; (a) strengths and weaknesses of the candidates, (b) implications for course and program improvement, and (c) whether assessments and rubrics have to be refined.

Although this is done by individual instructors in their courses and university faculty supervising interns, it is not currently implemented systemically for Unit improvement. The use of LiveText by students to create their portfolios is at its early stages. Candidates have begun to use LiveText to organize artifacts and products to demonstrate the Preprofessional Florida Educator Accomplished Practices (FEAP). Rubrics are used to evaluate the student portfolios. Data on the LiveText portfolios starting with Fall 2002 graduates are available in the Office of Student Teaching.

Unit and Program Effectiveness.

Candidates’ attainment of content knowledge, skills, attitudes, and dispositions are assessed through methods described above along with data from state licensing examinations (FTCE other professional program certification examinations) feedback from alumni on how effectively they felt their respective program prepared them for the teaching profession or entry into other professional areas, and end-of-course evaluations completed by candidates that ask specific questions about faculty. Aggregated data on portfolio assessments provide the Unit with information on the quality of [candidate preparation] the preparation of the candidates it is producing.

Quality of student learning outcomes provided by the LiveText electronic technology along with data that will be retrieved from REGfiles will enable Unit faculty to assess Unit and program effectiveness more readily. For instance, the Unit will be able to easily access data to determine the proportion of education majors that progress through the program, i.e., what proportion of education majors is admitted to the teacher education program, are approved for internship, complete the teacher education program, pass the FTCE, or other professional educator certification requirements, and then hired and rehired in a Florida school. The Unit will also be able to obtain correlations between GPA in content courses and professional courses and success in FTCE content and other professional educator tests, respectively. Unit faculty and administrators will be better able to identify areas for improvement and where assessments need to be strengthened, and determine which instructional approaches correlate with candidates’ success and those that are unproductive. Finally, the new technologies will provide
opportunities for the Unit leadership to objectively and more efficiently manage and improve Unit’s operations and programs.

A system for making in-depth interpretations of the aggregated data from the Livetext portfolio products and artifacts will be necessary to better enable the Unit to conduct dynamic and systemic improvement. The system will enable the Unit to make better assessments of the qualifications of the candidates that it is producing. It will provide the Unit faculty with a basis for determining whether or not the assessment artifacts and products are balanced across objectives in the standards. It will also enable the Unit faculty to determine if there is congruence between assessments (rubrics) and the standards within the Florida Education Accomplished Practices in complexity, cognitive demands and skill requirements.