

# **W** EDUCATION PROGRAM UNIVERSITY of WASHINGTON | TACOMA

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## **Mission:**

The mission of the University of Washington Tacoma Education program is to prepare ethical and reflective educators who transform learning, contribute to the community, exemplify professionalism, and promote diversity.

## **Conceptual Framework:**

The conceptual framework for preparing ethical and reflective educators who transform learning, engage with communities, exemplify professionalism, and promote diversity establishes the shared vision of the University of Washington Tacoma's Education Program. This vision draws from our core values of knowledge, collaboration, professional excellence, reflection, diversity, and justice. It provides direction for our efforts to prepare culturally responsive and inclusive educators to effectively advocate for and educate youth in P-12 schools. The framework guides the development of the curriculum in our programs leading to initial certification, advanced preparation of teachers, and the licensure of school administrators and superintendents.

The conceptual framework of the Education Program is consistent with the campus mission—*UWT educates diverse learners and transforms communities by expanding the boundaries of knowledge and discovery*. We embrace the UWT core values of *excellence, community, diversity, and innovation* as we review, reflect upon and revise our various program offerings to meet our mission of preparing ethical and reflective educators. Our collaboration among faculty, staff, candidates, and our local education and community partners (e.g. PEAB members, advisory board members, classroom teachers, educational administrators, etc.) informs and validates our framework.

## **Philosophies, Purpose and Goals**

We believe that teaching and leadership are processes informed by empirical research, theory, professional codes of ethics, and a philosophy of advocacy and social action. As such, to implement the conceptual framework we considered the relations among the knowledge, dispositions, and skills identified by scholarship and supported by professional organizations as essential for the effective educator and leader. Our programs reflect the national standards including The Next Generation Science Standards, Common Core State Standards, TESOL Pre-K-12 English Language Proficiency Standards, Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium standards, Washington State Professional Educators Standards Board standards, American Association of School Administrators standards and the Standards for Preparation and Certification of Special Education Personnel as advanced by the Council for Exceptional Children. We promote our program values through rigorous, coherent curricula that address the standards, skills, and knowledge needed by professionals to eradicate institutional inequities and transform schooling environments that partner with communities and families to strengthen student academic and socio-emotional learning. University coursework is thoughtfully delivered in line with carefully sequenced field and classroom experiences.

Reflection on the interconnection of university coursework and public school experience supports the intent of our mission of preparing ethical and reflective educators.

Education Program faculty have defined specific objectives to be met by all graduates of the UWT Education Program. These objectives articulate our core values regarding knowledge, service, professional excellence, reflection, diversity, and justice. We seek to create educators who are able to

1. Integrate theory, research, ethics, and experience to implement best practices in leadership, assessment, instruction, and classroom management;
2. Develop an integrated philosophical framework that clarifies and guides educational practices;
3. Develop the dispositions, knowledge, and skills to collaborate in professional learning communities;
4. Demonstrate strategic decision making for the betterment of the students, classrooms, families, schools, and communities;
5. Develop reflective practice that addresses the complexity and strength of race/ethnicity, class, culture, language, genders, sexualities, age, mental/physical ability, and religion.

### Values

Our framework draws on theory, research, professional norms, and practical wisdom to guide our practices.

### Knowledge

At the core of our work is the value of producing and engaging with scholarship. Our embrace of **knowledge** as a component of our values means we view our candidates, and guide our education professionals to view themselves, as intellectuals. **The knowledgeable educator is informed by philosophy, ethics, empirical research, and theory.** We model practices informed by research and theory in our university classrooms for candidates so that they, in turn, demonstrate these connections in their educational practice. Candidates are engaged in university classes that model multiple instructional strategies, incorporate a range of assessment procedures, and effectively use technology. We utilize research-based teaching strategies including equity pedagogy that support and connect to the needs of a diverse society and methods that provide for a safe anti-bias learning environment.

In our preparation of teachers and educational leaders, we emphasize strong content knowledge, a range of effective pedagogical and leadership practices, knowledge of leadership and multiple methods of assessment. We emphasize developing inclusive environments that meet the instructional, cultural, linguistic, and social/emotional needs of all learners. We demonstrate instructional design methods that are standards-based and multidisciplinary across content areas of social sciences, mathematical, scientific, aesthetic reasoning and leadership. We model culturally responsive instruction and leadership that facilitate candidates' abilities to affirm and leverage students' funds of knowledge (i.e., personal, cultural, and community assets) in schooling policies and practices.

### Collaboration

In fostering an ethic of **collaboration** that eradicates inequities and promotes diversity we guide our candidates to conceive education as a broader and more engaged praxis.

**Collaborative educators partner with families and community members, respond to diverse community interests and needs, and mobilize community resources to promote a more just and equitable education.** These educators build connections to the broader school site as well as to community agencies and community organizations in a collective effort to advocate for justice and solve problems. We support educational leaders in thinking systemically and demonstrating effective, ecologically framed problem solving skills in working with multiple constituencies to address current issues, eradicate institutional inequities, advocate for justice, and to plan for the future.

### **Professional Excellence**

**We seek to develop educators who embody professional excellence which encompasses attitudes, communication, and behaviors, maintaining high-standards for themselves and their students.** Faculty and candidates value knowledge and embrace a commitment to ongoing growth and learning. This growth is shaped by research, theory, community engagement, and professional organizations. Beyond this, professional excellence means we view our teaching and leadership as an ethical act. Finally, in our own organization we seek to make strategic decisions for the betterment of communities and classrooms based on our understanding of challenges in the classrooms and evidence gathered in the schools.

### **Reflection**

**Reflective educators revise their practice based on experience, theory, assessment, diversity, justice, professional ethics, and legal and policy issues.** To reflect means to see practice through the lenses of knowledge of the historical, economic, sociological, philosophical, and psychological foundations of education. Reflection is examining assumptions, engaging in self-questioning and critique, and analyzing actions as a means to improve professional practice. We train educators both to draw on research and to conduct research to guide their professional practices and create a continuous cycle of improvement. We strive to position educators in a complex cycle of knowledge production: their work informing our own at the university, and our work (and the work of our respective fields) informing daily educational practice.

### **Diversity**

**Educators who value diversity are effective in creating all-inclusive learning environments, in which diverse students and their families are valued and respected.** Within our program, diversity encompasses, but is not limited to: culture, race, gender, class, language, abilities, socioeconomic status, religion, and sexual orientation and family structures. Through coursework and field experiences, candidates are encouraged to engage in personal and professional reflections in order to identify, understand, and strategize around the differences in intersections of their own upbringing and beliefs, as compared to their professional experiences as educators working with diverse populations. In line with precepts of equity pedagogy, candidates are taught to learn about and from their students and their families, as well as engage in continued professional growth, as approaches towards developing culturally responsive pedagogy and leadership. Candidates are taught to examine and dismantle power relationships that marginalize youth and families as well as develop the communication and relationship skills necessary to cultivate strong family engagement based on trust and respect within and beyond the school community.

## **Justice**

Finally, we value **justice** in our own work and the work of our candidates. **Educators who embrace justice value and enact systems of inclusion, participation, and fairness.** This means that candidates understand the ways that historical and emergent disenfranchisement affects schools, and the ways that schools can act to further such exclusions and oppressive structures. These oppressive structures are both historical as well as emergent, organized around ethnicity, race, culture, class, gender, citizenship, cognition, and corporality as well as deriving from degraded ecologies, asymmetric globalization, and hierarchic socio-technical systems. Our educational work is integrally about eradicating oppressive practices and fighting for more fair social, political, economic, and ecological systems. We assist candidates in maintaining current knowledge of educational law and policy. Candidates learn to become political advocates for bettering the education students including engaging in teaching and leadership practices that advance fairness and improve the lives of students in and out of schools.

### **Alignment with Standards and Candidate Assessment**

We draw on state and national standards and professional organizations to define proficiencies that our candidates will possess at program completion. We use our core values of knowledge, service, professional excellence, reflection, diversity, and justice to interpret and specify the meaning of these standards. We assess these proficiencies in a variety of ways, including portfolio assessments aligned with state and national standards, field observations aligned with state standards, and coursework. This permits continuous feedback to the program and to the candidate.

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