

# **Conceptual Framework**

## **“Preparing Educators for Diverse Cultural Contexts”**



**North Carolina Central University  
School of Education**

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**NORTH CAROLINA CENTRAL UNIVERSITY**  
**School of Education**  
**Conceptual Framework**

**Overview of University**

North Carolina University is a comprehensive liberal arts institution. The Commission on Colleges of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools accredits NCCU to award bachelor's and master's degrees. The National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education accredits the professional education programs at the university. Within the School of Education the Counseling Program is accredited by Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP) and the Speech Pathology Program is accredited by the Council on Academic Accreditation (CAA). State accreditations include the accreditation of teacher education programs by the North Carolina State Department of Public Instruction.

The mission of North Carolina Central University is to prepare students academically and professionally to become leaders prepared to advance the consciousness of social responsibility in a diverse, global society. Teaching, supported by research, is the primary focus of the University. The vision of the institution is to be recognized as one of the nation's leading institutions for academic excellence in a diverse cultural and education environment. Six core values support the mission and vision of the institution:

- Excellence in Teaching, Research, Scholarship, and Creativity
- Access to Education and Effective Development Opportunities
- Promotion of Citizenship, Service, and Social Justice
- Appreciation of and Respect for Diverse Perspectives
- Superb Customer Service
- Commitment to Life-Long-Learning.

The mission of North Carolina Central University is reevaluated every four years; however, the university remains faithful to the mission of preparing students for an ever changing global society. The commitment to this mission is evidenced in the diversity of our student and faculty body. The University enrolls over 8,200 students, 6,353 undergraduates and 1,866 graduate students. The students come from 44 states and 95 counties. The composition of the student body is approximately 80.4% African American, 13% Caucasian, and 6.6% other. About 49% of the graduate students are classified as part-time, a feature which is attractive to many mature, working, career-minded individuals. The ethnic composition of the University faculty is approximately 61% African American, 30% Caucasian, and 9% other. The University's 325 full-time faculty members come from all sections of the United States as well as from several international countries, bringing to the campus a rich diversity of training and experience.

## Mission, Purpose, and Goals of the Unit

The mission of the School of Education emphasizes the vision of the institution.

*The mission of North Carolina Central University's School of Education is to prepare candidates academically and professionally to assume socially responsible positions that advance the general welfare of North Carolina people. The university is committed to serving its historical population of African American students as well as an increasingly diverse clientele. The School of Education's conceptual framework, "Preparing Educators for Diverse Cultural Contexts," undergirds the school's curriculum and represents the faculty's commitment to preparing teachers to teach children from all racial, cultural, socioeconomic, and religious backgrounds. The program is also designed to engender in graduates the ability to see the social and political implications of their actions and the social contexts in which they are carried out. The paradigm further supports the notion that graduates use their skills and knowledge to promote greater equality, justice, and humane conditions in schooling and society.*

This mission applies to all professional education programs at the University, including those housed in the College of Science and Technology, College of Liberal Arts, College of Behavioral and Social Sciences, and the School of Library and Information Sciences. (See appendix for Profession Programs in the School of Education.) The Unit is considered to be all professional education programs, with the unit head being the Dean of the School of Education. As such, the School of Education is the academic unit responsible for all NCCU teacher education programs. Departments in the School of Education include Counselor Education; Communication Disorders; Educational Leadership, Research and Technology; Curriculum and Instruction, and Professional Studies; and Special Education.

The stated goals within the Unit also reflect the expected professional knowledge, values, and attitudes as articulated by the university and other accreditation agencies (e.g., NCATE, SDPI, ASHA, and CACREP). The goals of the Unit include:

- 1) demonstrate excellence in teaching and advisement;
- 2) demonstrate effective systems of candidate assessment and unit assessment;
- 3) recruit, retain and graduate increased numbers of qualified candidates;
- 4) demonstrate strong partnerships with public schools, the corporate sector, and the community;
- 5) demonstrate excellence in scholarship, research, grantsmanship, and professional activities;
- 6) demonstrate commitment to the SOE conceptual framework in programs, projects, and activities; and
- 7) recruit, retain, and strengthen faculty.

In addition, the conceptual framework, which provides the philosophical underpinnings of our programs, drives the research, teaching, and service of the School of Education.

## CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

### Introduction

North Carolina Central University is a comprehensive university offering programs at the baccalaureate, master's, and professional levels. It is the nation's first public liberal arts institution founded for African Americans. The University maintains a strong liberal arts tradition and a commitment to academic excellence in a diverse educational and cultural environment. It seeks to encourage intellectual productivity and to enhance the academic and professional skills of its students and faculty.

The mission of the University is to prepare students academically and professionally to become leaders equipped to advance the consciousness of social responsibility in a diverse, global society. While the University serves its traditional clientele of African American students, it also expands its commitment to meet the educational needs of a student body that is diverse in race and other socioeconomic attributes.

As a part of the University, the Unit's conceptual framework and theme, *Preparing Educators for Diverse Cultural Contexts*, is a shared vision of the institutional mission. The Unit recognizes the mutually reinforcing impact of teaching and service to promote a student body that is prepared to work in culturally diverse contexts; therefore the goals and objectives of the unit are aligned with those of the institution. Teaching, supported by research, is the primary focus of the university. As a part of that focus, the university encourages its faculty to pursue intellectual development and rewards effective teaching and research. NCCU, therefore, encourages and expects faculty and students to engage in scholarly, creative, and service-oriented activities, which benefit the local, national, and international community.

The conceptual framework ensures a universal philosophy among all professional preparation programs in the School of Education. It serves as an underlying philosophy for the initial and advanced licensure programs whether in teacher education, school administration, counselor education, technology education, or speech-language pathology. The conceptual framework describes the knowledge, skills, and dispositions expected for candidates so that they can support the learning of all P-12 students. Moreover, the conceptual framework delineates the knowledge, skills, and dispositions for other professional school personnel to create an environment conducive to promoting cultural inclusiveness.

The conceptual framework also is reflected in the curriculum through all professional education syllabi, which explicitly align course goals and objectives with the

conceptual framework. In addition, a coherent, comprehensive assessment of knowledge, skills, and dispositions gained by the candidates through their clinical practicum and field experiences is completed at the end of each semester. Finally, the conceptual framework guides and directs other aspects of the Unit's governance, strategic planning, professional development, and criteria for faculty evaluation.

#### Changes in the Conceptual Framework

The NCCU School of Education, working collaboratively with Arts and Sciences faculty and public schools, assumes responsibility for preparing candidates who are keenly aware of, sensitive to, and effective in teaching students in inclusive settings. Our theme, *Preparing Educators for Diverse Cultural Contexts*, is a long-standing one, having served as a theme during the last three accreditation visits. The primary conceptual framework is based on theories of culturally responsive instruction, which is still necessary in 2007. The faculty members believe, however, that in this time of rapid globalization and demographic change, it is the obligation of the Unit to prepare candidates who are capable of utilizing technology and content knowledge to enhance their participation as advocates for social justice in culturally diverse contexts. To ensure that our vision, mission, and conceptual framework adequately address this demand, faculty have strategically reviewed and revised the unit's vision, mission, and conceptual framework.

During Fall Faculty Institute of 2003, the faculty revisited both the theme and the conceptual framework, questioning whether or not it continued to reflect what is most important in preparing educators for this 21<sup>st</sup> century. The entire faculty, with the assistance of an outside consultant, worked to create a vision for our future. As part of the Faculty Institute, faculty worked in small groups to reflect on the existing conceptual framework and recommended ways it may be updated to align with the vision and mission of the university. As a result of this process, the faculty agreed to maintain our theme, *Preparing Educators for Diverse Cultural Contexts*. The faculty recommended the vision to the conceptual framework reinforce our commitment to educational excellence in local and international settings. As a result of the process, the following vision statement was adopted:

*A Beacon of Education for North Carolina and Beyond.*

The mission statement was also revised to use language that more adequately reflects collaborative practices in educational settings. To demonstrate this coherent vision, the conceptual framework uses inclusive language of "preparing educators" rather than "teachers," thereby including all professional preparation programs. Our revised mission is found earlier in this document.

Review and revision of the conceptual framework continued during the 2004-2005 academic year. Faculty expressed their strong desire for expansion of the conceptual framework to include commitments to technology, family, social advocacy, and international linkages. Faculty members and candidates further evaluated their understanding and the implementation of our conceptual framework through an online

survey. As a result of the survey, professional development seminars were implemented. The results indicated the need to support faculty in expanding their development of a core curriculum that is culturally responsive and transformative. Consequently, faculty and candidates participated in discussions and professional development activities that challenged their understanding of and comfort level with social factors that influence their participation in culturally diverse educational contexts.

The Standard 4-Diversity Committee completed revisions of our conceptual framework in Fall 2006 and led discussions and reviews of the new edition, which was approved by the faculty of the School of Education in collaboration with the College of Science and Technology, College of Liberal Arts, College of Behavioral Sciences, and the School of Library and Information Sciences on August 16, 2006. In addition, the University-School Partnership Committee ensured that principals and teachers from the Professional Development Schools reviewed and validated drafts of the conceptual framework.

### Theoretical Framework

The Unit believes that the theme *Preparing Educators for Culturally Diverse Contexts* embraces a theory of multiculturalism. Multicultural instruction is similar to the framework constructed by Villegas and Lucas (2002) whereby issues of diversity are systematically infused through the unit to effectively prepare educators for practice in a changing society. In addition to the framework of Villegas and Lucas, multicultural perspectives are grounded in the research of Freire, Giroux, Banks, Bell, and social reconstructivists Sleeter and Grant. Irvine (2003) and Ladson-Billings (1994) define this theory as one that emphasizes the way in which learners actively create meaning by building understanding and reconstructing ideas through a cultural lens.

Gollnick (1980) points out that multicultural epistemology usually rests on five major premises:

- (1) educators promote the strength and value of cultural diversity;
- (2) through the promotion of human rights every learner's unique difference is respected;
- (3) the rights of every individual to pursue alternative life choices are respected;
- (4) educators encourage social justice and equal opportunity for all people; and
- (5) educators advance equity in the distribution of power in and among groups (cited in Sleeter & Grant, 2003).

Multiculturalists, like Villas and Lucas (2002), emphasize the salience of an equitable and just society where diversity is worthy of affirmation as the role of all schools.

The Unit chose multiculturalism as its theoretical base to support curricula development due to its long-standing history of educating diverse candidates. Throughout the School of Education programs, candidates are offered multiple opportunities and diverse processes to be connected with a meaningful and coherent approach to issues of multiculturalism. Faculty members serve as cultural guides and lead students through a structured comprehensive curriculum where they reflect on the role of diversity and

equity in the teaching and learning process. In addition, field experiences are deliberately constructed to allow candidates opportunities to apply their classroom knowledge to diverse clinical experiences. The design of the curriculum and clinical experiences are consistent with the multicultural approaches found in the literature (Banks, 2006; Delpit, 1995; Irvine, 2003).

Multiculturalism is fundamentally connected to dialogue—the process by which faculty and candidates engage in the common task of teaching and learning (Freire, 1970). Dialogue also provides an opportunity for candidates to reflect on their knowledge, skills, and dispositions as it relates to the education of students from diverse backgrounds. Faculty foster ongoing dialogues in which shared, culturally-based reflections offer the possibility for candidates to learn tolerance for multiculturalism and for the expansion of ideas and knowledge (Greene, 1992). In a multicultural curriculum, knowledge is therefore reconstructed and co-constructed. Dialogue and reflection become mutually beneficial to the expanding perceptions of the individual faculty and candidate, as well as to those whom they teach in the P-12 classroom (Nieto, 2004).

Edgar, Patton, and Day-Vines (2002), Freire (1970), and Howard (2003) all describe the intimate interdependency between dialogue, reflection, and action. The authors suggest that in order for schools to become highly effective in educating all students, educators must first be able to reflect on the beliefs and attitudes that influence their actions. It is the Unit's belief that NCCU candidates acquire the appropriate knowledge, skills, and dispositions to dialogue, reflect, and act in ways that consciously promote social justice within the profession. Multiculturalism without action does not transform schools. Equity and excellence for all students occur when multiculturalism merged with the vision of social justice move educators act to create a new learning context.

Candidates in the School of Education are immersed in a multicultural curriculum. Faculty members promote multicultural techniques, such as problem-posing using culturally relevant scenarios, self-reflection, building caring communities of learners, employing the use of dialogic inquiry, and engendering a consciousness of social justice. These and other activities are designed to help make candidates more aware of socio-cultural mores, and therefore, more able to instruct diverse students in real-life settings. Faculty members use these multicultural activities to monitor candidates' responses as evidence of their transformation into culturally responsive educators within their professional career settings, and to assess the candidates' ability to implement and evaluate their own performance.

The Unit believes that multicultural approaches, dialogue, and self- reflection will facilitate the development of *caring, competent, culturally responsive educators* who are prepared for diverse cultural contexts. Each of these three components forms the basis of our conceptual framework. Each will be discussed in the following sections.

The three components of caring, competent, and culturally responsive are discussed separately; however, the Unit recognizes the interconnectedness between the three areas.

### Preparing Caring Educators

The unit prepares *caring educators* by enabling candidates to model a unique pedagogy that affirms the significance of education and the relationship of education to academic, political, and socioeconomic success of students from diverse backgrounds. The act of placing emphasis on individual learning styles, accepting cultural and dialectical variance, and fostering a community of academic accountability are the principle dispositions of a *caring educator*. Ware (2002) describes caring as the foundation of good teaching. Evidence of these expected dispositions (i.e., outcomes) are given in this section. The unit carefully aligned the expected dispositions of a *caring educator* with the multicultural teacher education framework proposed by Villegas and Lucas (2002).

In addition, the dispositions of a *caring educator* are articulated and evaluated for each candidate during predetermined gateways. At the lowest level, candidates demonstrate limited evidence of commitment to teaching and *caring* for students from diverse backgrounds or willingness to accept input/feedback to inform their performance. At the highest level, candidates consistently and creatively incorporate teaching strategies that demonstrate *care* for all students, including students from culturally diverse backgrounds.

There are six relevant dimensions that define effective multicultural teacher education programs:

- (1) commitment of social consciousness;
- (2) affirmation towards cultural and linguistic diverse students;
- (3) commitment to preparing candidates to become agents of change;
- (4) promotion of knowledge construction through constructivist views of learning;
- (5) understanding of the community environments and lives of students; and
- (6) application of culturally responsive teaching practices. (See Table 1 for specific alignment of dispositions to each dimension.)

Much of the recent research about the importance of cultural competence in teacher education programs is drawn from the belief that future educators must demonstrate commitment to the six components described above (Villegas & Lucas, 2002; Irvine, 2003). The unit assists candidates in adopting the dispositions of a *caring educator* for a majority of the dimensions, while encouraging excellence in all of them.

Table 1—Description of the Dispositions Required of a Caring Educator

Multicultural Dimension	NCCU Expected Candidate Dispositions
Social Cultural Conscious	The candidate is: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• committed to promoting social justice,</li> <li>• able to view education as a political process, and</li> <li>• able to offer a global perspective.</li> </ul>
Affirming Attitudes Toward Students of Culturally Diverse Backgrounds	The candidate: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• understands and respects students' cultural backgrounds.</li> </ul>
Commitment and Skills to Act as Agents of Change	The candidate is: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• able to critique the system and advocate for change.</li> </ul>
Constructivist Views of Learning	The candidate: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• accepts and is able to offer multiple perspectives in the teaching/learning process.</li> </ul>
Learning About Students	The candidate is: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• sensitive to, understanding of, and prepared to effectively teach diverse student populations.</li> </ul> He/she <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• understands the impact of culture in the teaching/learning process.</li> </ul>
Culturally Responsive Teaching Practices	The candidate is: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• consistently professional (i.e., collegial, responsible, reflective, fair-minded), and</li> <li>• understands and accepts colleagues' and his/her own personal cultural background.</li> </ul>

In order for a candidate to adopt the characteristics of a *caring educator*, he/she must exhibit several dispositions emphasized throughout the programs within the School of Education. These dispositions are evident in course syllabi, program assessment evaluations, and exhibited by the administration, faculty, and staff. A number of expected outcomes are associated with the qualities of a *caring educator*. As mentioned earlier, *caring educators* place emphasis on individual learning styles, accept cultural and dialectical variance, and foster a community of academic accountability. These instructional practices are evidenced by the following:

1. Our candidates will adopt and demonstrate the components of *caring educator* by designing, implementing, and evaluating
  - a. strategies to address learning needs of students from culturally diverse backgrounds, including students with exceptionalities (e.g., cooperative learning, values and character education, and active learning), and

embracing high standards and expectations for all students (Gay, 2003; Ladson-Billings, 1994; Ware, 2002);

- b. strategies which maintain discipline to promote safe and secure classrooms where students are accepted and valued based on standards that support clear and consistent teacher expectations (Ladson-Billings, 1994; Kea, Cartledge, Bowman, 2002);
  - c. strategies to embrace anti-racist teaching that incorporate communal care for students, and strategies to empower students as well as family members who contribute to the students' personal and academic success in and out of the classroom (Banks, 2006; Collins; 2000; Irvine, 2003).
2. The candidate is able to investigate his/her own cultural backgrounds and beliefs in order to effectively educate students from all backgrounds (Pang & Sablan, 1998; Foster, 1994). In addition, the candidate is capable and willing to demonstrate a positive disposition toward the teaching profession through commitment to the profession, personal growth, and collegiality toward peers, faculty members, and administrators.

#### Preparing Competent Educators

The second component of the unit's conceptual framework is connected with the knowledge base candidates are exposed to in the School of Education. As a method to identify the goals and expectations of this component, characteristics of a *competent educator* are aligned with domains, proposed by Villegas and Lucas (2002), of effective multicultural teacher education programs. (See Table 2 for specific alignment of knowledge expectations with each multicultural dimension.) Although it is often the case that application of knowledge principles acknowledge only the standards (Darling-Hammond, 1997), the unit strives to assist candidates in mastery of content knowledge and cultural competences required to educate students from all backgrounds.

Preparing *competent educators* also requires mastery of a curriculum that meets the standards for the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction (NCDPI). The curriculum also meets the regional standards of the Southeastern Association of Colleges and Schools and the national standards of NCATE. The Unit offers a wide range of curricula options. Curriculum within each program is designed to insure alignment with standards of the following national agencies: Council for Exceptional Children (CEC), Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Education Programs (CACREP), Council for Accreditation in Audiology and Speech-Language Pathology (CAA), Educational Leadership Constituencies Council (ELCC), National Policy Board for Educational Administration, International Society for Technology in Education (ISTE), National Education Technology Standards for Students and Teacher, National Middle School Association (NMSA), and the Association for Childhood Education International (ACEI). The curriculum undergoes continuous transformation to address the instructional needs of students in a culturally diverse environment. These changes are informed by

data collected from candidates, faculty, graduates, and other members of the Eagle Village.

Table 2— Description of Knowledge Required of a Competent Educator

Multicultural Dimension	NCCU Expected Candidate Knowledge
Social Cultural Conscious	The candidate: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• knows the interrelationships of curriculum, clinical experiences, and diversity for teaching and learning.</li> </ul>
Affirming Attitudes Toward Students of Culturally Diverse Backgrounds	The candidate: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• exhibits a personal attitude that contributes to academic success for teaching and learning of all students.</li> </ul>
Commitment and Skills to Act as Agents of Change	The candidate: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• applies knowledge of content, policy, and pedagogical philosophies to advance excellence and equity.</li> </ul>
Constructivist Views of Learning	The candidate: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• knows inquiry-based teaching that challenges assumptions regarding teaching and learning.</li> </ul>
Learning About Students	The candidate: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• understands varying pedagogical philosophies that support teaching and learning for diverse cultural contexts.</li> </ul>
Culturally Responsive Teaching Practices	The candidate: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• knows the relationships between diversity, curriculum, and technology for teaching and learning, and</li> <li>• knows the subject that he/she teaches.</li> </ul>

The unit prepares *competent educators* to be professionals who are inquirers who examine their actions, instructional goals, methods, and materials in reference to their students’ cultural experiences and preferred learning styles, based on state and national standards. The unit recognizes various competencies necessary for develop in this area:

1. The candidate will demonstrate knowledge of critical foundations in writing, critical thinking, global focus and integrative learning. The candidate in undergraduate initial licensure programs meets requirements of the General Education Curriculum (GEC) program by completing the outlined course of study with a B or better. The candidate passes all sections of the Praxis I. Licensure only candidates must enter with an undergraduate GPA of 2.5 or higher. Candidates with a GPA lower than 2.5 must pass the Praxis I and earn a 3.0 or higher in courses beyond the bachelor’s degree level. Advanced licensure candidates must meet the requirements of the Teacher Education Council (TEC) by completing undergraduate work with a 2.5 or higher GPA. Advanced licensure candidates who do not meet this requirement must pass the Praxis I.

2. Candidates exhibit effective skill in instructional planning, teaching, and assessment of learning. The major sources of evidence, such as electronic portfolio, written reflections, and clinical instructor comments, show skill in the requisite areas.
3. Candidates will demonstrate the ability to design, implement, assess, and modify instruction and meet diverse student needs within the teaching/learning environment. The candidate is able to facilitate student learning at high levels; to collaborate with other professionals; and to use technology to support pedagogy appropriate for students from diverse backgrounds. This mastery is shown through standards articulated through state and national standards, such as the North Carolina Department of Instruction.
4. Candidates illustrate the ability to facilitate student learning at high levels; to collaborate with other professionals; to work with parents and the community; and to use higher levels of technology to support teaching and learning. Candidates demonstrate content knowledge through successful completion of Praxis II.

The third component discusses preparing *culturally responsive educators* within the Unit. The component is explained in the next section. Within this section, the concept is defined, correlated with Villegas and Lucas's dimensions of multicultural teacher education programs, and demonstrated through articulated expectations.

#### Preparing Culturally Responsive Educators

Preparing *culturally responsive educators* relates to the ability of the candidate to implement professional skills in diverse contexts. The unit defines *culturally responsive educators* as professionals who believe in their ability to effectively educate students from various backgrounds and capitalize on students' strengths and cultural capital to support learning for all students. Culturally responsive educators are able to continuously engage in reflection in order to investigate the interplay of the context and culture. *Culturally responsive educators* also rely upon a multicultural knowledge base to examine their actions, instructional goals, methods, materials, and assessments in reference to their students' cultural experiences and preferred learning styles (Gay, 2000; Howard, 2003; Irvine, 2003). Examples of the acquired skills of culturally responsive teachers are presented in this section. The expected skills were aligned with the multicultural teacher education dimensions proposed by Villegas and Lucas (2002).

Cunningham and Boykin (2004), Hale (2001), and Hilliard (2003) all describe critical relationships between *culturally responsive educators* and student success. Many educators believe that in order to ensure academic success for all students, teacher education programs must rethink traditional theories of learning; pre-service candidates must be made aware of the multiplicity of lived experiences that contribute to the instructional process (Beyer, 2001; Titone, 1998). It is becoming more widely recognized that not all candidates automatically enter teacher education programs with culturally responsive dispositions; they must be taught (Major & Brock, 2003). Culturally

responsive instruction occurs when educators are aware of their own cultural knowledge, the cultural knowledge background of those they teach, and then apply appropriate methodologies to teach all students (Kea & Utley, 1998).

Gay (2000) and Irvine (2003) emphasize the significance of culturally responsive education. There are several expectations in this component that generally move educators' perceptions of cultural difference from a deficiency model to appreciation of cultural difference and inclusive learning approaches appropriate for all children, especially children of diverse backgrounds. (See Table 3 for alignment of skill expectation with multicultural teacher education dimensions.)

Table 3—Description of Skills Required of a Culturally Responsive Educator

Multicultural Dimensions	NCCU Expected Candidate Skills
Social Cultural Conscious	The candidate is: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• able to offer a global perspective.</li> </ul>
Affirming Attitudes Toward Students of Culturally Diverse Backgrounds	The candidate is: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• able to incorporate personal cultural experiences as a means of enhancing teaching and learning.</li> </ul>
Commitment and Skills to Act as Agents of Change	The candidate is: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• engaged in teaching that promotes student use of inquiry that challenges assumptions about teaching and learning.</li> </ul>
Constructivist Views of Learning	The candidate is able to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• focus on academics and impact student learning</li> <li>• demonstrate a variety of appropriate assessments, which value the diversity of educational experiences of the students, and</li> <li>• use a repertoire of instructional strategies which incorporate technology to promote learning.</li> </ul>
Learning About Students	The candidate is: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• capable of capitalizing on students' strengths to promote learning.</li> </ul>
Culturally Responsive Teaching Practices	The candidate is: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• engaged in inquiry that promotes improvements in teaching and learning, and</li> <li>• able to demonstrate facilitation of a learning experience that is culturally inclusive.</li> </ul>

The Unit believes that *culturally responsive educators* are able to demonstrate culturally responsive practices in a variety of diverse contexts. Evaluating a candidate's proficiency of an expected skill requires that the candidate is observed and assessed in these various contexts. Ladson-Billings (1992) maintains that culturally responsive educators must demonstrate skillful, in-depth knowledge of both the student and the subject matter.

Candidate proficiency of *cultural responsiveness* is monitored and assessed throughout each School of Education program. Initial and advanced education programs require candidates to demonstrate mastery of skills in professional content and culturally responsive dispositions during internships, practica, and field placements. Candidates are guided through a series of activities designed to foster their growth as a *caring, competent, culturally responsive educator*. The field logs guide candidates through structured analysis of the classroom interactions in various school settings and reflect upon their personal beliefs as they interact with students from diverse backgrounds, including students with special needs. Signature assignments include one-on-one content area instruction, small-group lessons and intervention, case studies, analysis of videotaped lessons, whole group instruction, participation in parent-school conferences, and community-school service activities. These performance-based assignments assist candidates in the development of competence to become skillful in best practices which are research-based and *culturally responsive* in order to educate all students.

The theoretical frameworks of preparing *caring, competent, and culturally responsive educators* have been aligned with the multicultural teacher education dimensions proposed by Villegas and Lucas (2002) as a means of actualizing our theme, *Preparing Educators for Culturally Diverse Contexts*. Each of the components provides the expected candidate outcomes or learning proficiency as connected to the multicultural dimensions. The final section of this document indicates the Unit's expected learning proficiencies and shows alignment with state and national standards. The Unit is committed to modeling professional practices that are appropriate for nurturing caring, competent, culturally responsive educators; therefore, the next section addresses our assessment and evaluation procedures which also reflect theories of multiculturalism.

## ASSESSMENT AND EVALUATION OF CANDIDATE PERFORMANCE

The Unit's Assessment Program is comprehensive in scope and coherent in practice as it forms an alignment of the institution's mission, the Unit's purpose and each program's charge to exemplify academic excellence as defined by national and state standards. The institution's mission *to prepare students academically and professionally to become leaders prepared to advance consciousness of social responsibility in a diverse, global society* requires a program of assessment that evaluates the knowledge, skills, and disposition of our candidates as they grow to assume leadership roles in the advancement of social consciousness. The conceptual framework, *Preparing Educators for Diverse Cultural Contexts*, serves as the philosophical foundation for the Unit's programs, and drives the research, teaching and service of the School of Education. The Unit's assessment program therefore monitors and assesses the preparation of our candidates for diverse cultural contexts by research and service-based curricula within initial and advanced programs throughout the School of Education. In monitoring and assessing an achievement of academic excellence by graduating candidates who are caring, competent, and culturally responsive educators, the Unit's Assessment Program provides evaluative measures of each candidate's knowledge, skills and disposition toward this end.

Each initial and advanced program within the Unit is responsible for compiling an annual mini unit report that demonstrates compliance with national and state standards and alignment with the School of Education's mission and goals. The Unit offers a diverse curricula, created in alignment with the standards of national and state agencies and accrediting bodies: Council for Exceptional Children (CEC), Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Education Programs (CACREP), Council for Accreditation in Audiology and Speech-Language Pathology (CAA), Educational Leadership Constituencies Council (ELCC), National Policy Board for Educational Administration, International Society for Technology in Education (ISTE), National Education Technology Standards for Students and Teacher, National Middle School Association (NMSA), and the Association for Childhood Education International (ACEI). The current mini unit format is adapted from NCATE standards but also addresses the unique program requirements of the SOE.

A comprehensive report of the Unit's Assessment Program is detailed in NCCU's NCATE Report and in the Unit's Assessment Plan. This report provides an overview of two critical areas of assessment: the Assessment and Evaluation of Candidates' Performance and the Continuous Assessment. While it is beyond the scope of this report to provide a comprehensive review of the Unit's assessment and evaluation process in total, this report does provide an overview of Standard, Traditional, Alternative, and Authentic Candidate Assessment and Continuous Assessment used to appraise the growth and development of candidates toward becoming caring, competent, and culturally responsive educators.

#### System for Regularly Assessing Candidate Performance

The development of an Assessment and Evaluation (A & E) Committee is critical to establishing a comprehensive candidate assessment system. The committee is chaired by a half-time candidate assessment coordinator and its membership consists primarily of faculty from the School of Education and the College of Arts and Sciences. In addition, three principals representing elementary, middle, and secondary schools, as well as a representative from the institution's research office are included. The A & E Committee provides ongoing monitoring of the alignment of candidates' knowledge, skills and dispositions with state and national professional teacher standards (e.g. INTASC, NCATE, NBPTS, and CACREP). In addition, the committee serves to monitor the coherence between the Unit's assessment system with the School of Education's conceptual framework and the institution's goals. The Unit's system of assessment includes the following:

- A coherent comprehensive assessment of knowledge, skills, and dispositions gained by the candidates through their practicum and curriculum experiences. These include formative and summative assessment completed at the end of each semester.
- As a requirement for graduation, candidates complete portfolios as a summative assessment of their experiences.
- Data from Initial Licensure Programs are collected and analyzed through a coherent and continuous data management system known as Academic Advisor.

- Continuous candidate assessment for all licensure programs have four gateways and one follow-up or five transition points.
  - For initial licensure these are:
    - 1) admission into the teacher education program,
    - 2) mid-program upon completing methods courses,
    - 3) pre-intern or admission to pre-service teaching,
    - 4) program completion or end of pre-service teaching, and
    - 5) follow-up during first and second year after licensure.
  - For the advance programs, these points are:
    - 1) admission into licensure or professional program,
    - 2) candidacy or review of course work prior to pre-internship preparation,
    - 3) pre-intern/clinical experiences and thesis proposal,
    - 4) graduate requirements, and
    - 5) post-graduation follow up.

### Comprehensive Candidate Assessment

The profile of today's initial and advance level candidates has changed significantly from that of the past. Current and future candidates reflect an unprecedented mosaic whose spectrum ranges in knowledge, interests, attitudes, skills, and talents previously not witnessed in our Schools (Pruitt, 1998). This wide spectrum not only challenges the creativity but also the validity of instructional as well as assessment methods. To educate candidates that are caring, competent, and culturally responsive educators demands that the Unit and each one of its programs raise the bar in establishing a high quality, academic and transformative educational experience.

As a staunch advocate for the education of all persons, it is critical that our academic programs use a variety of day-to-day assessment methods that reflect the ethnic and cultural diversity of our candidates (Banks, 2006). These assessments must draw on many sources of evidence as diverse as the many sorts of candidates who matriculate and graduate from our programs (Banks, 2006). In our preparation of educators for diverse cultural context we are called to be exemplars of valid research driven evidences of best practice for the advancement of diverse learners. Candidates who are themselves diverse learners, thus engage in a curriculum that is transformational and grounded in principles of multiculturalism (Villegas & Lucas, 2002). Jones (1990) argues that the challenges at times witnessed in the academic performance of diverse learners lies not in their learning potential or capacity but as a product of the "quality of earlier teaching, materials, teacher expectations, learning experiences, learning styles, interests and motivation" (cited in Perry, Steele, and Hilliard, 2003). Thus, as educators of diverse learners, the Unit provides our candidates with multiple learning opportunities that are further supported by high teacher expectations designed to build the knowledge and skills as well as the spirit and morale of each candidate.

Graduates of NCCU's School of Education are caring, competent and culturally responsive educators. Throughout each School of Education program, candidate competency is monitored by a coherent comprehensive assessment of knowledge, skills, and dispositions gained by the candidates through their practicum and curriculum

experiences. These include summative and formative assessments completed during and at the end of each semester.

Summative methods of evaluation provide insight as to the progress and growth of our candidates through each stage of their academic training (e.g., application to baccalaureate and advance degree granting programs, preparation for in-house and off-site clinical placement, acceptance to student teaching, candidacy for written/comprehensive examinations, etc.). Formative assessment is critical in determining the need for alternative methods of instruction resulting in replacement, overhaul, and accountability decisions.

The theoretical framework of preparing caring, competent and culturally responsive educators was previously described as being closely aligned with the multicultural teacher education dimensions proposed by Villegas and Lucas (2002). (See Table 2.) Each component, along with state and national standards, determines the expected candidate outcomes and learning proficiencies. The unit is committed to modeling effective professional practices as well as guiding candidates through a series of activities designed to foster their growth as caring, competent, and culturally responsive educators.

Expected dispositions of a *caring educator* are evident in course syllabi and assessment evaluations, and further exhibited by the administration, faculty, and staff. Thus, candidates exemplify the qualities of a *caring educator* by being introspective in investigating their own cultural backgrounds and beliefs and by designing, implementing and evaluating strategies to: 1) address learning needs of students from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds as well as students with exceptionalities, 2) maintain discipline to promote safe and secure classrooms where students are accepted and valued, and 3) embrace anti-racist teaching that empowers students and their families.

Candidates must provide evidence of a knowledge base that exemplifies those characteristics of a *competent educator*. Adopted from Villegas and Lucas's (2002) multicultural dimensions (previously illustrated in table 3), the Unit requires that the candidate demonstrate the following necessary competencies: 1) knowledge of critical foundations of writing, critical thinking, global focus, and integrative learning, 2) knowledge of effective instructional planning, teaching, and assessment of learning, 3) ability to design, implement, assess and modify instruction and meet the needs of diverse students within the teaching/learning environment, and 4) ability to facilitate student learning at high levels through collaboration with professionals, parents, and the community as well as the effective application of technology.

Most critical to the Unit's conceptual framework are candidate competencies characteristic of a culturally responsive educator. Candidate skills aligned with Villegas and Lucas' (2002) multicultural teacher education dimensions, are applied in a variety of diverse contexts and include the ability to: 1) offer a global perspective, 2) enhance teaching and learning by incorporating personal cultural experiences, 3) engage in teaching that promotes students use of inquiry, 4) use a repertoire of appropriate

instructional and assessment strategies which promote learning, and 5) facilitate learning experiences that are culturally inclusive.(See Table 4.)

Through the administration of standardized, traditional, alternative, and authentic assessment measures, candidate competency is monitored throughout each School of Education program by a coherent comprehensive assessment of knowledge, skills, and dispositions gained by the candidates through their practicum and curriculum experiences. Initial and advanced education programs require candidates to demonstrate mastery of skills in professional content and culturally responsive dispositions during internships, practica, and field placements. Candidates are guided through a series of performance-based activities designed to foster their growth as *caring, competent, culturally responsive educators*. These performance-based assignments assist candidates in the development and application of professional competence rooted in research-based and *culturally responsive best practices*.

### Standardized Measures

Standardized measures serve as one of many measures used at entry level for the admission of initial and advanced level candidates. Standardized measures are not instruments that measure or predict capacity or potential but rather serve as measurements of experience and achievement (Hilliard, 2003). The Unit's commitment to fairness and equity recognizes the importance in using multiple criteria particularly when using standard test scores to assess the abilities of educationally disadvantaged students, students whose primary language is not English, and students who are returning to school after an extended absence. These among other factors are known to affect the interpretation of test scores such that standardized measures are not used exclusively in determining college admissions but are viewed along with a candidate's grade point averages (GPA), transcripts, letters of recommendation, and essays (ETS, 2007, Kaplan, 2007, Princeton Review, 2007).

Initial candidates take the American College Test (ACT) or the Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) for admissions to NCCU. Prior to admission into the NCCU School of Education (SOE) initial candidates must also take and pass all sections of the PRAXIS I, Academic Skills Assessment in reading, writing, and mathematics. In addition, initial candidates must successfully complete PRAXIS II before recommendation for licensure. The PRAXIS II contains subject specialty tests and content knowledge critical for elementary and secondary education candidates.

Advanced candidates must take the Graduate Records Exam (GRE). Any student applying for an advanced degree must have completed the GRE as a partial determination of the applicant's qualifications for admission into the Graduate Program. The PRAXIS II contains subject specialty tests and content knowledge critical for specialty areas such as Communication Disorders. Advanced candidates have the option of submitting passing scores for PRAXIS II in lieu of taking the written examination for candidacy (comprehensive exam).

### Traditional Assessment Measures

Discrete assessment of a candidate's knowledge, skills and dispositions are most often assessed by traditional evaluation. A number of traditional evaluations are used to assess and/or evaluate candidate performance throughout the Education Programs. Traditional evaluation is defined in this instance as "teacher-made tests and quizzes." Traditional tests make up a significant percentage of the evaluation methods used for determining a candidate's academic status/standing and, consequently, a measurement of his/her progress toward becoming a caring, competent and culturally responsive educator. Traditional methods of in class evaluation include written and oral quizzes and examinations which are administrated in a variety of formats (e.g., short answer, fill-in-the-blank, matching, true-false, illustrations, essay, etc.).

With the evolution of on-line and distance education courses, a variety of on-line methods of instruction and strategies for "distant" test-taking have encouraged creative methods of delivery and assessment. Blackboard Learning System and online exams may appear in any of the aforementioned forms.

While tests scores, points and corresponding grades are at the discretion of each professor/instructor, grade point average, letter grades (A, B, C, D, and F), credit hours and consequently, grade point averages reflect the cumulative/summative measure of each candidate's performance across respective courses. A grade point average (GPA) provides measurement of a candidate's preparedness to advance to the next stage of learning/development. A GPA of 2.5 within the baccalaureate program reflects a minimum level of performance to meet the requirements of the Teacher Education Council (TEC), while a GPA of 3.0 in a master's or advance degree program reflects acceptable "average" academic work.

### Alternative Assessments and Evaluations

Beyond the traditional assessment methods of tests, quizzes, and examinations are alternative assessments. Alternative assessments lend themselves to creative evidences of knowledge, skills and dispositions in the absence of real life performance. Alternative assessment strategies include but are not limited to: discussions, class simulations, participation in culturally diverse educational contexts, diverse clinical and teaching experiences, dialogue and self-reflection, written reflections, group case studies, service and community oriented activities, cooperative group learning experiences, development of treatment, lesson plans, evaluations, thematic plans, etc. reflective of assigned case studies, participation in interviews, observation assessment in various contexts, field observations, electronic portfolios, technology applications, and thesis research.

With the advancement of technology, alternative assessment and evaluation methods are bondless. Each program incorporates the use of Blackboard Academic Suite for in class as well as distance education courses. Instructional methods expand beyond walls and across campus' as students engage in real time, synchronous and asynchronous discussions through chat rooms, wireless communication via e-mail, participate in virtual classrooms, progress through learning units, experience bondless accessibility in spite of sensory, motor and learning disabilities, engage in discussion boards, develop e-

portfolios, access resources via the web and across e-reserve, engage in self-assessment, multiple test taking, and practice examinations.

Alternative performance evaluations give at best suggested evidence of the transference of knowledge and disposition to “skill”. Acquired skills are most overtly demonstrated through performance based or authentic assessments.

#### Performance Based or Authentic Assessments

In the roles of student teacher and clinical practitioner, candidates are required to demonstrate their ability to assess and analyze student learning, make appropriate adjustments to instruction through multiple instructional strategies, monitor student learning and have a positive effect on the learning, growth and development of all students in multiple contexts of school, family, and community. These skills are most directly assessed through the use of performance based and authentic assessments.

Performance based or authentic assessments—which may take the form of practicum, field experiences, field logs, parent partnerships, and student teaching provide real-life evidence of the candidate’s integration of knowledge, disposition, and culturally responsive education. Field logs guide candidates through structured analysis of the classroom interactions in various school settings and reflect upon their personal beliefs as they interact with students from diverse backgrounds, including students with exceptionalities. Signature assignments include one-on-one content area instruction, small-group lessons and intervention, case studies, analysis of videotaped lessons, whole group instruction, participation in parent-school conferences, and community-school service activity. The integration of knowledge and its subsequent transfer to skill addresses learning from a metacognitive level. The transfer and application of knowledge relies on critical, analytical thinking and self-evaluative skills.

Upon graduation candidates are expected to embody the qualities of a caring, competent, and culturally responsive educator. As a final requirement for graduation candidates submit portfolios as a summative measure of their achievement of academic excellence. These performance based assignments provide *summative* evidence of each candidate as *caring, competent, and culturally responsive educator* committed to the achievement of excellence in the education of all students.

#### Continuous Assessment

A continuous assessment and evaluation process is critical to systematic monitoring of each candidate’s progress, establishing necessary corrective and supportive measures and monitoring continuous program improvement. There are multiple formative and summative assessment methods in place for continuous examination of candidates’ performance as they progress through critical points of achievement. Candidate assessments are based on standards based courses, field, clinical and/or internship experiences and evidences of teaching and learning experiences. Contributing to candidates’ assessment are multiple sources of data reflecting internal (NCCU administration, faculty and personnel) and external (public school personnel, administrators, parents, and community partners) sources.

An integral part of the assessment and evaluation process is the development of an action plan when candidates are found not to be meeting the Unit's expectations. Each program area implements corrective and supportive measures specific to the expectations of the program and the unique needs of the candidate. In collaboration with the candidate, professor, supervisor, and/or advisor, an action plan is developed with established supports, criteria, goals, and timelines. An array of support services is available to candidates ranging from tutoring, counseling, therapy, and health care (e.g. Student Support Services, NCCU's Speech and Hearing Clinic, Student Health and Counseling, etc.). The reader is referred to each program's report for more detail.

All candidates meet with their assigned advisors at required gateway points at least once each semester. At the beginning of each semester and at designated gateways or transition points, candidates meet with their advisors to be advised on their performance and their readiness to begin the next phase of course work. The gateways serve as multiple checkpoints throughout the candidate's program. Each semester candidates seeking initial or advanced entry into the Teacher Education Program or completing course requirements in a phase of the program are ready to be assessed based on pre-determined rubrics that denote decision points or "gateways" of achievement along the curriculum. Key assessment data are collected from multiple sources across five gateways that mark transition points in the development of candidate educators, such that the quality of a candidate's performance reflects a team consensus (e.g., program faculty, advisor, supervisor, etc.). Faculty advisors use the Academic Advisor electronic system to input candidate assessment data recorded on gateway rubrics at the end of each semester.

The collection and use of gateway data has proven to be crucial to verifying the admission of only those candidates who meet critical entry requirements into teacher education and professional programs. Further, the use of gateways serves as a means of validating the quality of our program completers, graduating caring, competent, and culturally responsive educators. Finally, candidate assessment at designated gateways leads to effective action plans ensuring support for all candidates. Candidates who are rated below standard are supported by an action plan and close monitoring by their academic advisor.

Tables 4 and 5 list the key assessment measures collected at each transition point in the initial and advance programs. Candidates in undergraduate initial licensure programs meet requirements of the General Education Curriculum (GEC) program by completing the outlined course of study with a "B" or better. Initial program gateways include the following.

*Gateway 1 Admission to Teacher Education Program.* A point of entry, indicators for Gateway 1 include: grade point average of 2.5 and above, a passing score on Praxis I Pre-Professional Skills Test (PPST), completion of the Candidate Disposition Survey and Field logs. It should be noted that requirements may vary somewhat from program to program where instruments/measurements

may vary. However, admission criteria and transition points are requirements of all programs.

*Gateway 2 Mid-Program.* Conferences are scheduled with candidates at this point to discuss their progress and status. Indicators at this point include: monitoring grade point average with course work performance at a grade level of “C” and above, course assessments, and background checks for field experiences.

*Gateway 3 Pre-Internship.* For the traditional undergraduate candidate, this phase usually occurs during the first senior semester and designates the pre-internship phase. Indicators for Gateway 3 include: grade point average of 3.0 and above, a grade level of “B” and above for course content areas, evaluative performance in field experiences, verification of candidate’s understanding of content specific national and state standards, candidate developed classroom assessments, instructional application of technology, and candidate self-evaluation.

*Gateway 4 Program Completion.* Program completion usually occurs the last semester of the candidate’s program. Candidates are completing their teaching internships and engaging in candidate formative and summative appraisal. Indicators for Gateway 4 include: formative teacher observations, summative candidate appraisal by supervisor, evaluation by LEA, teaching and/or technology portfolio, mock interview. Candidates contribute to continuous Unit assessment, completing Program Completer Surveys and Candidate Disposition Surveys.

*Gateway 5 Follow-up* Beyond the completion of the program is candidate follow-up. A survey of graduates, principals, and mentors provides evidences of the skills, knowledge and disposition of our graduates as practicing caring, competence and culturally responsive educators.

Advance program gateways include the following.

*Gateway 1 Admission to Program.* For this point of entry, indicators for Gateway 1 include: Completed graduate application, including essay and recommendations, transcript evaluation of grade point average of 3.0 and higher in undergraduate major, GRE test scores, initial license or equivalent for graduate elementary or middle school candidates, three years of public school teaching and class A teaching license for School Administration, and two years of public school teaching and class A teaching license for Education Technology majors. School Counseling applicants are required to interview.

*Gateway 2 Admission to Candidacy.* Conferences are scheduled with candidates at this point to discuss their progress and status upon academic review of their courses and grade point average. Indicators at this point include: monitoring grade point average with course work performance at a grade level of “B” and above.

*Gateway 3 Pre-Internship, Research/Thesis/Portfolio.* Indicators for Gateway 3 include: grade point average of 3.0 and above, a grade level of “B” and above for course content areas, and evaluative performance in teaching and clinical experiences. Application for candidacy for thesis or portfolio follows submission of graduate proposal.

Table 4  
Unit Assessment System: Transition Point Assessments for Initial Licensure Programs

Initial Programs	Gateway 1: Admission	Gateway 2: Mid-Program	Gateway 3: Pre-Intern	Gateway 4: Program Completion	Follow-up
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Birth-Kindergarten</b></li> <li>• <b>Elementary</b></li> <li>• <b>Middle Grades</b> (Language Arts, Social Studies, Mathematics and Science)</li> </ul> <p><i>Secondary</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>English</b></li> <li>• <b>Mathematics</b></li> <li>• <b>Comprehensive Social Studies</b></li> <li>• <b>Comprehensive Science</b></li> <li>• <b>Family &amp; Consumer Science</b></li> </ul> <p><i>Special Subject:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Art</li> <li>• Music</li> <li>• Theatre</li> <li>• Physical Ed</li> <li>• French</li> <li>• Spanish</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• GPA <math>\geq</math> 2.5</li> <li>• English I, II &amp; Speech <math>\geq</math> C</li> <li>• Praxis I</li> <li>• Candidate Disposition Survey</li> <li>• Field logs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Monitor GPA</li> <li>• Course work <math>\geq</math> C</li> <li>• Cumulative GPA <math>\geq</math> 2.5</li> <li>• Micro-teaching</li> <li>• Project to demonstrate assessment of student learning</li> <li>• Use of alternative assessments for students w/diverse abilities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Content area <math>\geq</math> B</li> <li>• GPA <math>\geq</math> 3.0</li> <li>• Rating scales or checklists to evaluate candidate performance in field experiences: -a) developmentally appropriate instructional practices, -- b) understanding content specific national &amp; state standards c) technology in instruction d) candidate self-evaluation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Formative teaching observations</li> <li>• Summative candidate appraisal by supervisor</li> <li>• Evaluation by LEA</li> <li>• Mock Interview</li> <li>• Portfolio Review</li> <li>• Program Completer Survey</li> <li>• Candidate Disposition Survey</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• NCDPI Survey: Candidates, principals, &amp; mentors</li> </ul>

*Gateway 4 Graduate Requirements.* Program completion usually occurs the last semester of the candidate’s program. During this last semester candidates complete and submit the following: master’s thesis and oral defense, portfolio, comprehensive exam, and submission of program completers documents (e.g. completer’s survey, candidate disposition survey, and on-site observations).

*Gateway 5 Follow-up.* Beyond the completion of the program is candidate follow-up with candidate and employer surveys. A survey of graduates, principals, CFY supervisors, and mentors provides evidences of the skills, knowledge and disposition of our graduates as practicing caring, competence and culturally responsive educators.

Table 5 – Unit Assessment System: Transition Point Assessments for Advanced Licensure Programs Teacher Education Programs

Advance Programs	Gateway 1: Admission	Gateway 2: Candidacy	Gateway 3: Pre-Intern	Gateway 4: Graduate Requirements	Follow-up
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Elementary</b></li> <li>• <b>Middle Grades</b></li> <li>Language Arts</li> <li><i>Special Subject</i></li> <li>• Physical Ed</li> <li><i>Exceptional Child</i></li> <li>• <b>Behavioral Emotional Disabled</b></li> <li>• <b>Learning Disability</b></li> <li>• <b>Mentally Disabled</b></li> <li>• <b>Visually Impaired</b></li> <li><i>Special Service Personnel</i></li> <li>• <b>School Administrator</b></li> <li>• <b>School Counselor</b></li> <li>• <b>Instructional Technology Specialist</b></li> <li>• <b>Media Coordinator</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Interview [School Counselor only]</li> <li>• Two years public school teaching and Class A teaching license [Educational Technology]</li> <li>• Three years public school teaching and Class A teaching license [School Administration]</li> <li>• Transcript evaluation[GPA ≥ 3.0 in undergrad major]</li> <li>• Initial licenses or equivalent for graduate elementary or middle grades</li> <li>• GRE [School Counselor, School Administration]</li> <li>• Essay [part of application]</li> <li>• Recommendations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Academic review of courses and GPA &gt; 3.0</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Audio and video tapes of clinical experiences</li> <li>• Thesis proposal or teaching portfolio</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Comprehensive exams</li> <li>• School Leadership Licensure Assessment [School Administration]</li> <li>• On-site observations</li> <li>• Thesis defense or oral defense of teaching portfolio</li> <li>• Program Completer Survey</li> <li>• Candidate Disposition Survey</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• NCDPI Survey: Employer &amp; Candidate</li> <li>• Counseling Survey: Employer &amp; Candidate</li> </ul>

### SUMMARY

The mission of North Carolina Central University— *To prepare students academically and professionally to become leaders prepared to advance consciousness of social responsibility in a diverse, global society-- speaks well of the institution’s commitment to the shaping of diverse leaders, promoting social justice and embracing a global society.* Its rich history provides multiple evidences of its long-term commitment to promoting civil rights and social justice. Further evidence of NCCU’s commitment to diversity is its diverse student body, faculty, and staff. An institution of academic excellence, NCCU prepares the leaders of tomorrow for a global society by

providing a learning environment that promotes community, national and global outreach through community service and international partnerships.

**As a part of the university, the Unit’s conceptual framework and theme—*Preparing Educators for Diverse Cultural Context* –is a shared vision in close alignment with the institution’s mission.** A collective revisit of the Unit’s conceptual framework from multiple stakeholders within and beyond the Institution has validated a purpose that remains cutting edge in scope as well as in practice. Teaching supported by research and technology is a primary focus of the institution. The institution not only promotes the scholarly works of its faculty but its student body as well. Candidates are encouraged to engage in academic endeavors supported by the creative application of technology to exemplify best practices and promote the learning of diverse students everywhere.

**The conceptual framework forms the foundation of the Unit’s curriculum for all initial and advanced licensure programs.** Maintaining an alignment with the University’s mission and the standards of NCATE, along with a host of other associations and accrediting bodies, the Unit’s conceptual framework defines the knowledge, skills and dispositions expected of its candidates. To this end, the conceptual framework is reflected in all professional education course syllabi, course goals and objectives and candidate assessment measures. Finally, the conceptual framework serves as foundation for the governance of the unit, directing such aspects as the Unit’s strategic plan, professional development, and criteria for faculty evaluation.

**The theoretical foundation of the Unit’s conceptual framework can be found in the theory of multiculturalism.** It is the Unit’s belief that the conceptual framework, *Preparing Educators for Diverse Cultural Context*, embraces the theory of multiculturalism. Exemplifying a model of multicultural instruction, the Unit integrates a construct of multiculturalism promoted by Villegas and Lucas (2002). Multiculturalists like Villegas and Lucas (2002) emphasize the salience of an equitable and just society where diversity is worthy of affirmation as the role of all schools.

**Grounded by a multicultural perspective, the Unit’s curriculum has promoted a transformational view in its approach to training candidates who are caring, competent and culturally responsive educators.** Candidates are immersed in a multicultural learning environment that applies multicultural techniques of instruction and assessment. Techniques, such as problem-posing using culturally relevant scenarios, self-reflection, building caring communities of learners, employing the use of dialogic inquiry, and engendering a consciousness of social justice are critical to transforming candidates who are more aware of sociocultural mores and effective instructors of diverse learners in diverse cultural contexts.

**Summative and formative assessments are used to provide evidence of each candidate’s transformation, demonstrating the knowledge, skills and dispositions of a caring, competent, and culturally responsive educator.** A continuous assessment and evaluation process is critical to systematic monitoring of each candidate’s progress,

establishing necessary corrective and supportive measures and monitoring continuous program improvement. There are multiple formative and summative assessment methods in place for continuous examination of candidates' performance as they progress through gateways which designate critical points of achievement. Candidate assessments are based on standards based courses, field, clinical and/or internship experiences, and evidences of teaching and learning experiences.

In summary, the Unit has embraced a conceptual framework that remains in close alignment with NCCU's mission, NCATE and State standards. Cutting edge in its theoretical underpinnings as well as in practice, the conceptual framework is grounded in the ethos of multiculturalism. It supports a system of checks and balances that shapes, critiques and evaluates the transformation our candidates into caring, competent and culturally responsive educators, and monitors continuous program improvement. Finally, it continually challenges the Unit to exemplify those qualities of leadership that promote greater equality, justice and humane conditions in schooling and in society.

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## **Appendix**

### **Table of Professional Education Programs**

Professional Education Programs

Program Name	Award Level	Program Level (initial or advanced)	Agency or Association Reviewing Programs (state, SPA, etc)	Status of National and State Program Review	
				Program Review Submitted (yes or no)	Current Status (initial review, rejoining, complete)
Academically Gifted*	Add on Licensure	Initial	N/A		Temporary Auth.
B-K	Licensure, BS	Initial	NCDPI	Yes	Initial Review
Elementary	Licensure, BA, MEd	Initial, Advanced	NCDPI	Yes	Initial Review
English as a Second Language*	Add-on Licensure	Initial	N/A		Temporary Auth.
Middle Grades	Licensure, BA, MEd	Initial, Advanced	NCDPI	Yes	Initial Review
Art	Licensure, BA,	Initial	NCDPI	Yes	Initial Review
Comprehensive Science*	Licensure, BA,	Initial	NCDPI	Yes	Temporary Auth.
Computer Specialists	MA	Advanced	NCDPI	Yes	Initial Review
English	Licensure, BA, MA**	Initial, Advanced	NCDPI	Yes	Initial Review
French	Licensure, BA,	Initial	NCDPI	Yes	Initial Review
Literacy*	Add on Licensure	Initial	N/A		Temporary Auth.
Mathematics	LicensureBS, MA**	Initial, Advanced	NCDPI	Yes	Initial Review
Music	Licensure, BA,	Initial	NCDPI	Yes	Initial Review
Physical Education	Licensure, BA, MS	Initial, Advanced	NCDPI	Yes	Initial Review

School Administrator	MA	Advanced	NCDPI	Yes	Initial Review
School Counseling	MA	Advanced	NCDPI (CACREP)	Yes	Initial Review
School Media	MLS	Advanced	NCDPI (ALA)	Yes	Initial Review
Spanish	Licensure, BA,	Initial	NCDPI	Yes	Initial Review
Special Edu. (LD, BED, MD, VI,) BK*	Licensure, MAT, MEd	Initial, Advanced	NCDPI	Yes	Initial Review (BK – Temp. Auth)
Speech Language Pathology	MEd	Advanced	NCDPI (CAA)	Yes	Initial Review
Theatre Arts	Licensure, BA	Initial	NCDPI	Yes	Initial Review

\* These are new programs with “temporary authorization” to operate granted by the State Department of Public Instruction. Once there is a graduate of these programs the Unit will request for removal of “temporary authorization” status.

\*\*The graduate programs in these areas have not had candidates and will not be reviewed by the State Department of Public Instruction