Conceptual Framework

A Teacher-Student Dynamic of Sensitivity, Reflection and Faith

Mission Statement

The mission of the Educator Preparation Program is to prepare highly effective teachers within an environment of sensitivity, reflection, and faith.

Description of the Statement

Effective educators demonstrate knowledge in their respective fields, sensitivity to students’ diverse learning needs, reflection in scholarship and inquiry, motivation of their students’ becoming lifelong learners, and a careful examination of their worldview and integration of the fruit of the Spirit (Galatians 5:22-23).

Candidate Outcomes

1. Knowledge of Learners. Candidates as teacher-practitioners design and implement instruction in consideration of the typical cognitive, linguistic, social, emotional, and physical development of children and adolescents and responsive to individual needs.
2. Diverse Learners. Candidates as teacher-relaters respect diverse cultures and the wide range of individual abilities by establishing inclusive learning environments that maintain high expectations for all.
3. Learning Environments. Candidates as teacher-relaters create respectful, collaborative, and engaging learning environments that communicate the Christ-modeled worth and potential of each individual.
4. Content Knowledge. Candidates as teacher-scholars demonstrate academic competence in the central concepts, tools of inquiry, and structures of their discipline(s) and design instruction that makes content accessible and meaningful to facilitate content mastery.
5. Content to Critical Thinking. Candidates as teacher-practitioners engage learners in critical thinking, creativity, and problem-solving by integrating concepts of the discipline(s) from different viewpoints relevant to local and global issues.
6. Assessment, Reflection, Response. Candidates as teacher-practitioners use multiple assessment strategies to evaluate learning in the classroom and to empower the learner to reflect and improve.
7. Planning. Candidates as teacher-scholars and practitioners use content, pedagogical, and cultural knowledge to plan instruction that is rigorous, personal, and differentiated to the learner by providing for students a clear linkage between critical content, meaningful assessment, and purposeful, engaging instructional approaches.
8. Instructional Strategies. Candidates as teacher-practitioners demonstrate knowledge and use of a variety of effective teaching methods that promote deep understanding of content, its connections to other disciplines, and its meaningful application to their modern world.
9. Professional Learning and Ethical Practice. Candidates as teacher-practitioners are immersed in professional learning, demonstrate their ability to reflect on practice and choices, and are responsive to input from mentors, faculty, and cooperating teachers to adapt instruction for improved learner outcomes.
10. Leadership and Collaboration. Candidates as teacher-relaters demonstrate leadership by assuming responsibilities for instruction and learning in the classroom, collaborating with all stakeholders to ensure learner growth, and showing evidence of the potential for and interest in future leadership roles beyond the classroom.

NCATE Accreditation

The Educator Preparation Program is accredited by the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) under the NCATE legacy standards, 1140 19th St. SW, Suite 400, Washington, DC 20036; phone 202-223-0077. This accreditation covers initial teacher preparation programs and advanced educator programs.

Profile of the Educator Preparation Program

To be licensed to teach in the State of Tennessee, prospective teachers must earn a bachelor’s degree with a major in an academic field and meet specific competencies needed in the teaching profession.

Areas of licensure: Union offers both initial licensure and additional endorsement in the following areas:
- Instructional Leadership License, PreK–12
- Biology, 6–12
- Business Education, 6–12
- Chemistry, 6–12
- Early Childhood Educ., PreK-3
- Economics, 6–12
- Elementary, K–5
- English, 6–12 and 6–8
- English as a Second Language., PreK–12
- French, PreK–12
- Government, 6–12
- History, 6–12
- Library Information Specialist, PreK–12
The application to the EPP is

All post-baccalaureate candidates for the first year on the job-embedded Practitioner license need to be submitted with the Graduate Studies in Education Application. Policies if the program takes more than two years to complete. It is the student’s responsibility to inquire about current licensure policy of the TN DOE, not by the Catalogue of record. It is the process. Licensure requirements are determined by current in licensure requirements, and job-embedded Practitioner Praxis II and edTPA requirements, any proposed changes are apprised of course work that remains, EPP status, additional prior to starting classes. At this meeting the candidate will be apprised of course work that remains, EPP status, additional Praxis II and edTPA requirements, any proposed changes in licensure requirements, and job-embedded Practitioner processes. Licensure requirements are determined by current policy of the TN DOE, not by the Catalogue of record. It is the student’s responsibility to inquire about current licensure policies if the program takes more than two years to complete.

Application to the EPP. The application to the EPP is submitted with the Graduate Studies in Education Application. Candidates must be fully admitted to the EPP by the end of the first year on the job-embedded Practitioner license.

**Post-Baccalaureate Requirements**

Due to continual changes in education, all licensure requirements must be completed within five years. If all requirements are not met within five years, professional education coursework more than five years old must be repeated.

**Application Process.** Students who seek post-baccalaureate teacher licensure must submit the Graduate Studies in Education Application; $25 non-refundable application fee; official transcripts sent directly to Union from every college/university attended; Application for Admission to the Post-baccalaureate Educator Preparation Program; Consent to Fingerprinting, Background Check, and Release of Information form and background check received directly from TBI (http://www.uu.edu/programs/epp/resources/applications.cfm); and score report showing minimum Praxis II content knowledge test for the intended endorsement. A cumulative GPA of 2.75 or 3.0 on the last 60 semester hours or conditional admission (9 graduate hours with 3.0 GPA) is required to apply for the job-embedded Practitioner license.

**License evaluation.** After the candidate has submitted the aforementioned items, the candidate should call the Director of Educator Preparation for an appointment for a licensure evaluation. Post-baccalaureate candidates must have a licensure evaluation completed by the Director of Educator Preparation prior to starting classes. This meeting the candidate will be apprised of course work that remains, EPP status, additional Praxis II and edTPA requirements, any proposed changes in licensure requirements, and job-embedded Practitioner processes. Licensure requirements are determined by current policy of the TN DOE, not by the Catalogue of record. It is the student’s responsibility to inquire about current licensure policies if the program takes more than two years to complete.

**Application to the EPP.** The application to the EPP is submitted with the Graduate Studies in Education Application. Candidates must be fully admitted to the EPP by the end of the first year on the job-embedded Practitioner license.

**Admission to the EPP.** Post-baccalaureate candidates for initial licensure must meet the following requirements for admission to the Educator Preparation Program.

1. Satisfactory score on the Praxis II Speciality Area Content Knowledge Test for the intended endorsement.
2. Minimum cumulative GPA of 3.0 or conditional admission to graduate course work.
3. Two positive reference forms
4. Four dispositional evaluations completed by the student and the professors of the student’s first two classes.
5. Submission of criminal background check and fingerprinting from TBI.

**Continuation in the EPP.** In order to remain in the EPP following admission, the post-baccalaureate candidate must maintain a GPA of 2.75 in all course work taken at Union since completion of the baccalaureate degree and a GPA of 2.75 in the professional education core. A GPA of 3.0 must be maintained if student is in the M.A.Ed. Program.

**Job-embedded Practitioner License Program.** All post-baccalaureate candidates must be hired on the job-embedded Practitioner license to complete initial licensure. In accordance with Tennessee’s Practitioner license policy, Union offers teaching endorsements in the areas listed above (except Instructional Leadership, Reading Specialist, and School Social Worker). Candidates qualify to be hired on the job-embedded Practitioner license through Union’s program if they have passed the Praxis II content knowledge test for the intended endorsement, have a cumulative GPA of 2.75 or 3.0 on the last 60 semester hours, and have submitted the Intent to Hire form provided by Union or the hiring school system. Once the Practitioner license is issued, the candidate must follow the program of study and policies of the EPP or risk having the application status changed to “Enrolled-off track” or “No longer affiliated” in the candidate’s license record. Candidates who are hired too late in the fall semester to enroll for classes must participate in an orientation designed to apprise them of licensure standards and assessments. For more information about this license, contact the Director of Educator Preparation.

**Academic Policies**

**Minimum GPA requirements.** Minimum GPA’s are listed above. Following admission to the EPP, if the GPA drops below the minimum, the student is removed from the EPP and may only repeat courses to raise the GPA. When the GPA is at or above the minimum, the student will be submitted for readmission to the EPP.

**Early field experiences.** As required by national standards and by the Tennessee Department of Education guidelines, early field experiences are a vital part of the EPP at Union. The purpose of these early field experiences is to introduce the prospective teacher to a variety of school settings, learners, and routine activities. The knowledge and skills introduced in course work will be refined in the early field experiences.

Proof of professional liability insurance is required of all students enrolled in courses with field experiences. This expense is the responsibility of the student. Options for this
coverage include, but are not limited to, membership in Student Tennessee Education Association, Christian Educators' Association International, or Professional Educators of Tennessee. Liability insurance is also available through Union University. Information about each of these options is available through the Director of Educator Preparation.

**Background check and fingerprinting.** In accordance with TN Code Ann. §49-5-5632, all teacher candidates must supply a fingerprint sample and submit a criminal history records check by TBI prior to beginning coursework. Information available at www.uu.edu/programs/epp/resources/applications.cfm.

edTPA. While enrolled in EDU 6231 Mentoring Seminar II, the graduate student will submit edTPA. This is a nationally-scored performance assessment that includes video recording a teaching segment and submitting it with commentaries related to planning, instruction, and assessment.

**Appeals.** The School of Education is charged with the responsibility to follow the established policies for admission to and completion of the EPP. The Educator Preparation Program Council (EPPPC), which includes representatives of the faculty from across the university and students, is the EPP coordinating and policy-making body for the unit and is responsible for assuring that the established policies are followed. If the student feels that established policy or practice is not being followed, the EPPPC should be contacted. The EPPPC is also the appeals committee for the EPP. All appeals for variance from established policy and practice should be presented in writing to the Dean of the School of Education. The Dean will consider whether the appeal may, within established policy, be granted. If the appeal has been denied by the Dean, the student may choose to direct the appeal to the EPPPC. The student should contact the chairman of the EPPPC and present the appeal in writing. After the EPPPC has considered the appeal, the student will be notified in writing of the committee’s determination.

**Assessment of student outcomes.** The candidate will submit edTPA while enrolled in Mentoring Seminar II. This performance-based assessment is aligned to the inTASC standards and to the EPP’s candidate outcomes.

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**Financial Information**

A materials fee is charged for appropriate courses throughout the education curriculum to cover costs directly related to the course. Current materials fees are indicated in the “Financial Information” section of the Catalogue.

An edTPA fee is added to the spring semester of EDU 622 and the fall semester of EDU 6231. Prior to the student submitting edTPA, he/she will be given a voucher to submit when registering for edTPA to cover the cost of the first submission. The cost of resubmission of edTPA is the responsibility of the student.

All financial information is subject to change without notice.