Program Leadership

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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 educators 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 life-long 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.

CAEP Accreditation

The Educator Preparation Program is accredited by the Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP). The National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) first approved Union’s Professional Education Unit at both the initial and advanced levels in 2000. This national accreditation supported the unit's state approval that had stood since the mid-1950’s. The Educator Preparation Program remained accredited by NCATE through October 2020, when it achieved reaccreditation at the initial and advanced levels through the Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP). This accrediting body was created via the merger of NCATE and the Teacher Education Accreditation Council (TEAC) in 2013. Union University’s CAEP accreditation term runs from October 2020 through 2027.
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.

Internship I and II

Research reports that more extensive clinical experience better prepares teachers for the P–12 classrooms of today. Therefore, students will complete a year-long internship from fall through spring semesters of the senior year in one classroom appropriate to the grade range of the license. Internship I will begin prior to the beginning of Union’s fall semester so the student will be able to experience the first days of the school year. During Internship I in the fall semester, the student will be in the classroom two or three days a week while taking professional education coursework on campus the other days. This schedule will allow the student to move seamlessly from theory into practice. During Internship II, which begins when the placement school starts in January and continues through the spring semester, the student will be in the same classroom all day, every day. The student will take Problems-based Seminar during Internship II during which discussions will focus on current issues in today’s classrooms. Several out-of-classroom days occur during the internship to allow the student to experience a variety of school settings and grade levels.

Admission To and Continuation In The EPP And Admission To Internship

Admission to the EPP: Undergraduate students must meet the following requirements for admission to the Educator Preparation Program:
1. Minimum of 24 semester hours in general education.
2. Minimum GPA of 2.75 in all course work at Union University.
3. Interview with the Teacher Education Screening Committee.
4. Two dispositional evaluations completed in EDU 150.
5. Field experience in education at the appropriate grade level; field experience acquired through transfer credit must be verified with a course description or syllabus indicating the total hours completed and the placement.
6. Prior to placement in any field experience, each teacher candidate must submit to a criminal background check and fingerprinting completed by the T.B.I. in accordance with TN law. The cost is the responsibility of the teacher candidate. For procedures, see www.uu.edu/programs/epp/resources/applications.cfm.
7. Satisfactory scores on the Core Academic Skills for Educators (CORE) tests (Reading = 156, Writing = 162, Math = 150), or ACT (Composite of 22e), or SAT (R) (Combined score of 1100).
8. Approval of the School of Education.
9. Approval of the EPP Council (EPPC).

Application to the EPP: EDU 150, Foundations of American Education, should be taken during the first semester of the freshman year or during the first semester after transfer. The application to the EPP is submitted during this course and a 20-hour field experience in an approved setting is also completed. By completing the admission process early in the college career, a student is ready to apply for the internship in the fall one year before Internship I. A student who has transferred the equivalent of EDU 150 should make application to the EPP through the Office of Educator Preparation immediately upon entrance to Union.

Continuation in the EPP: In order to remain in the EPP following admission, the student must maintain a GPA of 2.75 in all course work, in the major, and in the professional education core.

Admission to the internship: Students must file an application in order to be admitted to the yearlong internship on or before October 1 one year prior to Internship I. Applications are available at www.uu.edu/programs/epp/resources/applications.cfm. Other requirements for admission are as follows:
1. Minimum scores on the content knowledge portion of the Praxis II series.
2. Minimum GPA of 2.75 in all course work.
3. Minimum GPA of 2.75 in the major; some major departments require a higher minimum GPA in the major.
4. Minimum GPA of 2.75 in the professional education core.
5. Lack no more than two courses in the major.
6. Recommendation from the major department.
7. Approval of the Dean of Students.
8. Approval of the EPPC.
9. Completion of a degree audit prior to the October 1 application due date.

At the end of Internship I, the dispositions of interns are assessed by a faculty panel. While no courses may be taken during the semester of Internship II, problems-based seminars are held throughout the semester, and attendance is mandatory.

Upon successful completion of all internship requirements, excluding edTPA, an undergraduate intern can graduate with the applicable degree. If the intern does not secure a passing score on edTPA by the end of the spring semester, he/ she cannot be recommended for a TN license (state requirement). In this case, the only option for these candidates is to enter Union's post-baccalaureate initial licensure program through the job-embedded Practitioner route and pass edTPA EDU 628 Mentoring Seminar C. The policy for post-baccalaureate edTPA completion applies at that point.

Application for teacher licensure: Applications for Tennessee teacher licensure are completed during a seminar and are filed by the licensing officer with the Tennessee State Department of Education when all course work and requirements are completed.

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. In this case
it is strongly recommended that the student repeat courses that caused the GPA to fall below the minimum required. When the GPA is at or above the minimum, the student will be submitted for readmission to the EPP.

**Early field experiences.** As is required by national standards and by the Tennessee State 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, including the year-long internship.** 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 Office of Educator Preparation Program. The student is responsible for transportation to and from field experience.

**Appeals.** The School of Education is charged with the responsibility to follow the established policies for admission to and completion of the EPP. The EPPC, which includes representatives of the faculty from across the University, 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 EPPC should be contacted. The EPPC 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 College of Education and Human Studies. 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 EPPC. The student should contact the chairman of the EPPC and present the appeal in writing. After the EPPC has considered the appeal, the student will be notified in writing of the committee’s determination.

**Assessment of student outcomes.** Student outcomes are measured through the Praxis II specialty area tests and edTPA. Praxis tests measure content knowledge, and edTPA is a performance assessment of the candidate’s ability to teach all students. Praxis tests are taken prior to and toward the end of Internship I, and edTPA is submitted in the spring of Internship II.

**Financial Information**

In addition to tuition, a fee will be charged all students engaged in the internship. This is used to meet part of the expenses of the mentor stipend and travel expenses incurred by the University coach. A materials fee is also charged for the internship and appropriate courses throughout the curriculum and to cover costs directly related to the course or laboratory. Additional expenses include a background check, and liability insurance each year. Current materials and experience fees are indicated in the “Financial Information” section of the Catalogue.

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**Programs of Study in Educator Preparation**

Students seeking licensure in secondary areas (6–12, K–12, and PreK–12) must complete the major in the endorsement area and the current Secondary Professional Education. See your academic advisor for specific courses and four-year programs of study.

Programs of study for each endorsement area are as follows:

**Business Education 6–12**
Complete the Accounting or Business Administration major with concentration in Economics, Management, or Marketing as outlined in the McAfee School of Business Administration section of the Catalogue for licensure, plus the Secondary Professional Education.

**Biology 6–12**
Complete the Biology major as outlined in the Dept. of Biology section of the Catalogue for licensure, plus the Secondary Professional Education.

**Chemistry 6–12**
Complete the Chemistry major as outlined in the Dept. of Chemistry section of the Catalogue for licensure plus the Secondary Professional Education.

**Early Childhood Educ., PreK–3 (only as add-on to K–5)**
Complete the Teaching and Learning and Interdisciplinary Studies majors as outlined in the School of Education section of the Catalogue (with EDU 337).

**Economics 6–12**
Complete the Business Administration major with concentration in Economics as outlined in the McAfee School of Business Administration section of the Catalogue for licensure, plus the Secondary Professional Education and HIS 101, 102, 211, 212; GEO 112 and either GEO 215 or 216. This program leads to dual licensure in Economics 7-12 and Business Education 7-12.

**Elementary K–5**
Complete the Teaching and Learning and Interdisciplinary Studies majors as outlined in the School of Education section of the Catalogue.

**English 6–12**
Complete the English major with either Literature or Writing concentration as outlined in the Dept. of English section of the Catalogue for licensure, plus the Secondary Professional Education.

**French PreK–12**
Complete the French major, Teacher Education track, as outlined in the Dept. of Language section of the Catalogue plus the Secondary Professional Education.
Government 6–12
Complete the Political Science major as outlined in the Dept. of Political Science section of the Catalogue for licensure, plus the Secondary Professional Education.

Health K–12 (add on)
Complete the Physical Education and Health major as outlined in the Dept. of Physical Education, Wellness, and Sport section of the Catalogue for licensure, plus the Secondary Professional Education. This program leads to dual endorsements in PE K–12 and Health K–12.

History 6–12
Complete the History major as outlined in the Dept. of History section of the Catalogue for licensure, plus the Secondary Professional Education.

Marketing 6–12
Complete the Business Administration major with concentration in Marketing as outlined in the McAfee School of Business Administration section of the Catalogue for licensure, plus the Secondary Professional Education. This program leads to dual endorsements in Marketing 6–12 and Business Education 6–12.

Mathematics 6–12
Complete the Mathematics major as outlined in the Dept. of Mathematics section of the Catalogue for licensure, plus the Secondary Professional Education.

Music Education, Instrumental K–12
Complete the Bachelor of Music degree core with emphasis in Music Education, Track for Instrumental/Band Instructor as outlined in the Dept. of Music section of the Catalogue plus the Secondary Professional Education Core.

Music Education, Vocal/General Music K–12
Complete the Bachelor of Music degree core with emphasis in Music Education, Track for General/Choral Instructor as outlined in the Dept. of Music section of the Catalogue plus the Secondary Professional Education Core.

Physical Education K–12
Complete the major in Physical Education and Health as outlined in the Dept. of Physical Education, Wellness, and Sport section of the Catalogue for licensure, plus the Secondary Professional Education.

Physics 6–12
Complete the Physics or Physical Science major as outlined in the Dept. of Physics section of the Catalogue for licensure, plus the Secondary Professional Education.

School Social Worker, PreK–12
Complete the major in Social Work to include SW 340 and complete SW 490 in a school setting, as outlined in the Social Work section of the Catalogue.

Spanish PreK–12
Complete the Spanish major, Teacher Education track, as outlined in the Dept. of Language section of the Catalogue plus the Secondary Professional Education.

Special Education Interventionist K–8 and 6–12 and Comprehensive K–12
Complete the major in Special Education and the Professional Education tailored for licensure in Special Education as outlined in the School of Education section of the Catalogue. To add Elementary K-5, take UNI 300 and either GEO 215 or 216.

Speech Communication 6–12 and Theater K–12 dual endorsements
Complete the Theatre and Speech major with Teacher Licensure emphasis as outlined in the Dept. of Communication Arts section of the Catalogue plus the Secondary Professional Education.

Visual Art K–12
Complete the major in Art as outlined in the Dept. of Art section in the Catalogue for licensure, plus the Secondary Professional Education.

Additional endorsement
Courses required for additional endorsements total roughly the equivalent of a minor but include specified courses to focus on knowledge and skills as determined by the Tennessee State Department of Education. The State’s Licensure Policy (2015) includes guidelines for adding endorsements based on the endorsement(s) held. See the TN Department of Education’s website or the Director of the Educator Preparation Program for current policies. Based on input from P-12 Directors of Personnel, students seeking initial licensure in the following areas are strongly encouraged to add endorsement(s) as indicated: History add-on Government and/or Economics and/or Geography; Biology, Chemistry, or Physics add-on another science area; Physical Education add-on Health and/ or another area.

Student Services/General Information

Academic advisor. Students are assigned an academic advisor within the major department.

Practicum/Internship supervision. Students enrolled in practicum experiences and the internship are assigned a University coach who observes the student regularly in the teaching environment and provides feedback regarding strengths and areas that need strengthening. Regular meetings are held with the intern and the University coach.

Director of Educator Preparation. The Director of Educator Preparation is available during regular office hours to answer questions regarding programs of study, testing requirements, teacher licensure, employment opportunities, and other topics related to the EPP. The student is responsible for scheduling an appointment with the Director of the Educator Preparation Program for a degree audit prior to October 1 of the junior year when internship applications are due to assure completion of requirements for graduation and licensure.

Director of Clinical Experiences. The Director is responsible for placement of all field experiences including observations, practica, and internship.