

Conceptual Framework

Department of Education

Meredith College

The conceptual framework was developed by the professional community invested in teacher preparation at Meredith College including the public school partners as well as Meredith faculty. The conceptual framework that guides the work in the Department of Education is research-based and is aligned with professional and state standards. It embraces the vision of globalization set forth by both the College and the State Board of Education and is focused on preparing teachers who are well-equipped to meet the needs of the diverse students found in our schools.

Our courses and fieldwork prepare our students to be teachers who will:

- **Exhibit culturally relevant and inclusive teaching.** Teacher candidates recognize that they participate in a diverse global community and maintain high expectations for all students. In making instructional decisions, they consider the needs of all students and are inclusive of every student. They practice culturally relevant teaching, are open to cultures and ideas other than their own, and affirm the cultural diversity that their students bring to their classrooms. They know how to modify instruction to support the unique learning needs of each student and provide a relevant and rigorous education to all students.
- **Practice connected pedagogy.** Teacher candidates understand that teaching and learning must be relevant to the students. As such they connect the content they teach to the lives of their students. Candidates lead student-centered classrooms designed with an understanding of their students' development and consideration of the needs of their students. They are able to design instruction to address individual differences and learning preferences, and when appropriate, respond to diversity in cultural practices and exceptionalities.
- **Engage in reflective teaching.** Teacher candidates believe that reflection is essential to improving the quality of their teaching. They are able to examine the dilemmas of classroom practice within the cultural contexts in which they teach. They are able to question the assumptions they bring to teaching and strive to understand how their actions impact their students. Teacher candidates are able to engage in reflection not only within their own classroom but also within a community of professionals who have the common goal of improving student learning.
- **Utilize continuous assessment.** Teacher candidates are knowledgeable in the use of formal and informal assessment and use this data to inform instruction. They are able to use a variety of authentic and traditional forms of assessment to determine their students' understanding and are able to interpret this information and use it to meet the instructional needs of each student. Teacher candidates know how to use appropriate technology in both collecting assessment data and recording that data for analysis.
- **Demonstrate leadership.** Teacher candidates demonstrate the professional dispositions necessary to become teacher leaders. They provide leadership by collaborating with colleagues, participating in and forging community-school partnerships, and structuring classrooms as communities of learners.
- **Understand content.** Teacher candidates demonstrate strong content knowledge learned in their general education and liberal arts majors and are able to combine that content knowledge with professional knowledge of pedagogy and best practices. They are able to utilize technology effectively in both helping students understand content as well as expanding their own content knowledge. In addition, teacher candidates are able to connect content to the student's community, and understand how cultural diversity and diversity in learning needs can interact with content understandings.