**COLLEGE OF EDUCATION
TEACHER EDUCATION**

**CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK**

**Educator as Professional Decision Maker,
Reflective Practitioner, and Adaptive Expert**

Mission of the University: The mission of Concordia University, Saint Paul, a university of the Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod, is to prepare students for thoughtful and informed living, for dedicated service to God and humanity, and for enlightened care of God's creation, all within the context of the Christian Gospel.

Vision of the University: The vision of Concordia University, Saint Paul, is to be acknowledged as the leading Lutheran university offering exceptional opportunities for students from all backgrounds who seek relevant career preparation and a challenging academic experience coupled with the insights of Lutheran theology.

Motto of the University: *In litteris proficere volo malo deligere Jesum*
     "It is good to be proficient in knowledge, but better to know Jesus."

The University's Promise to Students: Concordia University, Saint Paul, empowers you to discover and engage your purpose for life, career and service, in a dynamic, multicultural, urban environment, where Christ is honored, all are welcome, and Lutheran convictions inform intellectual inquiry and academic pursuits.

Mission of the College of Education: The College of Education prepares professionals in a Lutheran liberal arts environment for lifelong learning and service in teaching, research, and leadership in our diverse and global community.

Vision of the Education Preparation Provider (EPP): The faculty, staff, and programs embrace and live the core values of quality, diversity, and service – all within the context of the Christian Gospel. The faculty and staff foster a caring, Christian learning

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environment, rich in technology and wonderfully diverse, in which each candidate receives individualized attention to facilitate personal and professional growth. Candidates, in turn, demonstrate exemplary dispositions in their future P-12 classrooms.

Mission of the Department of Undergraduate Teacher Education: The Department of Undergraduate Teacher Education prepares professional, academically capable, and personally responsible entry-level educators who are professional decision makers to serve in diverse and global educational communities.

Mission of the Department of Graduate Teacher Education: The Department of Graduate Teacher Education, prepares professionals at the advanced/graduate level to be decision makers, reflective practitioners, and adaptive experts for teaching, research, and leadership in diverse and global educational communities.

## Liberal Arts Tradition and General Education

Concordia University prepares entry-level professional educators for service in public, private, and parochial (primarily Lutheran) schools as well as in-service reflective practitioners and adaptive experts for professional leadership positions as teachers, principals, superintendents, and scholars.

The university offers initial teacher licensure at the undergraduate level, for post-baccalaureate students, and for students in its Master of Arts in Teaching (MAT) program. The university also offers advanced preparation for educators through its Master of Arts in Education (MA.Ed.) program, Educational Specialist program, and Educational Doctorate program.

The university has established learning outcomes for all students and at the undergraduate level the outcomes are articulated as the *Framework for Learning*. The framework was created by the faculty as a conceptual model to organize the learning of undergraduate students at Concordia University. The function of the *Framework for Learning* is to make explicit how Concordia University understands and applies its mission statement. To help realize the goals of the mission statement, the total educational experience of Concordia students – both in and out of the classroom – is placed within this overarching structure. The framework includes goals and competencies in eight areas: aesthetic, intellectual, physical, spiritual, communication, interpersonal, civic, and global.

In turn, the 11 University Outcomes have been derived from the *Framework for Learning*. It is expected that all students will accomplish these University Outcomes through a variety of experiences and various coursework: general education coursework, major coursework, and elective coursework.

## The Framework for Learning, Goals, and Competencies

### Aesthetic

Goal: to increase awareness, understanding and informed critical appreciation of artistic expression and to foster creative talents within the student.

Competencies: With the help of the Concordia community, the student will:

A. understand the importance of artistic expression in reflecting and shaping the life of human communities;

B. appreciate the arts by exploring them in relation to philosophical, religious and social thought;

C. appreciate the arts by experiencing major forms of artistic communication;

D. appreciate and examine the relationship of the arts and ineffable aspects of human experience; and,

E. value one's self as a contributor to, appreciation of and participant in various avenues of artistic expression.

### Intellectual

Goal: to develop the ability to think critically, incorporating skills for imagining, organizing, analyzing and evaluating.

Competencies: With the help of the Concordia community, the student will:

A. reason logically, reflectively and independently;

B. examine, analyze and integrate ideas, applying inductive, quantitative and abstract thinking;

C. synthesize and formulate new ideas;

D. arrive at thoughtful, informed and ethical decisions; and,

E. use appropriate and current technology in problem solving, research and analysis.

### Physical

Goal: to foster informed healthful living, balanced service to God and humanity and enlightened care for self.

Competencies: With the help of the Concordia community, the student will:

A. demonstrate strategies that promote lifelong health;

B. implement and evaluate a personal physical fitness plan;

C. implement a health-conscious lifestyle, including intellectual and emotional wellness; and,

D. balance health of physical self and service to God and humanity.

### Spiritual

Goal: to foster understanding of the Gospel and its Biblical source from the perspective of Lutheran theology, including implications of the Gospel for human experience and for vocation in home, workplace, public life and congregation.

Competencies: With the help of the Concordia community, the student will:

A. appreciate and understand the content of the Bible, with appropriate reference to the Gospel and Lutheran theology;

B. describe the Christian tradition, noting the university's Lutheran heritage, and examine the range of Christianity's influence on human history and culture;

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    C. relate with sensitivity to various religious traditions;
    D. understand the complexities of the intersections of religion and society, including questions of ethics and vocation; and,
    E. serve the larger community and reflect on the significance of that service.

## Communication

Goal: to develop an awareness of communication processes and the desire and skill to improve writing, speaking, research, synthesis and analysis.

Competencies: With the help of the Concordia community, the student will:
    A. understand and demonstrate the writing and speaking process, developing theoretical knowledge of and applying skills in interpersonal, public and intercultural communication contexts;
    B. respond to texts with attention to logic, style, voice, organization and effect;
    C. use skills of logic, research, evaluation and synthesis in a variety of contexts;
    D. describe communication factors in the development, maintenance and dissolution of relationships;
    E. demonstrate a responsible, ethical use of all forms of communication; and,
    F. demonstrate application of technology as a communication tool.

## Interpersonal

Goal: to develop understanding of self and self in relation to others.

Competencies: With the help of the Concordia community, the student will:
    A. understand human behavior individually, in groups and in organizations;
    B. understand his/her own experience and paradigms, discover biases and their effects on behaviors, thought processes, feelings and spirituality;
    C. develop empathy and understanding for others from similar as well as from different backgrounds;
    D. develop self-understanding within the context of relationships with others; and,
    E. demonstrate cooperative approaches to conflict resolution.

## Civic

Goal: to understand the structure and operations of governments as well as the dynamic interplay between individual and corporate identities; to examine patterns and processes of culture and social structure.

Competencies: With the help of the Concordia community, the student will:
    A. evaluate and understand current and historical societal issues;
    B. compare and contrast issues, societal institutions and policies in the U.S. with those of other countries;
    C. articulate a coherent democratic and just vision for the U.S., including the rights and responsibilities of its citizens and the role of the state; and,
    D. participate in the body politic: campus, city, state, national, or international.

## Global

Goal: to facilitate an informed understanding of our global interdependence and the ability to interact effectively with people, language and cultures other than a student's own.

Competencies: With the help of the Concordia community, the student will:
   A. relate with an informed perspective to people of at least one other culture of the world;
   B. relate with an informed perspective to people of at least one other culture of the United States;
   C. identify economic, political, religious, scientific, technological, geographical, environmental and other links in our global community;
   D. work towards justice and environmentally responsible living within a global perspective; and,
   E. recognize and act upon the difficulties caused by ethnocentrism.

As indicated above, the Framework for Learning shapes the entire Concordia University educational experience, entailing not only overt academic work but also chapel and spiritual life opportunities, service learning, foreign study, internships and a wide array of campus life activities. All academic coursework – majors and minors, study in professional programs, electives and especially the general education curriculum – is explicitly guided and informed by the Framework for Learning and is designed to support its goals.

## University Outcomes for All Graduates

The Concordia University graduate will be able to demonstrate the following competencies:

**Critical Thinking** – Identify the problem/issue; articulate solutions/perspectives; identify and assess key assumptions; identify and assess data and evidence; identify and consider of the influence of context; evaluate of the ethical dimensions and apply ethical principles; and synthesize conclusions, implications, and consequences.

**Information Literacy** – Prepare for research; generate search strategy and access resources; evaluate and process information; transfer and apply learning; incorporate information technology; practice legal and ethical use of information.

**Oral Communication** – Develop content into a well-organized oral presentation; use appropriate language and nonverbals to enhance the fluency of the presentation; effectively incorporate citations into the presentation; effectively tailor the presentation to the audience and respond appropriately to audience feedback.

**Quantitative Reasoning** –Translate verbal or written assertions into quantitative data; read, analyze, and interpret quantitative data, such as graphs, charts, or statistics; and support conclusions using quantitative data.

**Writing** – Relate content to an audience, develop and organize material, construct fluent sentences using standard grammar, mechanics and references.

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**Aesthetic Values** – Relate how artistic expressions reflect philosophical, religious, and social thought in human communities; and recognize major forms of artistic expression in their culture.

**Civic Values** – Understand the value of participation in the civic infrastructure of the United States; recognize the similarities and differences between American civic policies, institutions, and beliefs and those of other communities, nations, cultures, and peoples throughout the world; and recognize the civic responsibility of the citizen and all levels of government to ensure a democratic and just vision for society.

**Global Values** – Pose critical questions about global issues and articulate arguments from a variety of global perspectives; identify and evaluate a variety of underlying cultural values that influence the diversity of ethics among cultures/countries; describe and interpret various aspects of other cultures relative to their own culture.

**Interpersonal Values** – Display effective interpersonal skills during interactions with others such that they accept and deliver constructive criticism; effectively resolve conflicts; demonstrate active listening strategies and other factors that contribute to positive relationships.

**Physical Values** – Demonstrate an understanding of and consistently implement health-conscious behaviors.

**Spiritual Values** – Identify and analyze narratives, theological themes, and literary types of the biblical texts; relate the Bible to Christian teachings and practice, particularly as these have been conveyed in the Lutheran tradition; state the central place of the Gospel in the teaching, life, and witness of the Christian church; respect those with differing religious traditions and experiences while being faithful to personal beliefs and practices.

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## General Education Curriculum

Thus, a critical initial part of the preparation of professional educators at the initial/undergraduate level is the university's emphasis on a set of unified and strategically-designed outcomes that make up a liberal arts curriculum. Such a background is typically evident for advanced/graduate candidates as well. These outcomes have been dispersed into a series of general education courses but their delivery in all aspects of the university.

The purpose of the general education curriculum is to provide Concordia University students with the opportunity to grow in their ability to:

A. discover, confront and explore unfamiliar information and ideas;
B. use available academic resources and skills to think analytically, critically, and synthetically;
C. use appropriate and current technology for research and problem solving; and
D. ideally move beyond the academic data itself to formulate and express new insights and ideas.

In order to reach these outcomes, general education coursework at Concordia University includes experiences in the following 10 areas: Communication, Fine Arts, Global Studies, Health and Physical Education, History and Political Science, Literature, Mathematics and Natural Science, Religion and Theology, Social and Behavioral Science, and Writing:

**Fine Arts (Minimum 4 credits required; two courses from two different areas – Art, Music, and Theatre) –** The fine arts curriculum increases students' awareness, understanding and critical appreciation of varied aesthetic expression; and seeks to foster their creative talents.

**History and Political Science (4 credits required) –** History offerings help students understand historical sources on their own terms and to recognize the interplay of political, intellectual, social, economic and cultural factors in the development of civilizations. It thereby provides one method whereby present-day circumstances can be better understood and evaluated. Political science courses help students understand their own government and the role of each citizen in the democratic process. Applied globally, political science pertains to the relationships between different governments and peoples and explores how their interests and welfare are connected by many of the same factors examined by historians.

**Communication (4 credits required) –** Communication courses pertain to the study of verbal and nonverbal messages between communicators in interpersonal, group, public, intercultural and mass media contexts. Communication theory and analysis informs student choice of ethical as well as effective strategies and skills used to relate and respond to ideas.

**Global Studies (4 credits required)** – Global courses help students recognize global interdependence and/or cultural connections and enhance students' ability to work constructively with a people, language, or culture other than their own.

**Social and Behavioral Science (4 credits required)** – Social and behavioral science courses provide the perspectives and tools for students to understand human behavior individually, in groups and in organizations.

**Health Science (3 credits required)** – The health science curriculum provides students with the resources and strategies necessary for healthy, balanced and vigorous lives.

**Literature (4 credits required)** – The literature curriculum helps students develop their abilities to think critically about, write coherently on and discuss enthusiastically a variety of literary texts; students develop both an intellectual understanding of the power of literature and an aesthetic appreciation for diverse literary works.

**Mathematics and Science (7 credits required)** – Mathematics offerings are designed to develop students' understanding of basic mathematical concepts, to develop their abilities to analyze and solve mathematical problems and to promote mathematical awareness in the analysis of problem solving strategies and the interpretation of results. Science courses examine the physical nature of the world. Biology involves plant, animal and human life; physical science deals with the processes of the earth; while earth science studies the earth and the universe. Students take a minimum of 7 credits of mathematics (3 credits) and science (4 credits).

**Religion and Theology (6-8 credits required; 3-4 Introductory, 3-4 Intermediate)** – Students in traditional programs meet their general education requirements in theology by taking a course from the "Biblical" category and a course from the "Intermediate" category. Students in professional church work programs must select from those courses in both categories that are also requirements in the minor in Lutheran Theology. Students in adult undergraduate programs meet this requirement by taking a combined course that meets the outcomes in the intro/intermediate areas.

**Writing (4 credits required)** – The writing course provides students with an awareness of written communication – specifically the process of research, synthesis and analysis – as well as opportunities to practice their own writing skills in an academic setting.

## Conceptual Framework Specific for Teacher Education Programs

The conceptual framework for the teacher education programs – *Educator as Professional Decision Maker, Reflective Practitioner, and Adaptive Expert* – articulates the multiple dimensions of these programs at Concordia University. The included visual model (Figure 1) presents the components of the framework and communicates the relationships that the components have with one another. The model suggests a dynamic, interactive, energetic, and productive orientation to the preparation of professional educators at Concordia University.

It is tempting to see progress through any program for educators as a linear, course-by-course, step-by-step, from-here-straight-to-there process, but a traditional flow chart with a row of discrete boxes connected by arrows fails to articulate the dynamic and synergistic approach to the preparation of educators at Concordia University. While the university has a clearly determined progression for moving candidates toward the profession and for professional growth in their practice, the Department of Undergraduate Teacher Education (DUTE) and the Department of Graduate Teacher Education (DGTE) have developed this "washing-machine model" to represent its program, where movement and momentum are implied, where elements swirl and tumble and bump into each other, suggesting a truly interactive and dynamic approach to the preparation of education professionals. A synergistic quality is also suggested in that each element is enriched and enhanced by its position and relation to the others. In effect, the result is greater than the sum of its parts. Educators are more than an embodiment of a university transcript. The conceptual foundations and framework, the curriculum, Field Experiences, and Clinical Practices, all interact, contributing to molding professional decision makers, empowered professionals, reflective practitioners, and adaptive experts – educators who know not only what to do but why they do it.

The theme *Educator as Professional Decision Maker, Reflective Practitioner, and Adaptive Expert* is a transformation of the *Teacher as Decision Maker* theme that was developed by the program in 1988. During the 1990/91 academic year, faculty worked with the Teacher Education Advisory Group (TEAG) to identify outcomes (knowledge, skills, and dispositions) for Concordia University's teacher education program. Refinement of the conceptual understandings has been ongoing with major revisions occurring in 1995, 2001 (*Educator as Professional Decision Maker*), and 2007 (*Educator as Professional Decision Maker, Reflective Practitioner, and Adaptive Expert*). The included Interstate New Teachers Assessment and Support Consortium (InTASC) standards – adopted as the Minnesota Standards of Effective Practice – were updated in 2010.

The following "frameworks" are worth noting, are important for the Concordia University understanding of the teaching and learning process, and are presented to candidates at different points in their preparation: Westbury (1973) – teaching as an interaction between four primary tasks and the constraints of the classroom situation; Shulman (1987) – seven areas of professional knowledge for teachers; Slavin (1987) – model of alterable elements of effective instruction; Dillon (1990) – a definition of teaching; Sternberg & Horvath (1995) – a prototype view of expert teaching; Danielson (1996) – a framework for teaching; Garmston (1998) – six knowledge areas of expert teachers; Bransford, Brown, & Cocking (1999) – synthesis of how people learn and designs for learning environments; Darling-Hammond, Bransford, LePage, Hammerness, & Duffy (2005) – synthesis of the knowledge base for "preparing teachers for a changing world"; and Stronge (2007) – qualities of effective teachers.

## Context of Professionalism

The word "professional" is often used to describe educators, especially when judging their level of competence, commitment, and integrity. Professionalism often includes such behavioral and attitudinal descriptions as "is always on time," "accepts responsibility," "shows initiative," "is respectful of colleagues and students." Such criteria may appear soft or fuzzy in a field that has built its theory and practice on the "hard data" of statistical research analyses; however, subjective characterizations like the ones mentioned above are often accepted as at least a part of the definition of professionalism. In addition, the habits and practices of self-evaluation, dedicated scholarship, critical thinking, creative problem solving, effective leadership, and ethical decision making suggest another dimension to the definition of professionalism. Perhaps, true elucidation of the term requires a combination of both common and noble qualities so that teachers demonstrate the simple characteristics of "showing up" as well as the exemplary ones of dedicated service. Much research and conceptual work is being done in this area and needs to be incorporated into coursework for aspiring and in-service professional educators. For example, Shulman (1998) has suggested that there are six commonplaces shared by all professions: service to society, a body of scholarly knowledge that forms the basis of the entitlement to practice, engagement in practical action, uncertainty caused by the different needs of clients and the non-routine nature of problems, the importance of experience in developing practice, and the development of a professional community that aggregates and shares knowledge and develops professional standards (p. 516).

The Concordia University teacher education program operates within a context of professionalism as expressed by the diagram in Figure 1. Infused throughout the coursework and field and clinical experiences of the program is an expectation that students and faculty members conduct themselves in responsible, moral, ethical, and committed ways. A continuous message from faculty helps candidates recognize the importance of the teacher's role in society and inspires them to respect teaching as an admirable profession. In coursework and field and clinical experiences candidates are encouraged to meet and exceed the high standards that the profession of teaching sets for the personal and professional conduct of its members.

## Four Areas of Teacher Competence – University "Pillars"

According to Smith (1992), a well-trained teacher should be prepared in four general areas of teacher competence in order to make informed decisions which translate into successful student learning – these represent the knowledge, skills, and dispositions required of all successful teachers: (1) knowledge of subject matter, (2) theoretical knowledge about learning and human behavior, (3) a repertoire of teaching strategies, and (4) attitudes that foster learning. In the conceptual framework model (Figure 1), these four areas make up the field against which Concordia University views all the decision-making components – they are the "pillars" of candidate preparation and learning. Garmston (1998) presents a similar list, suggesting that teachers need knowledge of

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content, knowledge of pedagogy (a repertoire of teaching skills), knowledge of students and how they learn, and knowledge of self and about collegial interaction.

Decision making is at the heart of the conceptual model: educational decisions are reflections of one's beliefs and attitudes about teaching and learning as well as one's knowledge and skills. The impact that each general area of teacher competence has on educational decision making is described below. Interestingly, the conceptual model presented in recent work by Darling-Hammond, Bransford, LePage, Hammerness, and Duffy (2005, p. 11), is strikingly similar to the model as the one used at Concordia University since 1995 and revised in 2007 (Figure 1). Called Preparing Teachers for a Changing World, the Darling-Hammond, et al., model includes the following "pillars" couched in a milieu of Teaching as a Profession and Learning in Democracy:

>Knowledge of Subject Matter and Curriculum Goals (educational goals and purposes for skills, content, subject matter)
>Knowledge of Learners and Their Development in Social Contexts (learning, human development, language)
>Knowledge of Teaching (content plus content pedagogy, teaching diverse learners, assessment, classroom management)

**Knowledge of subject matter**

Concordia University faculty believe that a broad-based and solid liberal arts education serves as the foundation of knowledge in the preparation of educators. A basic understanding of content to be taught is a fundamental necessity in the teaching and learning process; a thorough and deep understanding of subject matter to be taught must be a lifelong pursuit for the professional educator. The positive results of a growing understanding of subject matter are greater intellectual security and an ability to plan and implement the instructional content in ways which positively impact student learning. If a teacher is planning to teach direct objects, the causes of the Civil War, or the process for solving quadratic equations, he or she must know and understand the content of the lesson. A teacher's grasp of subject matter knowledge determines if he or she can plan and deliver an integrated, thoughtful, and organized unit of learning and experience, moving beyond a superficial or fragmented curriculum. Subject matter understanding drives many decision-making aspects of the teaching and learning process, including selection of significant topics and subtopics, experiences, materials, methods, questions, and student response opportunities.

As we recognize that entry-level educators must meet the basic requirements of each discipline, the development of subject matter knowledge and curriculum knowledge (Shulman, 1987) is addressed in the teacher education program in a variety of ways. First, as noted above, general education courses completed early in candidates' university experience, provide a broad exposure to the classic disciplines of a liberal arts curriculum. The sampling of fine arts, history and political science, communication, global studies, social and behavioral science, health and physical education, literature, mathematics and natural science, religion/theology, and writing ensures that candidates have a broad background and provide candidates with opportunities to focus on those

areas of greatest interest.  Often, during their teacher preparation program, candidates specialize in a particular subject area (e.g., middle school or secondary school subjects).  Teachers of early childhood or elementary children are expected to have a basic understanding of all curricular areas and so courses that focus on teaching methods are taught contextually; that is, the content of the subject used in methodological demonstrations or explanations.  For example, the course for elementary teachers, ED 360 Content and Methods of Mathematics, includes both content and teaching methods.  Also, when candidates learn the methodology of planning and implementing literature circles in their literacy coursework, they learn the technique by using and reading the "real books" of children's literature. Candidates must be able to use knowledge effectively to ensure that P-12 students with whom they work are benefiting from instruction as they plan, prepare, and deliver instruction (Danielson, 1996).

Specialization for the middle school and secondary teacher education candidates and those seeking Kindergarten through Grade 12 certification, requires greater coursework exposure in a particular subject area (Chemistry, Communication Arts/Literature, English as a Second Language, Health, Life Science, Mathematics, Music – Instrumental, Music – Vocal, Physical Education, Social Studies, Visual Arts). These candidates are expected to develop a subject-matter knowledge base which prepares them for meeting the teaching-learning challenges of the middle and/or high school curriculum.

Amidst all of their professional education classes, candidates encounter a strong advocacy for an educator's commitment to lifelong learning.  The fleeting nature of knowledge demands that educators in any area of specialization continually renew and update their own knowledge base.  Faculty members at Concordia University model this commitment through their participation in faculty development programs and they expect the same commitment from candidates aspiring to become educators themselves.

**Theoretical knowledge about learning and human behavior**

While teachers are often criticized for being more interested in practice than theory, the professional teacher recognizes that "we do what we believe" and that, in reality, there is nothing more practical than a good theory.  A clear understanding of learning theory and developmental theory (Bandura, 1977; Bruner, 1966; Gagne, 1985; Kohlberg, 1969; Noddings, 1984; Piaget, 1952; Rogers, 1983; and Skinner, 1974) as well as their implications for instruction is necessary if teachers are to be able to create classrooms where the teaching and learning process is powerful and successful.  Only when teachers understand, select, transform, and apply the ideas of behavioral, developmental, social learning, cognitive, humanistic, and moral reasoning theories and research will they be able to act with educational integrity and professional skill.  These internalized theories assist beginning and experienced teachers in making effective decisions and in interpreting results of specific decisions. Teachers often have only microseconds to shape their responses to the stream of incidents and spontaneous circumstances in their classrooms.  The ability to respond and decide effectively presupposes a knowledge base and pedagogical content knowledge (Shulman, 1987). This theoretical base guides the selection and implementation of the decisions which teachers make.  Effective,

professional teachers are aware of what theories of learning and behavior they hold and why they hold them.  Thus, it follows, that any decision made by a teacher is a reflection of his or her belief system (e.g., How are the desks arranged? How were classroom rules developed? How can this student best learn prosocial skills? How should homework best be used? What reinforcements are emphasized in the classroom – intrinsic or extrinsic – and why? What expectations are set for students and how were they arrived at?  What teacher behaviors are influenced by expectations and why? What assessment activities are important and how can they influence decision making?).

The practice of teaching, represented by the variety of answers to these questions, cannot be separated from the theories which direct them. The list of decision points during a school day and a school year is endless and encompasses every area of instructional, management, relational, and administrative concern in the teaching and learning process.

Candidates enrolled in the teacher education programs receive informational and experiential opportunities to learn the theoretical foundations that support teaching, especially as they are articulated in the discipline of psychology.  Course requirements include general psychology, and child development and/or adolescent development. Courses required of all candidates such as ED 201 Introduction to and Foundations of Education and ED 336 Educational Psychology specifically address the decision-making demands of teaching within the context of educational theory and philosophy.  Students view the complexity of theory from a historical perspective and are expected to articulate their own well-reasoned philosophy of education couched in the theoretical underpinnings of pedagogy. ED 439 Inclusive Classroom explores the great variability found in the typical classroom environment today.

Feedback and reflection opportunities in Field Experiences and Clinical Practice also address the theoretical underpinnings of classroom practice and require teacher education students to articulate the ideas and reasons that drive their teaching actions (Cruikshank, 1987).  The "why" question pervades the discussions:  Why did you choose that approach?  Why do you think that?  Why?  Examination of daily teaching practice informs and directs a teacher's continued growth into the profession.

**A repertoire of teaching strategies**

The Concordia University experience expects candidates to consider answers to questions such as, "what educational purposes should we seek to attain?", "what education experiences can be designed that are likely to attain the purposes of education and learning?", "how can educational experiences be effectively organized?", and "how can we determine whether our purposes are being attained?" (Tyler, 1949, p. 1). Thus, our position it that our purposes or "ends" are critical for the decision-making necessary to decide teaching strategies or "means."

The "teaching effectiveness" literature (Fisher et al., 1980; Gage & Giaconia, 1981; Emmer et al., 1980) revealed a number of teacher skills and behaviors that influence the management and learning of students in the classroom.  From this work, we have come to

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know better that while subject matter knowledge is a necessary condition for effective teaching, it is not sufficient.  It is also important to note that we have moved beyond this literature and recognize that it has only begun to address the important issues – the work started us on a path to more fully understanding the "science" of teaching but left us unsatisfied. Most college-educated adults can tell stories of the brilliant chemist or Shakespearean scholar, who knew everything about a topic but was unable to teach it to anyone else.  The need for knowledge and skills related to the delivery of instruction – general pedagogical knowledge and pedagogical content knowledge (Shulman, 1987; also implied are knowledge of educational contexts; and knowledge of educational ends, purposes, and values) – is critical to the success of learning experiences for students. Decisions related to materials, grouping arrangements, assessment methods, pacing, student levels of participation, and questioning strategies list only a few of the "methodological" concerns that effective teachers must address in their planning, implementation, and evaluation of instruction. In addition, effective management skills are also a part of a successful teacher's "repertoire of teaching skills." Knowledge of student characteristics, motivation theory, and prevention-intervention techniques determine a teacher's skill in establishing and maintaining productive and pleasant learning environments. "Teaching the way I was taught" rarely provides prospective teachers with a rich and robust repertoire of instructional and management skills and strategies. Moving beyond the "folkways and folklore" of teaching (Don't smile until Christmas!) is necessary.  More is known about the skills of teaching today than ever before.  As we know, the skills and strategies necessary in the teaching and learning process are closely connected to student learning and understanding.

Concordia University's program assists teacher education students in developing effective teaching skills and strategies in the following ways:  Faculty members in the professional courses model the skills and strategies which accommodate student learning styles, interests, and achievement levels.  They incorporate technology into their teaching and require candidates to conduct presentations with technology as well. As Concordia University is a "laptop campus", all fulltime candidates are issued laptop computers and are able to take advantage of the campus-wide wireless internet capabilities. Faculty incorporate a variety of candidate responding opportunities in their classroom, including cooperative learning, high participation formats, and hands-on experiences with manipulative materials.  Their instructional expertise provides a powerful demonstration of effective teaching strategies.  The model of effective teaching is presented with particular clarity and focus in the "methods courses," but all of the education faculty recognize their responsibility to be exemplary teachers, and to present students with the skills and strategies of teaching that represent the "best of practice."

Field Experiences and Clinical Practices also give candidates in the teacher education program opportunities to observe and practice effective teaching skills.  Cooperating Teachers are able to demonstrate current instructional and management practices.  In personal and group reflection experiences, student teachers are encouraged to analyze the effectiveness of the approaches they observe and attempt on their own.  They are also given opportunities to practice the skills and strategies of effective teaching in their practicum and student teaching classrooms.  Frequently observed by their Cooperating

Teachers and their University Supervisors, candidates are then given feedback to assist in their continual improvement of teaching skills.

Knowledge of diverse populations is addressed at several points in the program and most notably in the coursework focused on human diversity and relations. Teaching strategies that have been shown to be beneficial in a variety of settings and with diverse populations are included in the methods courses. Candidates are introduced to the realities of diversity in classroom settings, in learning styles, etc., and barriers to good instruction, but also to effective teaching strategies for all students, a variety of teaching strategies for diverse learners, and strategies specific to certain subject areas.

**Personal Qualities that foster learning**

Most educators believe that the personal qualities of teachers have a profound effect on the teaching and learning process. They are an important dimension of classroom and collegial dynamics and may have either a positive or negative impact on them. Some personal qualities are often described as attitudes and/or dispositions. Attitudes have a direct effect on behavior as they determine not only how we view ourselves, but also how we view and interact with others. Cooper (2006) suggests that there are four major categories of attitudes that affect teaching behavior. They include a balance between the following equally important "attitude arenas":
 (1) teachers' attitudes toward themselves – research in psychology supports the notion that emotionally healthy individuals are better able to respect and cope with the feelings of others.
 (2) teachers' attitudes toward children and youth – understanding the power of expectations and human relations and their impact on students' learning and behavior is an important awareness that teachers must possess.
 (3) teachers' attitudes toward peers and parents – positive professional and personal relationships with adults are necessary for a successful and satisfying career.
 (4) teachers' attitudes toward subject matter – being enthusiastic about a learning topic or experience has a dramatic impact on students' attitudes and achievement.

Dispositions are values, commitments, and professional ethics that influence a teacher's behavior toward his/her students, families, colleagues, and communities. Dispositions affect student learning, student motivation, and student development (Singh & Stoloff, 2008). They also impact an educator's own professional growth and are influenced by beliefs and attitudes related to values such as caring, fairness, honesty, responsibility and social justice. One critical disposition for educators, for example, is the belief that all students can learn. Others include the following (among others): caring, empathy, compassion, humility, respect, cultural competence, flexibility, initiative, resourcefulness, professionalism, confidentiality, and efficacy.

The educational preparation program promotes the development of healthy, respectful attitudes toward self and others by engaging candidates in coursework and experiential

opportunities which help them assess and grow in intrapersonal and interpersonal knowledge and skill. The Admission to the Teacher Education Professional Program process requires written and verbal responses to inquiries regarding candidates' perceived strengths and weaknesses related to the social and communication roles of a teacher. Through the processes of writing and interviewing, candidates are assisted in developing a realistic self-perception and in determining goals for growth in academic, social, and communication skills.  Goal-setting opportunities are also encountered later on in the program when candidates complete the Practicum experience. If issues are identified by course instructors, Cooperating Teachers, University Supervisors, or the candidate him/herself, reflection and renewal can be addressed by writing specific goals for future experiences.

Coursework focused on human diversity and relations is embedded in all educator preparation programs in the College of Education. In several cases field experiences are required in order to expand and enrich the world of the candidates by exposing them to a diversity of cultures, ethnicities, socioeconomic classes, learning styles and abilities, etc. Educators in an increasingly diverse educational world must develop an awareness of their own attitudes and expectations regarding persons who are different from themselves.  They interact with persons who play a variety of roles within the school: administrators, colleagues, parents, students, and these persons often reflect the richness and greatness of diversity in society. Developing attitudes of acceptance and appreciation are critical to the transformation of school and society which are too often troubled by the oppressive effects of bias, prejudice, and discrimination. Communication is addressed as the vehicle of attitudinal interchange as we recognize that attitudes are communicated through verbal and nonverbal interactions. Therefore, acquiring the skills necessary to engage in positive interpersonal communications is a prerequisite for operating successfully in the diverse world of the classroom.

### Three Necessary Skills for Decision-Making, Reflective Practice, and Adaptive Expertise

The central hub of the conceptual model, around which every element revolves, presents the program's organizing themes – educators as professional decision-makers (initial/undergraduate), and reflective practitioners, and adaptive experts (advanced/graduate). Coursework, Field Experiences, Clinical Practices, and reflections are focused and outcomes are directed to developing the knowledge, skills, and dispositions of prospective and in-service educators who have the ability to make sound professional decisions, to reflect upon personal practice, and to develop adaptive expertise. The process of decision-making (plan – implement – evaluate; and explained further below) also recognizes the continuous and pervasive role that feedback and reflection plays in the making of decisions. The substantial attention and support that professional decision-making receives as a pivotal activity and area of expertise in educating, is an important validation of its selection as an organizing theme for Concordia University's program. The "agitating action" of decision making as it is portrayed in the model accurately reflects the reality of professional life in and out of the classroom where decisive moments arise quickly, frequently, routinely, and non-

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routinely.  Coursework and field and clinical experiences give candidates opportunities to study and practice the process and method of decision making so they emerge from the program as informed and skilled professionals.  Overall, the dynamic design of the model suggests an active, participative orientation to learning and teaching for both faculty and candidates.

Both Smith (1992) and Cooper (2006) organize the decision making of teachers around three basic teaching functions – planning, implementing, and evaluating. This process is reflected in the conceptual model as the first ring around the central theme of *Educator as Professional Decision Maker, Reflective Practitioner, and Adaptive Expert*. Cooper says it this way (pp. 11-12):

> The *planning* function requires that teachers make decisions about their students' needs, the most appropriate goals and objectives to help meet those needs, the content to be taught, the motivation necessary to attain their goals and objectives, and the instructional modes and teaching strategies most suited to the attainment of those goals and objectives. The planning function usually occurs when teachers are alone and have time to reflect and consider long- and short-range plans, the students' progress toward achieving objectives, the availability of materials, the time requirements of particular activities, and other such issues. Some teaching skills that support the planning function include observing pupil behavior, diagnosing pupil needs, setting goals and objectives, sequencing goals and objectives, and determining appropriate learning activities related to the objectives.

> The *implementation* function requires that teachers implement the decisions that were made in the planning stage, particularly those relate to instructional modes, teaching strategies, and learning activities. While much of the planning function is accomplished when teachers are alone, the implementation function occurs when teachers are interacting with students. Research indicates that "teachers make one interactive decision every two minutes" and "the decision-making demands of classroom teaching are relatively intense" (Clark & Peterson, 1986, p. 274; quotation added from original). These decisions frequently must be made rapidly in response to classroom situations. Often, teachers have to make adjustments in their plans based on student questions and how the teachers perceive the lesson to be going. Teaching skills that support the implementation function included presenting and explaining, questioning, listening, introducing, demonstrating, eliciting student responses, and achieving closure.

> The *evaluation* function requires decisions about the suitability of chosen objectives as well as the teaching strategies keyed to those objectives and, ultimately, whether or not the students are achieving what the teacher intended. To make the necessary decisions, teachers must determine what kind of information they need and then gather it. Teaching skills that support

the evaluation function include specifying the learning objectives to be evaluated; describing the information needed to make such evaluation; obtaining, analyzing, and recording that information; and forming judgments.

## Educator as Professional Decision Maker
## Initial Licensure/Undergraduate

The conception of "educator as professional decision maker" draws from the work of Smith & Geoffrey (1968); B. O. Smith (1969); Shavelson (1973), C. B. Smith (1992); Brubaker & Simon (1993); Beadi (1996); and Cooper (2006), among others. Shavelson (1973) wrote:

> Any teaching act is the result of a decision, whether conscious or unconscious, that the teacher makes after the complex cognitive processing of available information. This reasoning leads to the hypotheses that the basic teaching skill is decision making. (p. 18)

Four general areas of teacher competence necessary to make informed decisions make up the field against which we view all of the decision-making components: subject matter, learning and human development, teaching strategies, and personal qualities. Educational decisions are reflections of one's content knowledge, pedagogical content knowledge, teaching skills, beliefs, and personal qualities or dispositions about learning and teaching. Teachers must become active decision makers (even with curriculum mandates) in their understanding and view of the importance of child development, curriculum, evaluation, and their continuous professional development and they should actively participate in the decision-making process, rather than being mere technicians who implement only a prescribed curriculum and decisions made by others.

Smith (1992) suggests that decision-making is a five-step process where one must: refine a question by focusing on a decision point in order to plan, implement or evaluate; consider options by collecting information that suggests a variety of alternatives; determine the factors to be used as means to rate and eliminate alternatives; make a decision that answers the initial question; and finally, reflect on the outcome.

Danielson's *Framework for Teaching* (1996) establishes four domains or components of Professional practice which imply critical decision making opportunities: planning and preparation, the classroom environment, instruction, and professional responsibilities. This framework has tremendous potential for teacher education candidates to conceptualize their practice.

Identifying decision making as a pivotal theme for the preparation of educators as well as actual teaching practice recognizes the pervasiveness of its presence both inside and outside of the classroom. The number of decisions – planned and incidental – that teachers make daily is legion. In his classic observational study of elementary classrooms published in 1968, Jackson suggested an average of 800 decisions were made by the teacher per day and that teachers engage in over 1,000 interpersonal interchanges each day. Later, Murray (1986) estimated the number to be 1,500 and Good and Brophy (2008) write that teachers face 1,000 decision points per day. In her popular book *Enhancing Professional Practice: A Framework for Teaching*, Danielson (1996) suggests that "the complexity of teaching is well recognized; a teacher makes over 3,000 nontrivial

decision daily" (p. 2). Research clearly suggests that decision making is the single-most frequent and significant activity of the classroom teacher. Add to these the decisions that teachers make *outside* of the classroom – decisions pertaining to home-school concerns, curricular evaluations and selections, administrative matters, planning (individual and departmental), and collegial relationships (both personal and professional).

Teachers have been characterized as "managers of complexity" (Brandt, 1994) and classrooms as multidimensional environments where events occur simultaneously, where the pace is fast, and where events are unpredictable (Doyle, 1986). The skills needed to manage complexity often boil down to decision making. The complexities of instruction, teacher-student relations, student-student relation, parental interactions, administrative expectations all come to bear upon the daily actions of the teacher, and those complexities require appropriate decision making. Professional practice certainly underscores the ubiquitous nature of the decision-making process in education.

# Educator as Professional Decision Maker Outcomes
# Initial Licensure/Undergraduate

Educational outcomes provide a description of the cognitive and non-cognitive (affective) qualities the Concordia University program helps candidates acquire and more fully develop. The *Educator as Professional Decision Maker* outcomes provide a complete listing and articulation of the goals of the initial/undergraduate level. It describes the personal and professional arenas of decision-making within which the Concordia University graduate is prepared to function successfully.

Upon completion of the initial/undergraduate teacher education licensure programs at Concordia University, candidates will be professional, academically capable, and personally responsible entry-level educators who are able to apply knowledge, skills, and dispositions related to subject matter, learning and human development, and teaching strategies to the classroom environment. Candidates will also be able to demonstrate personal qualities that foster learning in others by demonstrating positive and caring dispositions, providing direction, and making instructional decisions that enhance educational opportunities for all students. Successful candidates will demonstrate knowledge, skills, and dispositions related to each of the following as aligned with standards formulated by the Interstate New Teachers Assessment and Support Consortium (2010; Model Standards for Beginning Teacher Licensing and Development) also known as the Minnesota Standards of Effective Practice:

## A. <u>Subject Matter</u>

1. Demonstrates the intellectual breadth of the liberally-educated person.

2. Conveys the central concepts, tools of inquiry, content, and structures of the academic discipline(s).

InTASC/MSEP Standard #1a: **SUBJECT MATTER** – The candidate understands the central concepts, tools of inquiry, and structures of the discipline(s) s/he teaches.

## B. Learning and Human Development

1. Applies developmental theories and a philosophy of education in designing instruction.

   InTASC/MSEP Standard #2a: **STUDENT LEARNING** – The candidate understands how children and youth learn and develop.

2. Demonstrates knowledge of and sensitivity to diverse ways of learning including learning styles related to culture, gender, and ability.

   InTASC/MSEP Standard #3a: **DIVERSE LEARNERS** – The candidate understands how learners differ in their approaches to learning.

## C. Teaching Strategies

1. Communicates clearly verbally and in writing.

   InTASC/MSEP Standard #6: **COMMUNICATON** – The candidate uses knowledge of effective verbal, non-verbal, and media communication technique to foster active inquiry, collaboration, and supportive interaction in the classroom.

2. Engages students through a variety of instructional strategies (including instructional technology).

   InTASC/MSEP Standard #1b: **SUBJECT MATTER** – Based upon knowledge of the central concepts, tools of inquiry, and structures of the discipline(s) s/he teaches, the candidate can create learning experiences that make subject matter meaningful for students.

   InTASC/MSEP Standard #2b: **STUDENT LEARNING** – Based upon an understanding of how children learn and develop, the candidate can provide learning opportunities that support students' intellectual, social, and personal development.

   InTASC/MSEP Standard #3b: **DIVERSE LEARNERS** – Based upon an understanding of how learners differ in their approaches to learning, the candidate creates instructional opportunities that are adapted to learners from diverse cultural backgrounds and with exceptionalities.

InTASC/MSEP Standard #4: **INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES** – The candidate understands and uses a variety of instructional strategies to encourage the student's development of critical thinking, problem solving, and performance skills.

InTASC/MSEP Standard #5: **LEARNING ENVIRONMENT** – The candidate uses an understanding of individual and group motivation and behavior to create a learning environment that encourages positive social interaction, active engagement in learning, and self-motivation.

InTASC/MSEP Standard #7: **PLANNING INSTRUCTION** – The candidate plans and manages instruction based upon knowledge of subject matter, students, the community, and curriculum goals.

3. Applies classroom management strategies successfully according to individual student needs.

4. Involves students in curricular, management, and instructional decisions when appropriate.

5. Assesses, evaluates, and communicates student learning effectively.

InTASC/MSEP Standard #8: **ASSESSMENT** – The candidate understands and uses formal and informal assessment strategies to evaluate and ensure the continuous intellectual, social, and physical development of his/her learners.

InTASC/MSEP Standard #10: **COLLABORATION, ETHICS, AND RELATIONSHIPS –** The candidate communicates and interacts with parents/guardians, families, school colleagues, and the community to support the students' learning and well-being.

## D. <u>Personal Qualities that Foster Learning</u>

1. Maintains a positive self-image, respect, and concern for students and co-workers, enthusiasm and resourcefulness, and physical and emotional well-being.

2. Demonstrates awareness of professional, ethical, and legal responsibilities and rights of teachers, knowledge of school organizational structure, and the relationship with the social and philosophical foundations of education. Initiates responsibility for continuous self-learning.

InTASC/MSEP Standard #9: **REFLECTION AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT** – The candidate is a reflective practitioner who continually evaluates the effects of her/his choices and actions on others

(students, parents, and other professionals in the learning community) and who actively seeks out opportunities to grow professionally.

3. Initiatives responsibility for continuous self-learning.

> InTASC/MSEP Standard #9: **REFLECTION AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT** – The candidate is a reflective practitioner who continually evaluates the effects of her/his choices and actions on others (students, parents, and other professionals in the learning community) and who actively seeks out opportunities to grow professionally.

For candidates pursuing teaching positions in Lutheran schools, the following three outcomes are also included:

1. Models a Christian life based upon a hope in Jesus Christ as Savior.
2. Demonstrates knowledge and skill needed to serve in the parish and school.
3. Demonstrates sufficient theological insight to communicate the Gospel effectively.

In sum, the initial licensure programs have 10 outcomes originally published as the Interstate New Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium (INTASC) Model Standards for Beginning Teacher Licensing and Development. These were later adopted by the state of Minnesota as the *Standards of Effective Practice*. These are the outcomes for both the undergraduate licensure programs and the Master of Arts in Teaching (MAT) which is also an initial licensure program.

<u>Minnesota Standards of Effective Practice and
the Outcomes for the Master of Arts in Teaching Program</u>

1. Subject Matter:  The teacher understands the central concepts, tools of inquiry, and structures of the discipline(s) he or she teaches and can create experiences that make these aspects of subject matter meaningful for students.

2. Student Learning:  The teacher understands how children and youth learn and develop and can provide learning opportunities that support their intellectual, social and personal development.

3. Diverse Learners:  The teacher understands how learners differ in their approaches to learning and creates instructional opportunities that are adapted to learners from diverse cultural backgrounds and with exceptionalities.

4. Instructional Strategies:  The teacher understands and uses a variety of instructional strategies to encourage the students' development of critical thinking, problem solving, and performance skills.

5. Learning Environment:  The teacher uses an understanding of individual and group motivation and behavior to create a learning environment that encourages positive social interaction, active engagement in learning, and self-motivation.

6. Communication:  The teacher uses knowledge of effective verbal, non-verbal and media communication techniques to foster active inquiry, collaboration, and supportive interaction in the classroom.

7. Planning Instruction:  The teacher plans and manages instruction based upon knowledge of subject matter, students, the community, and curriculum goals.

8. Assessment:  The teacher understands and uses formal and informal assessment strategies to evaluate and ensure the continuous intellectual, social, and physical development of his/her learners.

9. Reflection and Professional Development:  The teacher is a reflective practitioner who continually evaluates the effects of her/his choices and actions on others (students, parents, and other professionals in the learning community) and who actively seeks out opportunities to grow professionally.

10. Collaboration, Ethics, and Relationships:  A teacher communicates and interacts with parents/guardians, families, school colleagues, and the community to support the students' learning and well-being.

## Educator as Reflective Practitioner and Adaptive Expert
## Advanced/Graduate

The advanced/graduate teacher education programs are focused on the preparation of educators who are not only professional decision makers (initial/undergraduate) but also reflective practitioners and adaptive experts (advanced/graduate).

### Reflective Practitioner

The foundation for the conception of educators as reflective practitioners has, at its core, the work of Dewey (1933/1998; 1938); Smith & Geoffrey (1968); Cruikshank (1987); Schön (1987); Valli (1992); Zeichner & Liston (1996); Brookfield (1998); Bransford, Brown, and Cocking (1999); Darling-Hammond, Bransford, LePage, Hammerness, & Duffy (2005); and Darling-Hammond (2006), among others. The writings of these educators/researchers provide the basis for the conception of reflective practitioners at the advanced/graduate level.

Dewey (1933) introduced the notion of reflection and reflective thinking for teachers in the 1920's as part of his university laboratory school. He viewed education as an unfolding process in which the teacher facilitates the child's learning or understanding of the world around them (1938). Dewey's thoughts, in many ways, are extensions of the

work of Jean-Jacques Rousseau, Johann Pestalozzi, Johann Herbart, and Francis Parker – a more naturalist view – in which the child's experience is seen as the heart of learning. The learner is viewed as an emerging and inquiring being, actively striving to understand and manage his/her surroundings. This places both the curriculum and teaching methods in a new light. The quality of the learning experience grows in importance. Students are involved in understanding and constructing their reality and not just memorizing. This more pragmatic approach to learning and teaching contributes a strong base to the understanding of teaching in the graduate programs at Concordia University.

Schön (1987) describes an epistemology of practice that makes the distinction between school knowledge and what he describes as the kind of artistry that good teachers in their everyday work often display, reflection-in-action. Brookfield (1995 and 1998) describes critically reflective practice as a process of inquiry that involves the practitioner in trying to discover the assumptions that frame how they work. The Concordia University advanced/graduate programs ask learners to consistently reflect on their current practice in education and compare them to research-based, best practices as suggested by professional organizations and pertinent research (e.g., National Association for the Education of Young Children).

The notion of "reflective practitioner" is a critical ideal for the preparation of advanced/graduate candidates but will necessarily need more development. Concordia University faculty – and external constituents – will continue to refine this concept.

**Adaptive Expert**

The foundation for the conception of educators as adaptive experts reflects the work of the following: Hatano & Inagaki (1986); Bransford, Brown, & Cocking (1999); Hatano & Osura (2003); Darling-Hammond, Bransford, LePage, Hammerness, & Duffy (2005); Darling-Hammond (2006); and Lin, Schwartz, & Bransford (2007), among others. The writings of these educators/researchers provide the basis for developing adaptive expertise at the advanced/graduate level.

The development of adaptive expertise is the "gold standard for becoming a professional" according to Darling-Hammond, et al., (2005). They hypothesize that there are two dimensions of expertise: efficiency and innovation. Classic experts are efficient when solving problems that are routine. Adaptive experts, when presented with problems that are not routine or when confronted with different types of problem, innovate. However, the relationship between classic experts and adaptive experts is not a dichotomy but rather a continuum of adaptive ability – as one becomes "more adaptive" one becomes "more expert" resulting in adaptive expertise.

> Expertise along the *efficiency* dimension involves greater abilities
> to perform particular tasks without having to devote too many
> attentional resources to achieve them….Expert teachers are able
> to perform a variety of activities without having to stop and think
> about how to do them. Examples include how to manage a classroom

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while students are working in groups, how to give directions and
hand out materials while keeping everyone's attention, how to predict
the range of answers that students may give to a particular question
about a concept in math, history, science, and so forth. Expert teachers
are also able to notice patterns of classroom activity that, to the novice,
often seem like disorganized chaos….

Lifelong learning along the *innovation* dimension typically involves
moving beyond existing routines and often requires people to rethink
key ideas, practices, and even values in order to change what they are
doing. These kinds of activities can be highly emotionally charged,
and the capacity to consider change without feeling threatened is an
important ability (p. 361).

Two possible trajectories to adaptive expertise are available (Schwartz, Bransford, &
Sears; 2005): innovate and then become efficient or become efficient and then practice
innovating.

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# Educator as Reflective Practitioner and Adaptive Expert Outcomes
## Advanced/Graduate

Master of Arts in Education with emphasis in Curriculum and Instruction

The Master of Arts in Education program with an emphasis in Curriculum and Instruction prepares highly effective professional, decision-making, and reflective educators who:

1. Exhibit strong communication (written, oral, listening) and critical thinking skills.
2. Evaluate educational research for professional decision-making leading to improvement in student learning.
3. Demonstrate an understanding of the importance of educational leadership, curriculum development, improved instructional practice, and the supervision of instruction, leading to improved student learning.
4. Demonstrate awareness of professional, ethical, and legal responsibilities and rights of teachers, knowledge of school organizational structure, and the relationship with the social and philosophical foundations of education.
5. Design and implement educational solutions for issues stemming from the reality of multi-cultural, multi-linguistic, and multi-ability school populations.
6. Design and implement educational solutions that employ the best practices of educational technology.
7. Commit to continuous self-directed professional growth as reflective practitioners and adaptive experts.

*"Essential Program Question": In light of what is known about how children learn and the realities of educational policy and practice, how shall professional educators best teach to positively impact student learning?*

Master of Arts in Education with emphasis in Curriculum and Instruction and
K-12 Reading Endorsement

The Master of Arts in Education program with an emphasis in Curriculum and Instruction (with K-12 Reading endorsement) prepares highly effective professional, decision-making, and reflective educators who:

1. Exhibit strong communication (written, oral, listening) and critical thinking skills.
2. Evaluate educational research for professional decision-making leading to improvement in student learning.
3. Design and implement educational solutions to issues stemming from the reality of multi-cultural, multi-linguistic, and multi-ability school populations.
4. Demonstrate knowledge of the foundations of literacy, i.e. reading and writing processes and instruction.
5. Effectively use a wide range of instructional practices, approaches, methods, and curriculum materials to support reading and writing instruction.
6. Effectively use a variety of assessment tools and practices to plan and evaluate

effective reading instruction.
7. Create a literate environment that foster reading and writing by integrating foundational knowledge, use of instructional practices, approaches and methods, curriculum materials, and the appropriate use of assessments.

*"Essential Program Question": In light of what is known about how children learn and the best practices in literacy instruction, how shall professional educators teach literacy in educational settings today?*

### Master of Arts in Education with emphasis in Differentiated Instruction

Differentiated Instruction is the teacher

The Master of Arts in Education program with an emphasis in Differentiated Instruction prepares highly effective professional, decision-making, and reflective educators who:

1. Exhibit strong communication (written, oral, and listening) and critical thinking skills.
2. Demonstrate the ability to design, implement and assess educational solutions to challenges educators face in the reality of multi-cultural, multi-linguistic and multi-ability school populations.
3. Demonstrate application of an understanding of differentiated instruction to their/your own practice using a wide range of instructional approaches, methods, and curriculum materials to support student learning.
4. Apply purposeful and dynamic strategies that empower each learner to access the full curriculum and achieve academic success in complex learning environments.
5. Demonstrate an understanding of collaboration and the skills necessary to lead effectively as members of teams within inclusive settings.
6. Synthesize, evaluate and apply the research of others, and present, orally and in writing, the results of such study and research.
7. Commit to continuous self-directed professional growth as reflective practitioners and adaptive experts.

*"Essential Program Question": In light of what is known about differentiated instruction, how shall professional educators effectively teach every student?*

### Master of Arts in Education with emphasis in Early Childhood

The Master of Arts in Education program with an emphasis in Early Childhood Education prepares highly effective professional, decision-making, and reflective leaders for educational settings who:

1. Exhibit strong communication (written, oral, and listening) and critical thinking skills.
2. Evaluate educational research for professional decision-making, leading to school improvement and better student learning.

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3. Demonstrate awareness of professional, ethical, and legal responsibilities and rights of teachers, knowledge of school organizational structure, and the relationship with the social and philosophical foundations of education.
4. Demonstrate knowledge of critical issues including current and future trends in early childhood education.
5. Demonstrate an understanding of the teacher's role in creating supportive family relationships.
6. Understand the place of authentic assessment and developmentally appropriate practices in decisions about curriculum and instruction.

*"Essential Program Question": In light of early childhood theories and philosophies and current research in the field regarding best practice, what is the future of programming and practice in early education?*

Master of Arts in Education with emphasis in Educational Leadership

The Master of Arts in Education program with an emphasis in Educational Leadership prepares highly effective professional, decision making, and reflective leaders for educational settings who:

1. Demonstrate solid, high level communication (written, oral, and listening) and critical thinking skills.
2. Develop necessary skills to lead and manage responses to educational issues in a multi-cultural, multi-linguistic and multi-ability school site.
3. Gain the ability to lead and manage the professional, ethical, and legal responsibilities for school staff and students.
4. Learn to effectively lead and manage the financial resources of an educational environment
5. Synthesize, evaluate and apply educational research for professional decision-making, leading to school improvement and increased student learning.
6. Understand the importance of curriculum development, improved instructional practice and to supervise instruction, leading to improved student learning.
7. Commit to continuous self-directed professional growth as reflective practitioners and adaptive experts.

*"Essential Program Question": In light of what is known about how children learn and educational policy and practice, how shall professional educators' best lead in educational settings today in order to impact student learning?*

Master of Arts in Education with emphasis in Educational Technology

The Master of Arts in Education program with an emphasis in Educational Technology prepares highly effective professional, decision-making, and reflective leaders for educational settings who:

1. Design classroom instruction integrating a variety of technology applications that utilize best practices in educational technology.
2. Evaluate educational research for professional decision-making leading to improvement in student learning.
3. Demonstrate knowledge of critical issues including current and future trends in the use of technology in education
4. Explore, analyze and apply learning theory in the development of instructional strategies.
5. Research and demonstrate best practices that reflect ethical and legal responsibilities and how technology can be used to support all learners.
6. Effectively manage the skills needed to support technological advancement and training in educational institutions.
7. Design and implement educational solutions to issues stemming from the reality of multi-cultural, multi-linguistic, and multi-ability school populations.

*"Essential Program Question": In light of what is known about how children learn, how shall professional educators' best teach, utilize, and implement technology to enhance student achievement?*

<u>Master of Arts in Education with emphasis in English as a Second Language</u>

The Master of Arts in Education program with an emphasis in English as a Second Language prepares highly effective professional, decision-making, and reflective leaders and teachers for educational settings who:

1. Exhibit strong communication (written, oral, and listing) and critical thinking skills.
2. Synthesize educational research for professional decision-making and reflective practice focused on the improvement of learning.
3. Demonstrate knowledge of the foundations of literacy including the relationships between spoken and written language; the historical evolution of English and the learning of English; processes and stages of reading, spelling, and writing development; and effective instructional programs and strategies for literacy development.
4. Articulate an understanding of second language acquisition, the developmental progression of English-language learners, and program models and methods for second language instruction including the involvement of the families of the learners and the community.
5. Effectively employ a wide range of instructional program models and strategies for English-language learners while understanding the impact of cultural, linguistic, ethnic, regional, and gender differences in the classroom.
6. Design and implement educational solutions to issues related to the reality of school populations that are multi-cultural, multi-linguistic, and multi-ability.

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*"Essential Program Question": In light of what is known about how children learn, how shall professional educators best teach learners who speak a first language other than English?*

<u>Master of Arts in Special Education with emphasis in Autism Spectrum Disorders</u>

The Master of Arts in Special Education program with an emphasis in Special Education prepares highly effective professional, decision-making, and reflective educators who are proficient in meeting the following program outcomes:

1. Exhibit strong communication (written, oral, listening) and critical thinking skills.
2. Effectively use a variety of assessment tools and practices to evaluate, plan and implement effective individualized instruction.
3. Design and implement educational solutions to meet the needs of learners from multi-cultural, multi-linguistic, and multi-ability school populations while addressing social/emotional health, social competence, cultural competence, classroom management, and academic competence.
4. Demonstrate application of a wide range of instructional practices, approaches, methods, technologies, and curriculum materials to meet the needs of learners in both special education and general education settings.
5. Demonstrate competence with due process provisions and requirements related to educating students in special education settings.
6. Exhibit an understanding of collaboration and skills necessary to lead effectively as members of teams within inclusive settings.
7. Synthesize, evaluate and apply the research of others and present orally and in writing the results of such study and research.

*"Essential Program Question": In light of what is known about special education law and policies, what are best practices for providing inclusive instruction for all learners?*

<u>Master of Arts in Special Education with emphasis in Emotional Behavioral Disorders</u>

The Master of Arts in Special Education program with an emphasis in Special Education prepares highly effective professional, decision-making, and reflective educators who are proficient in meeting the following program outcomes:

1. Exhibit strong communication (written, oral, listening) and critical thinking skills.
2. Effectively use a variety of assessment tools and practices to evaluate, plan and implement effective individualized instruction.
3. Design and implement educational solutions to meet the needs of learners from multi-cultural, multi-linguistic, and multi-ability school populations while addressing social/emotional health, social competence, cultural competence, classroom management, and academic competence.

4. Demonstrate application of a wide range of instructional practices, approaches, methods, technologies, and curriculum materials to meet the needs of learners in both special education and general education settings.
5. Demonstrate competence with due process provisions and requirements related to educating students in special education settings.
6. Exhibit an understanding of collaboration and skills necessary to lead effectively as members of teams within inclusive settings.
7. Synthesize, evaluate and apply the research of others and present orally and in writing the results of such study and research.

*"Essential Program Question": In light of what is known about special education law and policies, what are best practices for providing inclusive instruction for all learners?*

Master of Arts in Special Education with emphasis in Specific Learning Disabilities

The Master of Arts in Special Education program with an emphasis in Special Education prepares highly effective professional, decision-making, and reflective educators who are proficient in meeting the following program outcomes:

1. Exhibit strong communication (written, oral, and listening) and critical thinking skills.
2. Effectively use a variety of assessment tools and practices to evaluate, plan and implement effective individualized instruction.
3. Design and implement educational solutions to meet the needs of learners from multi-cultural, multi-linguistic, and multi-ability school populations while addressing social/emotional health, social competence, cultural competence, classroom management, and academic competence.
4. Demonstrate application of a wide range of instructional practices, approaches, methods, technologies, and curriculum materials to meet the needs of learners in both special education and general education settings.
5. Demonstrate competence with due process provisions and requirements related to educating students in special education settings.
6. Exhibit an understanding of collaboration and skills necessary to lead effectively as members of teams within inclusive settings.
7. Synthesize, evaluate and apply the research of others and present orally and in writing the results of such study and research.

*"Essential Program Question": In light of what is known about special education law and policies, what are best practices for providing inclusive instruction for all learners?*

## Master of Arts in Teaching with Kindergarten through Grade Six Licensure

The Master of Arts in Teaching program leads to eligibility for a Kindergarten through Grade Six teaching license in Minnesota and prepares highly effective professional, decision-making, reflective educators. The outcomes for the program are organized in reference to the Interstate New Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium (INTASC) Model Standards for Beginning Teacher Licensing and Development, also known as the Minnesota Standards of Effective Practice:

1. Subject Matter:  The teacher understands the central concepts, tools of inquiry, and structures of the discipline(s) he or she teaches and can create experiences that make these aspects of subject matter meaningful for students.
2. Student Learning:  The teacher understands how children and youth learn and develop and can provide learning opportunities that support their intellectual, social and personal development.
3. Diverse Learners:  The teacher understands how learners differ in their approaches to learning and creates instructional opportunities that are adapted to learners from diverse cultural backgrounds and with exceptionalities.
4. Instructional Strategies:  The teacher understands and uses a variety of instructional strategies to encourage the students' development of critical thinking, problem solving, and performance skills.
5. Learning Environment:  The teacher uses an understanding of individual and group motivation and behavior to create a learning environment that encourages positive social interaction, active engagement in learning, and self-motivation.
6. Communication:  The teacher uses knowledge of effective verbal, non-verbal and media communication techniques to foster active inquiry, collaboration, and supportive interaction in the classroom.
7. Planning Instruction:  The teacher plans and manages instruction based upon knowledge of subject matter, students, the community, and curriculum goals.
8. Assessment:  The teacher understands and uses formal and informal assessment strategies to evaluate and ensure the continuous intellectual, social, and physical development of his/her learners.
9. Reflection and Professional Development:  The teacher is a reflective practitioner who continually evaluates the effects of her/his choices and actions on others (students, parents, and other professionals in the learning community) and who actively seeks out opportunities to grow professionally.
10. Collaboration, Ethics, and Relationships:  A teacher communicates and interacts with parents/guardians, families, school colleagues, and the community to support the students' learning and well-being.
11. Synthesize, evaluate and apply the research of others and present orally and in writing the results of such study and research.

*"Essential Program Question": In light of what we know about how people learn, how shall we best teach?*

# Accreditation and Certification

The Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association
    30 North LaSalle Street, Suite 2400; Chicago, IL 60602-2504
    (312) 263-0456

*National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE)
    2010 Massachusetts Avenue NW, Suite 500; Washington, DC 20036-1023;
    (202) 466-7496

*Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP)
    1140 19th Street, NW | Suite 400; Washington, DC 20036
    www.caepnet.org

Minnesota Professional Education Licensing and Standards Board (PELSB)
    1500 Highway 36 West, Suite 300; Roseville, MN 55113-4266
     (651) 539-4200    pelsb@state.mn.us

**COLLEGE OF EDUCATION –
TEACHER EDUCATION**

**CONCORDIA UNIVERSITY, SAINT PAUL**

**CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK**

**Educator as Professional Decision Maker,
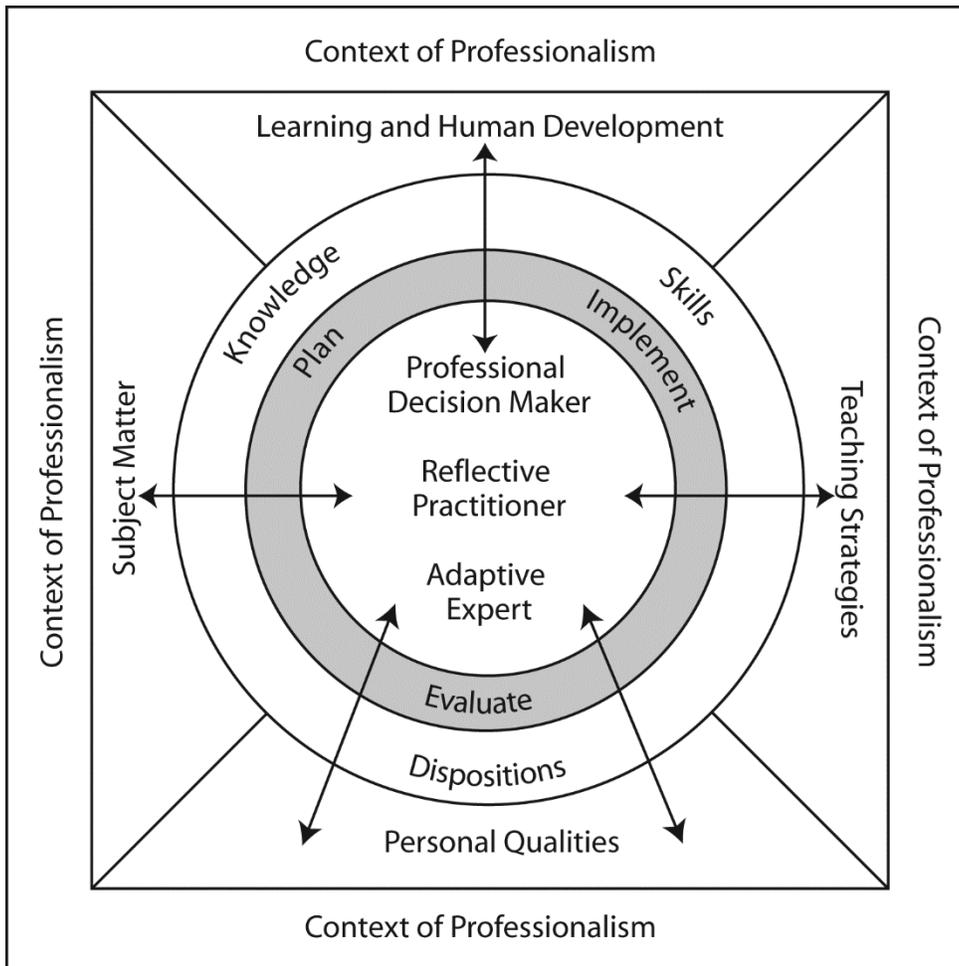Reflective Practitioner, and Adaptive Expert**



**FIGURE 1**

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