

Salisbury University Conceptual Framework



Caring, Competent and Committed:
Informed Professionals Promoting Student Success and
Excellent Practice in Education

Professional Education Unit
2005

Caring, Competent and Committed

Introduction

Throughout its history, the United States has been dedicated to the idea that a well-educated citizenry is fundamental to a free and democratic society. Although public education has not always been equitably accessible to all segments of our society, we have made progress toward the realization of a quality education for all of our citizens.

The key to a quality education is outstanding instruction by highly proficient and effective teachers. The last two decades have produced numerous research studies which link teacher effectiveness to student learning and achievement (Gage, 1985; Brophy & Good, 1996; Sanders, 1998; Wright, Horn and Sanders, 1997; Mendro, 1998). Moreover, it is becoming increasingly clear that teacher quality or lack thereof impacts students for years to come, long after their direct contact with an individual teacher (Sanders, 1998; Mendro, 1998). Fundamental to teacher preparation at Salisbury University is the understanding by both faculty and teacher candidates that above all else, it is the teacher who makes the difference.

It is in this context that Salisbury University (SU) continues its long and proud tradition of teacher education. Currently SU produces teacher education graduates serving proudly and with distinction in a variety of educational roles in all twenty-three counties of Maryland, the City of Baltimore, and in more than twenty states across the country. SU graduates are highly regarded and heavily recruited in the mid-Atlantic region and beyond.

Salisbury University traces its origins to 1922, when the Maryland State Legislature established a commission to determine a location for a two-year normal school on the Eastern Shore. A site at Salisbury was selected by the commission and the institution was opened in September, 1925. The Salisbury Normal School offered a two-year course for the preparation of elementary teachers until 1931 when the course of study was expanded to three years. In 1934, the curriculum was expanded to four years and in 1935, by action of the Legislature, the institution was authorized to grant the Bachelor of Science degree and to change its name to the State Teachers College at Salisbury. In 1947 and 1960, junior high and senior high school certifications were offered, respectively. The Teachers College at Salisbury retained its designation until 1963 when the Board of Trustees removed “Teachers” from the name and created degrees for other undergraduate programs. The institution gained university status with another name change in 1988, and in 2000, the word “State” was dropped, establishing our current identity as Salisbury University.

Salisbury University consists of four endowed schools: the Fulton School of Liberal Arts, the Perdue School of Business, the Henson School of Science and Technology and the Seidel School of Education and Professional Studies. The Seidel School houses the Department of Education, the Department of Health, Physical Education and Human Performance and the Department of Social Work.

Throughout its history, Salisbury University has focused much of its educational efforts on the preparation of education professionals. The teacher preparation programs have long been the hallmark of excellence for the institution and continues to be among the largest majors on campus. All programs are grounded in a belief that graduates from Salisbury University will be **caring, competent and committed** professionals.

The Seidel School of Education and Professional Studies, in collaboration with the arts and science faculty, offers a variety of programs for the undergraduate and graduate preparation of education professionals.

Programs at the undergraduate level include:

- Elementary Education
- Early Childhood Education
- Secondary Education with majors in Biology, Chemistry, English, French, Health, History, Mathematics, Physics and Spanish.
- K-12 Certification programs in Physical Education and Music, both Vocal and Instrumental

At the graduate level initial certification programs include:

- Master of Arts in Teaching (MAT) for secondary and K-12 fields, with University of Maryland Eastern Shore
- M.A. English, Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL) with Fulton School of Liberal Arts

Advanced certification graduate programs include:

- M. Ed. School Administration
- M. Ed. Reading Specialist

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Graduate non-certification programs

- M. Ed. with tracks in Elementary Education, Early Childhood Education Middle/Secondary Education, Post Secondary Education and Teaching and Learning with Technology
- M.S. in Math Education with the Henson School of Science and Technology
- Certificate of Advanced Study in Teaching and Learning with Technology

Although different programs and degrees are offered within the Professional Education Unit (PEU), the Conceptual Framework document undergirds all programs. As faculty have engaged in discussions regarding curriculum and program development, selected aspects of philosophy and beliefs about the quality preparation of educators have remained relatively constant. Moreover, national standards for quality preparation of educational professionals, while differing in format and language, have much in common. Accordingly, as the Unit faculty worked together to articulate the Conceptual Framework, one framework emerged which embraces the critical aspects related to the knowledge base, skills, and dispositions valued and promoted within each program.

The Salisbury University Context

As part of the process of preparing for the 1999 NCATE institutional review, a Conceptual Framework for all teacher education and school personnel programs was articulated and aligned with national standards, best practices and the mission of the University.

The Conceptual Framework includes the knowledge, skills and dispositions to be acquired and fostered in the professional education programs at Salisbury University. During professional preparation, candidates acquire knowledge, develop and practice their skills, and learn to value and appreciate the diverse challenges that face educators today. It is our goal to articulate and make explicit what we consider to be the essential knowledge, skills and dispositions for our graduates. Our course syllabi, class instruction, internship assessments and individual program outcomes reflect these efforts. At Salisbury University, the Professional Education Unit has articulated a Conceptual Framework which serves as a guide to all education programs and to program policies, procedures and curricula.

Development of the original Conceptual Framework

The original Conceptual Framework document was written in several drafts. Developed in the fall of 1997 and accepted as a “working draft” by the faculty on November 11, 1997, further revision continued through the academic year. Unit faculty, as well as faculty representing general education from the Henson School of Science and Technology and the Fulton School of Liberal Arts reviewed the document during two full-day retreats in May and August 1998. During the May retreat meeting, faculty shared the curriculum goals for each program within the professional education Unit, including content area goals for the programs in secondary education. A significant revision, resulting in the streamlining of the document, took

place during the summer. A second retreat in August of 1998 allowed for additional faculty input and for faculty to confirm that the Conceptual Framework aligned with program curricula.

The themes and associated learning outcomes of the Conceptual Framework were shared with adjunct faculty and supervisors of student teachers at the beginning of the Fall 1998 semester. Faculty in the Unit were invited to attend weekly meetings to write and revise a final draft of the Conceptual Framework. Brown bag meetings addressing the four themes of the Conceptual Framework: *A Focus on Student Learning; Scholarship; Informed and Reflective Practice; Professional Collaboration and Development*, allowed for ongoing dialogue and revision. Following this process, which included multiple drafts with frequent opportunities for involvement of all faculty within the Professional Education Unit, the Conceptual Framework was approved by the Unit faculty in November 1998.

To assure that the Conceptual Framework was shared and understood by university faculty outside the Unit, as well as by candidates and members of the community, representatives of these groups were involved at several levels. The Conceptual Framework was discussed during meetings with the Teacher Education Council, the Teacher Education Advisory Council, and the Center for Technology in Education, as well as in orientation meetings for students in pre-professional classes, methods classes, and student teaching internships. Faculty in the Unit were encouraged to present the alignment of the Conceptual Framework with national standards to candidates in the professional programs. While the organizing theme, **A Tradition**

of Caring: Informed Professionals Promoting Student Success and Excellent Practice in Education, was being shared with candidates, emphasis was placed on sharing the substantive priorities of the curriculum and student learning outcomes.

Revisions to the Conceptual Framework

Revisions to the Conceptual Framework have emerged from the curricular reform that has occurred within the Professional Education Unit during the past six years since the 1999 joint State, NCATE visit. Major curricular reform occurred within the Elementary Education program, all Secondary and P-12 programs, and development of new majors and programs in Early Childhood Education, Physics, Health Education, and Teaching English as a Second Language.

In 2003-2004, the Conceptual Framework was formally revisited and updated. During several faculty meetings and meetings of the Professional Education Unit, revisions to the Conceptual Framework were presented and discussed. The decision to move toward a new organizing theme of Salisbury University teacher education graduates as **Caring, Competent and Committed** went through multiple drafts and subsequently either face-to-face or online discussions. Reordering of the thematic areas occurred as a result of debate and discussion about the enduring sense of purpose and timely changes in the social and political context of schooling based upon new research and publications in the field, *The Redesign of Teacher Education*

Performance Criteria (2001) and No Child Left Behind (NCLB) legislation (2001). Much of the discussion surrounding changes in the Conceptual Framework emerged as a result of expanded collaborative relationships with schools.

The revised Conceptual Framework 2005 retains much of the focus of the original document with the themes of **Informed and Reflective Pedagogy, Enhanced Student Learning, Scholarship, and Collaboration.**

These core values and beliefs are fundamental to the programs offered by the Professional Education Unit at Salisbury University. The overall theme of *A Tradition of Caring* in the original Conceptual Framework has been replaced by the theme that graduates of SU's teacher preparation programs are **Caring, Competent and Committed.** Thus, this document represents an expression of commitment to the values expressed in earlier versions, with updates that have occurred as a result of new knowledge and conceptualizations in the profession of teacher preparation.

Role and Purpose of the Conceptual Framework

The philosophy and attributes reflected in the Conceptual Framework indicate the emphasis which all Unit programs place on learning and the learner. The Unit for professional education values the concept of student centeredness and fosters **Caring, Competent, and**

Committed. Faculty in the PEU take pride in Salisbury University's long-established tradition which emphasizes candidates as the central focus of the learning process. Programs are delivered with an emphasis on university candidate involvement leading to the active construction of learning and recognition of the need for acceptance and adaptability by both faculty and candidates. Class size and design arrangements allow for active learning. This well-established climate of caring serves as the hallmark for what is most characteristic about the preparation of education professionals at Salisbury University.

The Conceptual Framework guides all initial and advanced programs in the PEU. Sequenced programs of study and field experiences build upon a foundation of content and pedagogical knowledge to prepare students for entry into teaching or continuing professional development. All aspects of the programs are guided by the Conceptual Framework with an overall goal of SU teaching candidates' exhibiting knowledge, skills, and dispositions through identified learning outcomes. Committed to the underlying principles of the Conceptual Framework, education Unit faculty engage candidates in active learning experiences which provide a model for professional practice.

The Teacher Education Mission

The teacher education program at Salisbury University addresses three interdependent goals: preparing outstanding educators for the next generation, contributing to the knowledge

base of the professional education community, and helping P-12 schools fulfill their missions. In addition to pre-service teacher preparation programs at the undergraduate and graduate levels, SU offers graduate curricula for school administrators, reading specialists, TESOL professionals, educational technology specialists, and teachers for classrooms from early childhood to postsecondary education. Our faculty serve not only as university instructors but also as consultants, workshop leaders, researchers, grant-writers, and liaisons within the large network of Professional Development Schools throughout the region.

The Salisbury University program maintains close ties to local schools and practitioners in the field. At SU, we require our candidates to spend considerable time in field-based experiences, observing and practicing in nearby schools. We have consolidated these field experiences in numerous partner schools that have been identified as PDS sites. By focusing our field-based connections in these designated sites, we believe that our candidates will find consistently supportive and productive environments in which to learn their craft, and that our faculty will continue to establish valuable partnerships for collaboration.

Concurrently, we embrace an obligation to contribute to the professional knowledge base in education through the dissemination of current scholarship, the integration and dissemination of theoretical constructs and the investigation of instructional issues and practices.

The third strand of our goal statement--helping schools fulfill their missions--is integral

to the other two. Besides ensuring a supply of desirable candidates for employment, the Salisbury University faculty embraces its outreach obligation to assist local schools in meeting the challenge of educating an increasingly diverse school population. Our regional PDS network is the primary focus of these efforts, with the expectation that initiatives in PDS sites will extend to the benefit of other schools in the region and beyond. A noteworthy focus in our program is performance-based accountability, leading candidates to demonstrate their emerging abilities as professional educators in authentic settings with student learners.

Themes of the Conceptual Framework

As a professional learning community, our charge is to the service of our candidates and our local school partners. This mission is grounded in shared professional dispositions and in a tradition of caring that can be traced to the University's origins as a normal school founded in 1925. There are four interdependent themes in this tradition that provide the foundation for our current practices and future growth:

- **Informed and Reflective Pedagogy:** We believe in teachers as decision-makers.

Through careful preparation and a thorough grounding in research and best practices, we support candidates and collaborative partners who are disposed to question and reflect continuously in the pursuit of sound educational judgments.

- **Enhanced Student Learning:** We celebrate human diversity and we are passionately committed to the belief that skilled and caring educators enhance learning and achievement when they recognize, appreciate and build on the individual strengths and differences of every learner.
- **Scholarship:** We are committed to academic excellence, ongoing scholarly inquiry, and integrity – in our own work, in the efforts of our candidates, and by extension, in the primary mission of student learning in local schools.
- **Collaboration:** We believe that the integrated mission of preparing teachers, advancing the knowledge base, supporting teachers’ professional development and improving student achievement in P-12 schools can best be accomplished through synergistic partnerships. These partnerships must include all stakeholders in the greater educational community.

Consistent with the purpose of a Conceptual Framework, this document is based on the belief that a candidate’s acquisition of knowledge, skills and dispositions are central to the preparation of professional educators (Dill, 1990). Curricula developed for education professionals should be built on a knowledge base which is grounded in professional theory and current research (Murray, 1996; Sikula, 1996; Donovan, Bransford & Pelligrino, 1999; Bransford, Brown & Cocking, 2000; Darling-Hammond, 2005). The knowledge base, once

established, must be applied to the educational setting to ensure that candidates acquire the skills necessary to positively influence student achievement (Resnick, 1987). Finally, professional dispositions that allow candidates to value and support achievement and lifelong learning are critical components of the educational process and a central consideration of programs and outcomes (Yost, 1997; Darling-Hammond, 2005).

Knowledge

Effective educators must possess a meaningful knowledge base (Christensen, 1996; Holmes Group, 1986; Shulman, 1987). It is widely accepted that teachers must know subject matter (Buchman, 1984) and, consistent with the Maryland Higher Education Commission report (1995), candidates must possess content knowledge from an academic major or minor. However, an educator's knowledge base includes not only knowing one's content, but also acquiring pedagogical knowledge in the context of content and application (Shulman, 1986; Darling-Hammond, 2005). We contend that teaching should be viewed as a complex process where education professionals' decisions are contingent on students' needs, students' developmental level, and instructional goals. Effective educators guide student learning and continually modify and revise learning experiences based on student responses. Pedagogical knowledge, knowledge about general instructional strategies, is no longer simply the ability for the teacher to implement a set of routines or strategies for managing student learning and behavior (Darling-Hammond & Cobb, 1996). Pedagogical content knowledge, therefore, requires that specific strategies for teaching a particular subject take into account the

Omulticultural influences, multiple intelligences, and diversity that comprise today's student body (Darling-Hammond, 2005; Banks, Cochran-Smith, et. al 2005). Accordingly, the Conceptual Framework addresses the importance of:

- knowledge of content grounded in the arts and sciences;
- pedagogical knowledge including knowledge of learning, behavior, and development;
- ~~kn~~nowledge of diversities.

To support the continual acquisition and updating of knowledge, the Conceptual Framework emphasizes a lifelong process of scholarly learning and addresses the underlying theme of **Competent** professionals.

Skills

Skills, behaviors, and processes that are used to facilitate student learning and achievement are acquired through practice and experience. Knowing what to teach, when to teach, and how to teach are a set of procedures that are used by education professionals (Grossman, 1990). The development of skills, such as lesson planning, implementation of instructional strategies, continuous assessment and classroom management, are essential for effective instruction and speak to the importance of educational pedagogy and the underlying theme of **Competent** educators.

Dispositions

Dispositions reflect the attitudes and beliefs that educational professionals apply to practice. Successful educators possess a moral and professional commitment to students and their learning. Educational professionals understand learners in a way that allows them to identify different strengths, intelligences and approaches to learning. Today's professionals must value a lifelong commitment to learning and reflection in order to meet the needs of the diverse student body. Positive, personal student relationships are an important part of a teacher's responsibilities. Teachers develop ethical and caring relationships with students to promote academic success (Noddings, 1988, 1992, 2002). Recognizing that educators balance high performance expectations with sensitive awareness of affective needs (Jones, 1996), we have identified expected dispositions within our Conceptual Framework. The organizing themes of **Caring** and **Committed** provide the foundation for the specific dispositions identified and assessed in our overall assessment of teacher candidates.

The Conceptual Framework provides our grounding, and yet it is a work that will change in emphasis in response to a wide range of factors that impact us, including social, political, economic and cultural forces and events. The Conceptual Framework guides curriculum development and program revision. Changing needs of the profession, national standards for teacher education, standards of professional associations, state and community initiatives, and the desire of the faculty to provide programs which will produce high-quality graduates provide a catalyst for ongoing curriculum review. Programs developed recently, such as the Master of

Education in Reading and the undergraduate major in Early Childhood Education, were designed to reflect current research and best practice and to meet strong regional needs. The preparation for the NCATE accreditation review prompted careful analysis of the existing curriculum through the process of folio and rejoinder compilation. Although many different curricular emphases are possible for the preparation of educational professionals, the Conceptual Framework provides unifying themes which provide direction, coherence, and continuity to programs.

Conceptual Framework

Salisbury University Teacher Education Graduates are Caring, Competent and Committed

Themes and Associated Learning Outcomes:

Informed and Reflective Pedagogy

- Quality performance through critically examined practice
- Application of pedagogical theory to diverse educational settings and diverse populations
- Competent use of technology as a tool for learning and communication
- Clear communication of knowledge so that others can learn
- Informed decision making

Salisbury University teacher education graduates:

Draw upon experience, research and knowledge of best practice to make professional decisions.

Employ skills in technology to promote inquiry and effective practice.

Demonstrate skills in communication, critical thinking, problem solving and leadership in a variety of professional settings.

Strive to refine and improve practice through continuous reflection and assessment in the context of diverse learner needs.

Base decisions and actions on professional and ethical judgment.

Enhanced Student Learning

- Understanding of how learning occurs
- Application of the knowledge of human development and diversity to the planning, instruction and evaluation of all learners
- Respect of cultures, values, beliefs and talents of all persons
- Recognition that self-esteem influences achievement
- Value of cultural dimensions of communication
- Using assessment to shape and modify instruction for individual learners

Salisbury University teacher education graduates:

Incorporate their understanding of how learning occurs into both planning and instruction.

Incorporate an understanding of social context, cognitive and psychological development, and professional ethics into their practice.

Understand human diversity and design activities and experiences that develop individual strengths.

Foster a climate conducive to inquiry, achievement and active construction of knowledge.

Communicate effectively to diverse audiences through a variety of mediums, including technology.

Create environments that promote active discourse and interaction among learners.

Scholarship

- Content knowledge grounded in the arts and sciences
- Pedagogical knowledge based on best practices and scholarly research
- Interactive models of teaching that engage all learners and encourage active learning in a scholarly environment
- Recognition that careers in education require a lifelong process of scholarly learning

Salisbury University teacher education graduates:

Apply knowledge and skills attained through rigorous content and pedagogical study.

Experience and apply varied instructional strategies as an essential component of practice in each discipline.

Develop a commitment to scholarship and continue to expand knowledge and facility in their respective fields of study.

Collaboration

- Establishment of productive relationships with parents, educators and all members of diverse communities
- Knowledge of schools as social and political systems within the larger community
- Commitment to teaching, learning and service through participation in professional development
- Appreciation of the magnitude of responsibility for education professionals

Salisbury University teacher education graduates:

Understand that schools are organizations within a larger community and recognize that the community influences schools and education.

Collaborate with parents, community members and other professional educators as members of learning communities to promote educational excellence and to bring about necessary change.

Pursue knowledge through professional development and demonstrate excellence and enthusiasm for teaching, learning and service.

Theoretical Foundations of the Conceptual Framework Themes

The Conceptual Framework, developed across four themes, is structured to include the knowledge, skills and dispositions promoted throughout the programs. Furthermore, each theme is linked to specific assessable outcomes expected of program graduates. The Conceptual Framework was developed from discussion and analysis of coursework, classroom experiences, content, field experiences, and methods of evaluation which comprise the curriculum for the programs. The framework emerged from the theory and practice represented in the current programs, but also was designed to allow for continued development to meet curricular needs for improvement. The Conceptual Framework is grounded in the national and state standards articulated by the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards, the Interstate New

Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium, the Maryland Professional Development School standards and the Maryland Teacher Technology Standards. Accordingly, themes for the Conceptual Framework are consistent with national standards as well as practice within the Professional Education Unit. The themes also closely tie with the standards and outcomes promoted by program area specialty organizations.

Informed and Reflective Pedagogy

The first theme in the Conceptual Framework is Informed and Reflective Pedagogy. Salisbury University is dedicated to producing teachers who are knowledgeable and informed and who are disposed to being reflective about educational issues and practices in order to ensure continuous professional growth. We hold our candidates to the following expectations:

- Quality performance through critically examined practice
- Application of pedagogical theory to diverse educational settings
- Competent use of technology as a tool for learning and communication
- Clear communication of knowledge so that others can learn
- Informed decision making

Teaching is a profession and thus requires continuous decision making as well as continual self reflection on one's own performance. Shulman (1998) has suggested six characteristics shared by all professions: 1. service to society, 2. a body of scholarly knowledge, 3. engagement in practical action, 4. uncertainty caused by the different needs of clients and the non-routine nature of issues, 5. the importance of experience and 6. the development of a professional community.

The above definition implies a disposition of ethical commitment to society by professional educators, as well as a well-developed body of both content and pedagogical knowledge. The uncertainty of client or learner needs calls for the ability of teachers to continuously adjust instruction to the needs of diverse learners and to use one's experiences to reflect and modify instructional practice. All of this occurs at Salisbury University in a context of a collaborative environment among candidates and their peers, supportive faculty, mentors, supervisors and the larger community in the various partnership settings.

Knowing content alone does not guarantee effective teaching (Evertson, Hawley & Zlotnik, 1985). Subject matter must be translated effectively to the learner. We believe that educational professionals should be informed decision-makers who use effective strategies to promote exemplary teaching practices. Such practices may include: careful selection of appropriate pedagogy, clear and enthusiastic presentation of content, ongoing assessments, classroom management skills, time management, establishing student accountability and maintenance of a positive class environment. These characteristics of effective educational systems (Smith, 1983; Brophy & Good, 1986; Rosenshine & Stevens, 1986; Evertson, 1989; Darling-Hammond, Banks, Zumwalt, Gomez, Shervin, Griesdorn & Finn, 2005) provide a useful framework for teaching a diverse student body and promoting student achievement.

Educators are decision makers who determine *what* students will learn and *how* they will

learn. Educational leaders must possess skills in understanding and analyzing organizations and existing situations. Through preparation programs which enable them to learn and practice a variety of approaches to decision making, educators can respond appropriately to issues which arise in the complex organizations of schooling (Estler, 1988; Senge, Cambran-McCabe, Lucas, Smith, Dutton & Kleimer, 2000). Recognizing decision making as an essential element of teaching, our candidates gain knowledge about making appropriate judgments based upon systematic data collection, observation and analysis. Our programs offer opportunities for students to recognize the importance of decision making in professional practice, to learn models of decision making, to gain experience through practice in decision making, and to learn about the effects of decision making through discussion and reflection.

Excellence in education is not routine and cannot be scripted. Salisbury University candidates are taught initially to observe classroom interactions and reflect on the appropriateness and outcomes of these interactions. Early in their courses in pedagogy with accompanying field experiences, candidates are required to engage with students and reflect on the instructional practices in classroom settings. As candidates progress in their program they are increasingly required to justify what and how they are teaching. Candidates are strongly encouraged to ask themselves “*Why* would I employ a particular classroom procedure or methodology? *How* will I engage and motivate my students? *When* is it most appropriate to do so?” Candidates continuously are required to reflect on teaching events and to assess the effectiveness of their instruction. A key focus of the required 100-day internship is continuous self reflection.

The idea of reflection is not new. John Dewey (1938) proposed that reflective teachers should be able to make informed and intelligent decisions about the subject matter they teach. More recently, Schon (1987) has stated that teachers must reflect in order to adapt to the differing situations faced each day. The ability to reflect allows the educator to constantly self-evaluate and improve practice. This allows educators to bridge the gap between everyday experiences and educational theory (Sharan & Sharan, 1987). We contend that our graduates should not only be knowledgeable, but that they should be informed decision makers who reflect on their own practice as a form of continuous self-evaluation and professional growth.

Much of informed and reflective practice centers on the concept of metacognition. Metacognition includes knowledge about learning, knowledge of one's own learning strengths and weaknesses, and the demands of the learning tasks at hand. Metacognition also includes self-regulation and most importantly, the ability to reflect on one's own performance (Bransford, et al., 2000). Teachers need time and incentives to reflect on their practice, as well as opportunities to use that time to learn about new research and curricula (Donovan, Bransford & Pelligrino, 1999).

At Salisbury University, the concept of informed and reflective practice is woven throughout the fabric of the program; from the first courses in the Professional Teacher Preparation Program to the 100-day internship. Candidates are given multiple opportunities to

practice the selection and delivery of instruction for a rich variety of teaching situations and to adjust that instruction for varying profiles of students. With class assignments and internship experiences, SU candidates are urged to ask themselves, “*What* am I teaching? *Why* am I teaching this content or process? *How* might I teach this? *What* are my students learning? *What* did I learn about myself based on my teaching? *How* might I adjust my instruction?” As Donovan et al. (2003) point out, “To provide a knowledge-centered classroom environment, attention must be given to what is taught (information, subject mastery), why it is taught (understanding) and what competence or mastery looks like.” (p.21)

In preparing teachers for today’s world, the informed use of technology continues to represent an exciting new horizon. Students’ and teachers’ use of technology as a tool for readily accessing information, analyzing information from multiple sources, and applying and sharing information with others, allows both teachers and learners to become more active participants in the learning environment. Technology use has been shown to be a pedagogical tool which increases the development of skills in decision making, observation and analytic thinking (Merseth, 1992). Computer-based technologies hold great promise both for increasing access to knowledge as well as promoting learning (Bransford, 2000). Even with technology, however, decisions of *what* technology to use, *when* to use the technology, and *how* to use technology to optimize learning and instruction is part of the everyday equation of the informed and reflective practitioner. Salisbury University candidates and graduates embrace the role of technology in today’s classrooms by understanding its positive impact on acquisition of knowledge, student motivation, self-esteem, collaborative learning, and higher order thinking

skills.

Informed and reflective practice is modeled and practiced by university faculty and mentor teachers, teacher candidates and students. It is through this unity of effort that informed and reflective pedagogy is nurtured and celebrated at Salisbury University.

Table 1 illustrates how the theme of **Informed and Reflective Pedagogy** is linked to national and state standards for preparation of education professionals as well as best practice and beliefs at Salisbury University. Comparisons are made with the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS), the Interstate New Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium (INTASC), the Maryland Teacher Technology Standards and the Maryland PDS Standards. In addition, belief statements articulated by faculty within the Unit convey beliefs about essential values and best practices for preparation of education professionals and illustrate the inclusive nature of the Conceptual Framework. This table is intended to represent the spirit of correspondence among standards and themes of the Conceptual Framework; in some instances, standards may apply to more than one theme.

Table 1. Informed and Reflective Pedagogy and the Standards and Beliefs It Draws Upon.

Theme	INTASC Standards	NBPTS Standards	Maryland Teacher Technology Standards	Maryland PDS Standards	Practice and Beliefs at SU
Informed and Reflective Practice	<p>The teacher uses knowledge of effective verbal, nonverbal, and media communication techniques to foster active inquiry, collaboration, and supportive interaction in the classroom.</p> <p>The teacher plans instruction based upon knowledge of subject matter, students, the community, and curriculum goals.</p> <p>The teacher understands and uses formal and informal assessment strategies to evaluate and ensure the continuous intellectual, social and physical development of the learner.</p> <p>The teacher is a reflective practitioner who continually evaluates the effects of his/her choices and actions on others and who actively seeks out opportunities to grow professionally.</p>	<p>Teachers are responsible for managing and monitoring student learning.</p> <p>Teachers think systematically about their practice and learn from experience.</p>	<p>Access, evaluate, process and apply information efficiently and effectively.</p> <p>Use technology effectively and appropriately to interact electronically.</p> <p>Use technology to communicate information in a variety of formats.</p> <p>Design, implement and assess learning experiences that incorporate use of technology in a curriculum-related instructional activity to support understanding, inquiry, problem solving, communication and/or collaboration.</p>	<p>The PDS recognizes and supports the distinct learning needs of faculty/staff, interns, students, parents and community members.</p> <p>PDS partners work together to carry out the collaboratively defined mission of the PDS.</p> <p>The PDS accepts the responsibility of and is accountable for upholding professional standards for preparing and renewing teachers in accordance with the Redesign of Teacher Education.</p> <p>Partner institutions allocate resources to support the continuous improvement of teaching and learning.</p> <p>The PDS supports equitable involvement of Pre-K-12 faculty/staff and interns to support equitable outcomes for diverse learners.</p>	<p>We emphasize decision making and reflective and informed practice as essential elements of teaching and learning.</p> <p>We set high expectations for our candidates as reflective practitioners.</p> <p>We are committed to effective communication through a variety of modes, including technology.</p> <p>We encourage candidates to develop a posture of continuous self-reflection of teaching practices in the context of diverse learner needs.</p> <p>We believe that informed and reflective pedagogy is at the heart of teaching.</p>

Enhanced Student Learning

A second theme in the Conceptual Framework is **Enhanced Student Learning**. This theme traditionally has been embedded throughout the institution's preparation of teacher candidates and is based on the idea that Salisbury University views itself as a learning community. This theme indicates the emphasis which all programs place on multicultural and global perspectives. Programs are delivered with an emphasis on student involvement leading to active construction of learning and require recognition of diverse learning styles and multiple forms of communication. Field experiences in economically and racially diverse settings prepare students for practice in a culturally diverse world. The focus on student learning includes high expectations for candidates that involve:

- Understanding of how learning occurs
- Application of the knowledge of development and diversity to planning, instruction and evaluation for all learners
- Respect of cultures, values, beliefs and talents of all persons
- Recognition that self-esteem influences achievement
- Value of cultural dimensions of communication
- Using assessment to shape and modify instruction for individual learners

The Carnegie Task Force (1989), Goodlad (1991), and the Holmes Group (1986) have identified the ability to teach all students as fundamental to effective teaching. More recently, the No Child Left Behind Act (2001) challenges the profession to address all children in learning and achieving. Achievement data at the local, state and national levels are disaggregated into various subgroups to insure that all students are learning regardless of race, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, native language or special learner needs. At Salisbury University, we

operationalize this ability to teach all students based upon our teacher candidates' knowledge of sound learning principles, the understanding of human development and diversity as well as strong content knowledge. Further, this ability requires a valuing and respect of diversities, a recognition of the relationship between self-esteem and learning, and a sensitivity to cultural differences in communication and interpersonal relationships. Effective teaching occurs when teachers possess the skills to facilitate the development of self-esteem in all children, to communicate with all learners, and to foster learning in all children. To accomplish this, our professional education programs must address our candidate's dispositions and beliefs about learners and the teaching-learning interaction (Edwards & Young, 1996; Haberman, 1996; Cochran-Smith and Lytle, 1999).

There is increasing evidence that teacher candidates can positively impact student achievement. In a recent article, Pine (2004) describes a PDS initiative where scores in both math and reading increased significantly over a three year period. Of special significance is that this PDS represented a diverse population of over 75 percent students of color and was located in an inner city. In his discussion of the possible causes of dramatic student achievement gains, Pine writes, "Concern for student learning permeated the teacher education program" (p. 44). Student learning is our highest priority and our professional education programs promote the realization that learning occurs in the total context of the child's life. We explore and dispel the assumption that every child will arrive at school well-rested, well-fed and ready for a day of learning. Valuing and respecting of the cultures, beliefs and talents of all learners is demonstrated through the program curricula, field experiences, and the practices and behaviors

of the Unit faculty. Consistent with learner-centered principles related to student achievement, we believe that a student's self-concept and self-esteem affect learning. Students who approach learning with positive beliefs, curiosity, and expectations of success are more likely to have high academic achievement than students who are influenced by negative thoughts about self, fear, insecurity, or anxiety. Thus, our candidates have opportunities to study and practice learner-centered psychological principles and strategies which encourage positive student achievement (American Psychological Association, 1997).

We believe that, in addition to the high self-esteem of P-12 students, our teacher candidates at Salisbury University must possess characteristics that exhibit high self-esteem, positive attitudes about themselves and others as well as exhibiting professional demeanors and dispositions of responsibility, engagement, energy and commitment. Teachers who enjoy teaching gain great satisfaction in what they do as professionals, and are far more likely to produce high achieving and motivated learners.

We provide opportunities for our candidates to develop a philosophy that embraces a genuine respect for a pluralistic society. We believe that a student's sense of belonging impacts the student's receptiveness to the learning environment and can affect academic achievement (Nieto, 1992). Therefore, our candidates are prepared to establish a sense of belonging for all students beginning in the early grades and continuing throughout the school experience. We also believe that it is critical that educators learn to communicate effectively with students from

diverse backgrounds to foster a sense of student belonging (Gersten & Jimenez, 1998; Payne, 1998).

Education professionals must possess the knowledge, skills and dispositions to educate all learners. By the end of the 20th century, students of color comprised one-third of the school population. By the year 2020, white non-Hispanic children will make up less than half of all school-aged children and twenty percent of the school-aged population will live below poverty level. In contrast, more than 90 percent of teachers will be white, monolingual and primarily from suburban areas (Zimpher & Ashburn, 1992). How will these teachers deal with the increasing diversity of the students they educate? To work effectively with diverse and disadvantaged populations, educators need to understand the cultural settings of schools (Gollnick & Chinn, 1998). Candidates must not only examine their cultural assumptions about individuals' differences and their role in schooling, they must also examine their own cultural perspectives.

Our professional candidates must acquire the knowledge about families, parents, communities, their demography and how they influence learning in school settings (Gollnick & Chinn, 1990; Edwards & Young, 1996; LePage, Darling-Hammond & Akar, 2005). Given the increasing diversity of students, candidates entering the education profession are challenged to consider the social context as well as the cognitive and psychological development of each child while providing appropriate learning experiences (Payne, 1998). Our programs provide

experiences which allow candidates to develop this knowledge and appropriate skills and attitudes. Our candidates' understanding of the nature of diversity and development of skills and attitudes to address diverse student needs begin with foundation courses and continue through field experiences and advanced study. Recognizing that educators who extend their own thinking by seeking to understand others also benefit themselves (Cazden & Mehan, 1989), it is our goal at Salisbury University to enable candidates to connect positively to other cultures, to other social classes, to other family structures and to other races and ethnicities. Furthermore, we believe that quality instruction must go beyond recognition and acceptance of diversity; it must result in high quality learning and student achievement. We assert that student-centered learning results in successful achievement when students are engaged in active learning, problem solving, and exploration. Therefore, our programs emphasize professional preparation grounded in the conviction that educators must foster a climate conducive for inquiry and active construction of knowledge (Brooks & Brooks, 1993; Bransford, Brown and Cocking, 2000). Teacher candidates at Salisbury University learn the knowledge, skills and dispositions to enable them to create both culturally responsive and inclusive practices as described by Banks, Cochran-Smith, Moll, Richert, Zeichner, LePage & Darling-Hammond (2005).

Teacher candidates are expected to impact student achievement while they are working toward completion of their program requirements. At Salisbury University teacher candidates are expected to observe and work in the field as early as their foundations and human development courses, typically taken in the freshman or sophomore year. Following admission to the Professional Teacher Education Program, candidates register for field experience in

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conjunction with their methods course work. The focus of assignments in the field experiences has been expanded from the traditional question of “*What* have I learned?” to “*What* did my students learn because of my teaching and instructional interventions?” This dual theme of teacher candidate learning and student learning continues and is strongly emphasized during the last two semesters of the programs when students are completing their 100-day internship in PDS sites.

Faculty work with teacher candidates to develop their skills in student assessment in order for the candidates to direct the planning and modifying of instruction so that all learners achieve. While the science of linking candidate performance to P-12 learning is still relatively new, faculty have been studying recent works that document attempts to create this linkage (ATE, 2004; Pankrantz, 2001; Wiseman and Knight, 2003). SU efforts to create such linkages were described in a presentation at AACTE in 2005 (Pataniczek, Hammond, Garin, Wood, & Book, 2005).

The report of the National Council for Educational Statistics cites the importance of teacher preparation in the areas of technology and diversity and cites a lack of such preparation nationally (Lewis, Basmat, Carey, Bartfai, Farris, & Smerdon, 1999). This theme of the Conceptual Framework with its emphasis on student learning addresses both of these important areas for the preparation of educators. Technology as a tool for instruction and communication is integrated into the curriculum and is emphasized as a critical skill for educational

professionals, consistent with the Maryland Teacher Technology Standards (2002). Teacher candidates must take coursework in educational technology. In addition, since 2003 candidates register for classes online through GullNet and submit their assignments and assessments on LiveText, adopted for Unit-wide use in 2004. A plan for further integration of technology into instruction has been implemented by the faculty which has resulted in increasing levels of confidence and sophistication in applying the skills in technology by both candidates and faculty. The Professional Education Unit initiative in technology is undegirded by a university-wide IT plan for 2004-09 (see Salisbury University website: <http://www.salisbury.edu/campotech>).

Table 2 illustrates how the theme **Enhanced Student Learning** is linked to national and state standards for preparation of education professionals as well as best practice and beliefs at Salisbury University. Comparisons are made with the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS), the Interstate New Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium (INTASC), the Maryland Teacher Technology Standards and the Maryland PDS Standards. In addition, belief statements articulated by faculty within the Unit convey beliefs about essential values and best practices for preparation of education professionals and illustrate the inclusive nature of the Conceptual Framework. This table is intended to represent the spirit of correspondence among standards and themes of the Conceptual Framework; in some instances, standards may apply to more than one theme.

Table 2. Enhanced Student Learning and the Standards and Beliefs It Draws Upon.

Theme	INTASC Standards	NBPTS Standards	Maryland Teacher Technology Standards	Maryland PDS Standards	Practice and Beliefs at SU
A Focus on Student Learning	<p>The teacher understands how children learn and develop, and can provide learning opportunities that support their intellectual, social and personal development.</p> <p>The teacher understands how students differ in their approaches to learning and creates instructional opportunities that are adapted to diverse learners. 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.</p> <p>The teacher uses knowledge of effective verbal, nonverbal, and media communication techniques to foster active inquiry, collaboration, and supportive interaction in the classroom.</p>	Teachers are committed to students and their learning.	<p>Access, evaluate, process and apply information efficiently and effectively.</p> <p>Use technology effectively and appropriately to interact electronically.</p> <p>Use technology to communicate information in a variety of formats.</p> <p>Demonstrate an understanding of the legal, social and ethical issues related to technology use.</p> <p>Design, implement and assess learning experiences that incorporate use of technology in a curriculum-related instructional activity to support understanding, inquiry, problem solving, communication and/or collaboration.</p> <p>Understand human, equity and developmental issues surrounding the use of assistive technology to enhance student learning performance and apply that understanding to practice.</p>	<p>The PDS recognizes and supports the distinct learning needs of faculty/staff, interns, students, parents and community members.</p> <p>PDS partners work together to carry out the collaboratively defined mission of the PDS.</p> <p>The PDS accepts the responsibility of and is accountable for upholding professional standards for preparing and renewing teachers in accordance with the Redesign of Teacher Education.</p> <p>Partner institutions allocate resources to support the continuous improvement of teaching and learning.</p> <p>The PDS supports equitable involvement of Pre-K-12 faculty/staff and interns to support equitable outcomes for diverse learners.</p>	<p>We attract, support, and prepare diverse, capable, and resourceful candidates.</p> <p>We promote in our candidates a strong understanding of how learning occurs and the faculty to modify instruction for diverse learner needs. We value, embrace and celebrate diversity in pursuit of civility and social justice.</p> <p>We believe that a focus on student learning is the central purpose of teaching.</p>

Scholarship

A third theme of the Conceptual Framework is **Scholarship**. Scholarship is central to the commitment to life-long learning, which is strongly promoted by the University and the Seidel School of Education and Professional Studies. During professional preparation at Salisbury University our candidates meet the following expectations:

- Content knowledge grounded in the arts and sciences
- Pedagogical knowledge based on best practices and scholarly research
- Interactive and constructive models of teaching that engage all learners in an active and supportive environment
- Recognition that careers in education require lifelong dedication to scholarly learning and critical decision making

The study of content subject matter is an essential component of the professional knowledge of a teacher and other professional educators. Bransford, et al. (2000) has stated as one of the three guiding principles of learning that, “To develop competence in an area of inquiry, students must a) have a deep foundation of factual knowledge b) understand facts and idea in the content of a Conceptual Framework, and c) organize knowledge in ways that facilitate retrieval and application” (p. 16). These principles apply to teachers as well. For students to develop this deep and broad interconnected knowledge teachers must know this content in order to create engaging instruction for young students. As Shulman (1986) has asserted, “teachers should understand the content of the subject well enough to know why it is so” (p. 8).

Elementary Education and Early Childhood teacher candidates at Salisbury University

take a broad array of carefully selected general education courses in the Arts and Sciences, which include the study of Composition and Literature, History, Geography, Biology, Physical Science, Earth Science, Art, Communication and Mathematics as well as additional selected course work from the social sciences. In addition, each teacher candidate must declare a minor area of study with a minimum of 15-18 credit hours of concentration. Students may select from more than forty minors.

Consistent with N.C.L.B. legislation (2001), all candidates must exhibit strong content knowledge to be considered “highly qualified.” Secondary education candidates major in a content area such as English, Mathematics, Biology, Chemistry, Physics, Spanish, French, History or Health. Candidates in K-12 programs choose majors in Physical Education, Music or TESOL.

As Grossman, Schoenfeld & Lee (2005) argue, “We believe that a grounding of inquiry in a particular discipline will help prospective teachers create inquiry-oriented classrooms for their students” (p. 230).

Candidates at Salisbury University are well grounded in pedagogical content knowledge which allows them to apply specific strategies to best represent subject matter in instructional settings. Salisbury University candidates are grounded in pedagogical practices that first engage learners in addressing their existing knowledge or schema in order to effectively accommodate

and integrate the new learning into their knowledge. As Bransford et al. (2000) assert “Students come to the classroom with preconceptions about how the world works. If their initial understandings are not engaged, they may fail to grasp the new concepts and information that are taught, or they learn them for purposes of a test, but revert to their preconceptions outside the classroom” (p. 15).

This constructivist view of learning is supported by extensive research and theory based on scholarship from the 1930’s to present day (see for example Bartlett, 1932; Vygotsky, 1962, 1978; Piaget, 1973; Bruner, 1960; Bransford, 2000). Curricular knowledge, the understanding of teaching materials, texts, and visual aids is also a critical component essential to good teaching (Shulman, 1986).

In recent years a solid understanding of the use of technology to support the teaching/learning process has become essential (Darling-Hammond et al., 2005). Included under technologies are procedures such as word-processing, spreadsheets, and common networking tools such as e-mail, web browsers, audio, video, hand-held computing and text based conferencing. Salisbury University is strongly committed to preparing teacher candidates for teaching in a world of technology through required coursework, which addresses the Maryland Teacher Technology Standards (2002).

Included in the scholarship of pedagogy is attention to classroom management, group dynamics and differentiated instruction (Tomlinson, 1999; Tomlinson & Allen, 2000). This attention to differentiation speaks to the critical issue of diversity and students with special needs. Through coursework and field experiences in inclusion settings in Professional Development Schools, Salisbury University teacher candidates are grounded in the diversity of students and how this diversity makes teaching challenging and more satisfying.

We also believe that those who are preparing for a career in education should value the idea of what it means to be a scholar and to possess passion and enthusiasm for learning. Goodlad (1991) identified four dimensions of teaching 1) facilitating enculturation 2) providing access to knowledge 3) building an effective teacher-student connection and 4) practicing goal stewardship.

Teaching and scholarship are inextricably tied together. Boyer (1990) quotes Aristotle as saying, “Teaching is the highest form of scholarship” (p. 23). Salisbury University and the Seidel School of Education and Professional Studies is committed to the Boyer (1990) model of scholarship; namely the scholarship of discovery, the scholarship of integration, the scholarship of application and the scholarship of teaching. Traditionally a university dedicated to excellence in teaching, Salisbury University embraces this comprehensive definition of scholarship. In an era calling for research-based practices and pedagogy, it is critical that university faculty and teacher candidates dedicate themselves to the integration and application of scholarship as well

as to the scholarship of teaching. To this end teacher candidates are encouraged to engage in action research projects in classroom settings. Candidates are encouraged to raise questions and explore ways of testing hypotheses during their teaching candidacy. Engagement in action research helps candidates develop the skills of data collection, analysis, and reflection (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 1999; Hollingsworth & Sockett, 1994). Salisbury University strives to produce teacher candidates who welcome and practice the scholarship of teaching as well as in increasing commitment to the integration and application of scholarship to their educational decision making.

Thus scholarship serves as the foundation of teacher education and builds a base for reflective practice and ultimately student achievement. We also believe that students are more likely to learn from teachers who are themselves learners, who raise questions, attempt to solve problems and continue to find excitement in learning (Brooks & Brooks, 1993). Teacher candidates are strongly influenced by university faculty who value scholarship and who practice scholarship in their interactions with candidates from campus classrooms and PDS sites, to mentoring, advising, supervising interns, and exhibiting an overall commitment to schools and students.

Boyer (1987) has stated that, “Scholarship is at the heart of what the profession is all about...to weaken faculty commitment for scholarship is to undermine the undergraduate experience” (p. 1). Salisbury University strives to help candidates see that scholarship is a

central part of their education and subsequent teaching of students.

Table 3 illustrates how the theme of **Scholarship** is linked to national and state standards for preparation of education professionals as well as best practice and beliefs at Salisbury University. Comparisons are made with the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS), the Interstate New Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium (INTASC), the Maryland Teacher Technology Standards and the Maryland PDS Standards. In addition, belief statements articulated by faculty within the Unit convey beliefs about essential values and best practices for preparation of education professionals and illustrate the inclusive nature of the Conceptual Framework. This table is intended to represent the spirit of correspondence among standards and themes of the Conceptual Framework; in some instances, standards may apply to more than one theme.

Table 3. Scholarship and the Standards and Beliefs It Draws Upon.

Theme	INTASC Standards	NBPTS Standards	Maryland Teacher Technology Standards	Maryland PDS Standards	Practice and Beliefs at SU
Scholarship	<p>The teacher understands the central concepts, tools of inquiry, and structures of the discipline(s) he or she teaches and can create learning experiences that make these aspects of subject matter meaningful for students.</p> <p>The teacher plans instruction based upon knowledge of subject matter, students, the community, and curriculum goals.</p>	Teachers know the subjects they teach and how to teach those subjects.	<p>Access, evaluate, process and apply information efficiently and effectively.</p> <p>Use technology effectively and appropriately to interact electronically.</p> <p>Use technology to communicate information in a variety of formats.</p> <p>Demonstrate an understanding of the legal, social and ethical issues related to technology use.</p> <p>Use technology to analyze problems and develop data-driven solutions for instructional and school improvement.</p> <p>Design, implement and assess learning experiences that incorporate use of technology in a curriculum-related instructional activity to support understanding, inquiry, problem solving, communication and/or collaboration.</p> <p>Develop professional practices that support continual learning and professional growth in technology.</p>	<p>The PDS recognizes and supports the distinct learning needs of faculty/staff, interns, students, parents and community members.</p> <p>PDS partners work together to carry out the collaboratively defined mission of the PDS.</p> <p>The PDS accepts the responsibility of and is accountable for upholding professional standards for preparing and renewing teachers in accordance with the Redesign of Teacher Education.</p> <p>Partner institutions allocate resources to support the continuous improvement of teaching and learning.</p> <p>The PDS supports equitable involvement of Pre-K-12 faculty/staff and interns to support equitable outcomes for diverse learners.</p>	<p>We practice and value exemplary teaching, scholarship, and ethical judgment.</p> <p>We are committed to the concept of lifelong learning and inquiry.</p> <p>We embrace a model scholarship that includes the scholarship of discovery, integration, application and teaching.</p> <p>We believe that scholarship is at the heart of teaching.</p>

Collaboration

The fourth theme is **Collaboration**. From classroom learning encounters among students and teachers to the individual school as a learning community and to schools in the context of community and cultures, collaboration and co-operation is at the heart of the school experience. Goodlad (1991) in, *Teachers for our Nation's Schools*, states that the preparation of teachers should be determined in part by the corresponding needs and expectations of schools. Thus, teacher education does not exist in isolation; rather, it is a reciprocal process which ultimately should result in the improvement of schools. The professional collaboration and development processes embedded in the work of preparing teachers and other educational professionals at Salisbury University stems from a clear and thoughtful conception of high expectations for students that involves:

- the development of knowledge about schools as social and political systems
- establishing productive relationships with parents, educators, and other members of the community
- reaching a commitment to teaching, learning, and service through continual participation in professional development
- arriving at appreciation of the magnitude of the responsibility for education professionals
- participating in collaborative relationships with fellow candidates and mentors in forming learning communities

In order for these high expectations to be attained, candidates must realize that an on-going relationship and commitment to professional collaboration and development is imperative.

These collaborative relationships manifest themselves through substantive sequential curricular offerings, research assignments, on-site classroom observations, intensive field work placements, internship experiences in Professional Development Schools and a host of co-curricular activities that supplement and complement the learning process.

The development of knowledge about modern schools as social and political systems is grounded in the context of educational foundations that includes the history of education and the socio-cultural ramifications of public policy. Jencks (1972) argued strongly that, “children seem far more influenced by what happens at home than what happens at school” (p. 255). Coleman (1966) concluded that children’s achievement is linked directly to the social background in which they live. These two views have provided the impetus for school reform as we know it today. Social and political systems in contemporary society can only be understood from a multi-disciplinary perspective. Family dynamics, value shifts in society, the aging of America, and the demographic changes are salient issues that must be taken into account in order to understand the complexity of schooling in America (Tozer, 1993).

We believe, as proffered by The Council of Learned Societies in Education (1986) that the field of foundational studies offers three common perspectives appropriate to the development of knowledge about schools as social and political systems. These are: 1) an interpretive perspective that relies on the humanities and social sciences which informs students in viewing education within different contexts; 2) a normative perspective that encourages

students to examine and explain education in view of value orientations; and 3) a critical perspective which provides opportunities for students to examine and explain education in the context of its origins, major influences and consequences. These perspectives serve candidates well in grappling with the dynamics and complexity occurring in the social and political systems that impact our schools.

Establishing productive relationships with parents, educators and other members of the community is fundamental in reaching a commitment to teaching, learning and service through continual participation in professional development. Fullan (1991) argues that continuous professional development of teachers is the key to school improvement. Like so many other singular-factor solutions to multi-faceted phenomena, the endorsement of in-service education means little, without an accompanying understanding of the characteristics of effective and ineffective in-service education efforts. Fullan (1991) posits that nothing has promised so much and has been so frustratingly wasteful as the thousands of workshops and conferences that led to no significant change in practice when teachers returned to their classrooms.

DuFour and Eaker (1998) argue that schools must become professional learning communities with a shared mission, collaborative inquiry, collaborative teams, action orientation, a quest for continuous improvement and a willingness to be assessed on the basis of results rather than intentions. Salisbury University seeks to provide a model of an effective and collaborative learning community for our candidates throughout their program.

Preparation to engage in collaborative activities can no longer wait until a teacher engages in professional development as a practicing teacher. Faculty at Salisbury University have developed and implemented a collaborative teaching model that has been adopted at most of SU's internship sites whereby interns and mentors share in the planning and teaching of students in PDS classrooms. This model depends on the development of collaborative teaching skills. The model has a long and rich history in special education (Vaughn, 1997; Dicker & Barnett, 1996) that Connors (2005) with others have modified for SU's PDS settings. The need for collaborative skills for all teachers is further highlighted by the work of Hammerness, Darling-Hammond, and Bransford (2005) when they discuss that learning in collaborative contexts makes teacher candidates and teachers more open to feedback and learning from others.

The emphasis on collaboration manifests itself in several forms across the Unit. There is an emphasis on collaborative teaching during internships. There is a push toward using collaborative learning activities within a constructivist framework. There is much collaboration that occurs during program courses and methods courses, whereby candidates engage in group-oriented activities and projects. Skills learned in candidate preparation are translated to collaborative relationships in schools, including teaming and serving on school improvement teams and committees. And certainly, collaboration between teachers at school sites and the university are manifest in the creation and development of Professional Development Schools. What undergirds all of these activities and examples of collaboration is the notion that we learn

best in cooperation with others; that learning is very much a social constructivist act and mediated by one's culture (Vygotsky, 1978; Bransford, Derry, Berliner, and Hammerness, 2005).

Professional development is contingent on an inclusive process that establishes productive relationships for all who have a stake in the improvement of the educational enterprise. Bellanca (1995) asserts a constructivist theory that professional development resulting in change should not be defined from the individual's point of view but rather, in the context of a planned, comprehensive and systematic program designed by a system to improve all personnel's ability to devise, implement, and assess productive change in each individual and the school environment. Bellanca's theory differentiates among in-service, staff development, and professional development suggesting differences spring from: a) who makes the professional development decisions; b) how these decisions align with the organization's agenda; c) responsibility and accountability issues; and d) the notion of learning for change. Through this comprehensive effort he believes that professional development occurs systematically and the resulting change benefits overall school improvement.

We recognize the important role that Professional Development Schools can play in enhancing teacher education, as well as fostering professional development and collaboration. A growing body of research on the effects of Professional Development Schools provides evidence of improved preparation of pre-service teachers (Wiseman & Knight, 2003). Other studies report that teachers in Professional Development Schools show improvement in the areas of:

willingness to take instructional risks, being energized by new ideas, professional growth, an increased sense of professionalism, and improvements in classroom practice (Abdal-Haqq, 1998). Furthermore, our Professional Development Schools afford our students the opportunities to realize productive relationships with parents, educators, and other members of the community that culminate in a commitment to teaching, learning and service. Continued participation in collaborative professional development activities that are systematic in nature enhance the likelihood of individual development and overall school improvement.

The mission of schooling in today's society, simply put, is to prepare students to meet the challenge and demands of the 21st century. Increasingly this means preparation for a knowledge-based economy. If one is to succeed in such an environment, learning must become the paramount activity. Education professionals hold the key to learning. The decisions educators make determine what knowledge students will learn, how they will learn, and which students will have the most opportunity to learn. As members of professional groups, educators are policy makers who determine curriculum, instruction and assessment (Murray & Porter, 1996). In the classroom and school, educators communicate expectations, standards, and beliefs about students and their individual potentials. Within this context, educators play powerful roles in determining student success or failure (Anyon, 1987). We believe that consideration of the ethical implications of beliefs and actions is essential to the preparation of education professionals. Darling-Hammond (1996) notes that rather than merely "covering the curriculum" teachers must find ways to support and connect with the needs of all learners. This is the enormous challenge facing educational professionals as they come to realize and develop

an appreciation for the magnitude of that responsibility. Thus it is critical that educators see themselves as part of the larger community; acting in collaboration with fellow teachers, knowledgeable others within the professional community of educators as well as with parents and the community at large.

Table 4 illustrates how the theme of **Professional Development and Collaboration** is linked to state and national standards for preparation of education professionals as well as best practice and beliefs at Salisbury University. Comparisons are made with the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS), the Interstate New Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium (INTASC), the Maryland Teacher Technology Standards and the Maryland PDS Standards. In addition, belief statements articulated by faculty within the Unit convey beliefs about essential values and best practices for preparation of education professionals and illustrate the inclusive nature of the Conceptual Framework. This table is intended to represent the spirit of correspondence among standards and themes of the Conceptual Framework; in some instances, standards may apply to more than one theme.

Table 4. Collaboration and the Standards and Beliefs It Draws Upon.

Theme	INTASC Standards	NBPTS Standards	Maryland Teacher Technology Standards	Maryland PDS Standards	Practice and Beliefs at SU
<p>Professional Development and Collaboration</p>	<p>The teacher is a reflective practitioner who continually evaluates the effects of his/her choices and actions on others and who actively seeks out opportunities to grow professionally. The teacher fosters relationships with school colleagues, parents, and agencies in the larger community to support students' learning and well-being.</p>	<p>Teachers are members of learning communities.</p>	<p>Access, evaluate, process and apply information efficiently and effectively.</p> <p>Use technology effectively and appropriately to interact electronically.</p> <p>Use technology to communicate information in a variety of formats.</p> <p>Use technology to analyze problems and develop data-driven solutions for instructional and school improvement.</p> <p>Design, implement and assess learning experiences that incorporate use of technology in a curriculum-related instructional activity to support understanding, inquiry, problem solving, communication and/or collaboration.</p> <p>Develop professional practices that support continual learning and professional growth in technology.</p>	<p>The PDS recognizes and supports the distinct learning needs of faculty/staff, interns, students, parents and community members.</p> <p>PDS partners work together to carry out the collaboratively defined mission of the PDS.</p> <p>The PDS accepts the responsibility of and is accountable for upholding professional standards for preparing and renewing teachers in accordance with the Redesign of Teacher Education.</p> <p>Partner institutions allocate resources to support the continuous improvement of teaching and learning.</p> <p>The PDS supports equitable involvement of Pre-K-12 faculty/staff and interns to support equitable outcomes for diverse learners.</p>	<p>We practice and value regional collaborations for educational excellence.</p> <p>We believe that PDS sites offer the best opportunity for collaboration between the university and public schools.</p> <p>We seek to provide our candidates with opportunities for international experiences that promote an understanding of diverse cultures.</p> <p>We believe that the celebration of diversity is at the heart of teaching and instructional decision making.</p>

Conclusion

The Conceptual Framework defines the mission of the Professional Education Unit at Salisbury University. By its very nature, the Conceptual Framework must be a document of stability and consistency while at the same time being responsive to the changing priorities, research, new insights and professional mandates of our time. The four themes of **Informed and Reflective Pedagogy, Enhanced Student Learning, Scholarship, and Collaboration** remain the four cornerstone themes of our mission and commitment. These themes are articulated in our quest at SU to constantly strive to produce educators who are **Caring, Competent and Committed** to the education of our next generation of citizens.

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