**Hanover College Department of Education**

**CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK**

**At Hanover College, a community of teachers and learners prepare COMMITTED, competent, culturally responsive, and critically reflective new teachers.**

*The most effective learning comes through doing, acting on and in the world.*

*(*John Dewey)

Hanover College certainly expects those who pursue and secure successful careers in the teaching profession to be "committed." Teachers in today’s P-12 classrooms face a heterogeneous mixture of varying abilities, backgrounds and cultures thus creating a very challenging environment. It is imperative for a teacher to fully believe that all students can learn and be committed to instill a sense of accomplishment in each and every student. We use this term as an integral part in our conceptual framework and to activate our learning and teaching community, because we use commitment as a call to action. The call to action is explicit in Danielewicz (2001, 163): “Agency is the quality of an individual that makes doing possible; it means believing that one’s self is capable of action.”Our inspirations for, and expressions of, commitment foster positive, dispositions in our teacher candidates and enriching and lasting relationships among all who invest time, attention, and resources in formal instruction. We demonstrate our commitment to these relationships by engaging our teacher candidates in service and outreach opportunities within the local community and school systems. Our inclusion of this word in our conceptual framework demands that we make good our promise, our pledge, to continue our professional growth and learning so that we can provide a continuity of experience for and with our teacher candidates. We, as a department, demonstrate our commitment to the profession by being life-long learners, continually seeking professional development opportunities to broaden our knowledge of current trends in our respective disciplines. As Dewey argued continuity is the longitudinal criterion of educational experience: “What [students] learn in the way of knowledge and skill in one situation becomes an instrument of understanding and dealing effectively with the situations which follow. The process goes on as long as life and learning continue ([1938] 1963, p. 44).”

We are committed to educating and preparing new teachers who feel called to devote their growing knowledge and skill to developing the ability and zeal for life-long learning in others. We accomplish this goal by creating a climate of expectation for educational excellence and innovation in both the classroom and various field experiences. In each course, students are expected to critically think formulate connections between theory and practice. Teacher candidates are expected to be fully prepared for each class, ready to explain and effectively communicate their ideas as they seek to construct their personal knowledge and learn how students construct their knowledge. We expect our teacher candidates to demonstrate their commitment to the teaching profession throughout their studies by establishing rigorous expectations in numerous field experiences. Through a variety of experiences offered through community outreach venues, we expect our teacher candidates to become actively involved working with children. Teacher candidates are expected to do demonstrate professional dispositions, such as being dependable, punctual, showing initiative, cooperation, and flexibility, which are assessed throughout the junior and senior years. We expect our teacher candidates to be passionate about their work with P-12 children and to become an advocate for children.

This commitment to activating knowledge construction is paralleled and strengthened by our commitment to collaboration and collegiality which is reciprocal between teachers and candidates. We are a small and carefully selective education faculty. Low numbers and physical proximity naturally support the development of self-selected learning cohorts in both elementary and secondary programs. Close, caring networks are established among peers and faculty that extend well beyond the campus experience and engender excellent alumni and professional relations. For us, teaching is acting on our promise to work together to send new teachers into the profession committed to the belief that all P-12 students can learn and are capable of creating an effective learning environment for all children and young adults in ways that make a positive difference for us all.

**At Hanover College, a community of teachers and learners prepare committed, COMPETENT, culturally responsive, and critically reflective new teachers.**

*[The purpose and when to use knowledge] renders [the teacher’s] practice more intelligent, more flexible, and better adapted to deal effectively with concrete phenomena of practice. . . . Seeing more relations the teacher sees more possibilities, more opportunities. The teacher’s ability to judge being enriched, he [she] has a wider range of alternatives to select from in dealing with individual situations.* (John Dewey)

We value and support Hanover’s vision of an educated person as one who represents the ideals of the liberal arts. We view teaching as both art and science. A liberal arts education stresses looking at the world from different perspectives, using inquiry as a tool towards learning, and always remembering how important the reflective process is. This is a crucial ideal in an ever changing education world, as the profession of teaching has taken on more than just the educating of students. Teachers are now also mentors, coaches, social workers, counselors, listeners, and agents of empowerment and inspiration. Therefore, teacher candidates need to be well-versed in the liberal arts, pedagogy, and the subject or subjects they intend to teach in addition to the future trends which will affect their p-12 students. “Learning requires stable, flexible cognitive frameworks and consistent forms of adaptive assessment” (Cookson, 2009). For elementary and secondary candidates alike, this means developing a fluid, revolving interest in researching best practices, literacy, and specific disciplines that exceed expectations of individuals who plan to enter other professions. Our teacher candidates have excellent academic preparation in several ways. Teacher candidates must complete a rigorous general education course of study, be exposed to a second language and culture, and elect an academic major. Teacher candidates at Hanover College must pass a comprehensive examination or complete an Independent Study in their major field during their senior year. Education candidates also are required to participate in a cross cultural and an urban experience to broaden their knowledge in multiple educational settings and understand how these elements will affect their students.

Discipline-specific knowledge is the platform upon which is built the essential structures for learning how to learn. Pedagogical studies are equally rigorous. Understanding how children and young adults learn, and applying this competence, enables independent and social negotiation of ideas for problem-solving and creative expression. Elementary and secondary teacher candidates are well-grounded in children's and adolescents' physical, mental, social, moral, and emotional development. General education and foundation courses focus attention on human development, educational theory and practice. Advanced methods courses examine philosophies and theories of teaching children and young adults and how to account for their learning. All of our teacher candidates are expected to be knowledgeable of current curriculum, best practice, pre-school through grade twelve, and of proficiencies and teaching standards required by the Indiana Department of Education and the standards recommended by specialized professional associations (SPAS). Courses in methodology include field experiences designed to integrate learning theories, knowledge-bases, and teaching practices. The Interstate New Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium (INTASC) provide the principles that help us assess teaching practices.

Current research on the effectiveness of using immersive technology in teaching and learning suggests that key factors are the careful integration of technology literacy with traditional instruction, the development of clear objectives for the use of technology, ways to evaluate whether those objectives have been met, and the vital importance of teacher professional development related to technology. (ACT Policy Report, 2004) Teacher candidates at Hanover College utilize various forms of technology as a tool for p-12 student learning in their own lesson planning and in the delivery of instruction**.**

Teacher candidates and faculty at Hanover College are encouraged to integrate 21st Century skills into their planning, differentiated instruction, and assessment of student learning. Both faculty and future teachers utilize a circular model in order to guide instruction based upon data. It is important to not only master content and standards, but to also provide students with the 21st Century skills needed to succeed in society. As technology changes the landscape of the teaching profession, technology is also changing “the nature of learning,” through the democratization of knowledge, participatory learning, authentic learning, and multimodal learning (Lemke and Coughlin, 2009). In combination with 21st Century skills, to prepare for the ever changing educational landscape of the public school structure, Hanover College seeks to learn and collaborate with educators using new education models. By using inquiry we focus on the promotion of meta-cognitive skills that enable students to monitor their own learning and make changes if needed in our 21st Century world. "The 21st century mind will need to successfully manage the complexity and diversity of our world by becoming more fluid, more flexible, more focused on reality, and radically more innovative." (Cookson, 2009).

We continue to expand and refine our research and teaching competencies through professional activities that include publication, participation in professional organizations, research into best practice, and teaching children and young adults through classroom-based action research experiences in local classrooms. Our continuing education serves as impetus for our students’ partnership in life-long learning.

**At Hanover College, a community of teachers and learners prepare committed, competent, CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE, and critically reflective new teachers.**

*When we teach across the boundaries of race, class, or gender -- indeed when we teach at all -- we must recognize and overcome the power differentials, the stereotypes, and the other barriers which prevent us from seeing each other. Those efforts must drive our teacher education, our curriculum development, our instructional strategies, and every aspect of the educational enterprise. Until we can see the world as others see it, all the educational reforms in the world will come to naught.* (Delpit, 2006)

Professional commitment to responding effectively to the changing educational needs of the diverse linguistic, cultural, ethnic, and socio-economic representatives in our schools is fundamental in the development of beginning teachers. Hanover teacher candidates and professors regard highly the diverse needs and concerns of the communities we shape and share. We strive to be fully aware of, and responsive to, the multiple perspectives influencing our scholarship and service. Our aim is to structure creative, lived-through, vicarious learning experiences which foster interest in and knowledge of the voices and lives that differ from our own (Perrone, 1991; Delpit, 2006; Nieto, 1996). Our constant challenge is to enhance our understanding and deepen our respect for all peoples, and in so doing, affirm the commitment among ourselves and our teacher candidates that “we each have the solemn obligation to the other people who have entrusted us with the minds [and hearts] of their children.”

( Delpit, 2006).

Culturally responsive teachers are engaged in school communities where teaching includes getting to know students, their families, and traditions that are diverse in ethnicity, socio-economics, urban and rural setting, and religious backgrounds. This means that teacher candidates understand, empathize with, and participate in a culture different from their own. Consequently, teacher candidates learn to accurately and authentically represent other cultures and peoples in their classroom environment and instruction. This kind of engagement represents a framework for increasing teachers’ cultural competency and promoting social structural equality and cultural pluralism (Grant and Tate, 2001; Gollnick & Chinn, 2001). Gollnick & Chinn describe this teacher competency as being multicultural. The Hanover Education Department encourages this engagement for teacher candidates by utilizing James Banks’ Integration of Multicultural Curriculum model (1997) and assessing teacher candidates’ cultural competency through lesson series, unit plans, portfolio, and student teaching rubrics.

Hanover College strives to provide a culturally enriched academic and social environment for teacher candidates and professors. The liberal arts program require~~s~~ that first-year students be involved in interdisciplinary study and experiences with world languages, alternative cultures, and global perspectives. Hanover College encourages students to “reach outward and look inward” through at least one Off-Campus Experience that immerses a student in a culture or setting different from what he/she knows. The College and the Education Department strive to build upon the teacher candidates’ prior experiences, address misconceptions, and broaden awareness of privilege, so that teacher candidates are able to take the perspectives of others. All Hanover teacher candidates complete an individual cross cultural experience and an urban experience under the guidance of an Education faculty member as part of completing their teacher preparation program.

We offer courses and experiences that focus on multicultural, multilingual, gender fair, global education. Student teaching opportunities in Hanover and Madison, Indiana, provide students with valuable experiences among economically disadvantaged students and students with special needs. We maintain and advance professional communication networks with colleagues who are academic leaders in schools in Louisville, Kentucky, Cincinnati, Ohio, Indianapolis, Indiana, and Philadelphia, Pennsylvania where our student teachers meet the demands and earn the rewards of teaching in urban centers.

We are a community of learners and teachers who value the richness of diversity. We listen and learn with compassionate sensitivity, promote democracy, and advocate social justice in our own classrooms so that others will never suffer the lack of it in theirs.

**At Hanover College, a community of teachers and learners prepare committed, competent, culturally responsive, and CRITICALLY REFLECTIVE new teachers.**

*The simple fact is that our world is being transformed by profound*

*demographic, economic, technological, and global changes.*

(Arthur Levine, 2010)

Critically reflective educators continuously develop the dispositions and skills to question, but they especially question their own assertions and assumptions. To make sense of their experiences, they understand and express multiple perspectives concerning problems, events, people, and places in this ever changing and complex world. Before deciding what to believe or what action to take, they weigh competing arguments and seek logical explanations and evidence to support knowledge claims. Whereas in previous times, critical reflection implied an “objective,” “value-free” stance, the postmodern view acknowledges principled decision-making, empathetic responses, and caring attitudes. Teacher dispositions as identified in the INTASC Principles and teacher standards are in some ways developmental so that Hanover’s teacher candidates are first able to discern their personal beliefs, then apply what is learned and build confidence in becoming a teacher, and finally create and initiate effective teaching practices. Assessing dispositions helps to determine progress from novice to expert teacher.

Instead of promoting a traditional view of schooling, a critically reflective teacher education program encourages the freedom and capacity to shift from narrow socialization patterns, behaviorist shaping, and the limitations suggested by theories about how things have always worked. It implies on-going evaluation of individual and institutional practices. It fosters the construction and reconstruction of learning and teaching images, as well as projects generated by those dynamic models and inquiry. It creates opportunities for interdisciplinary connections. Such pre-induction programs require deliberate appraisal of classrooms and the social milieu—the diversity and changes in creeds, codes, and needs. Through collaborations with school communities, teacher candidates not only gain insights, but also engage in the design and implementation of teaching-learning sequences. They discuss with mentors both planned and spontaneous educational experiences. They work to address federal, state, and locally approved standards or expectations for students. Teacher candidates learn that inquiry includes seeking and productively responding to feedback from their peers, mentors, supervisors, and p-12 students. This continuous evaluation of practice is always linked to p-12 outcomes.

Members of the Department of Education subscribe fully to the open-minded spirit and attempt to conduct their professional lives in accord with the stated principles in the College mission: *Hanover College is a challenging and supportive community whose members take responsibility for lifelong inquiry, transformative learning and meaningful service.* We appreciate human diversity and the flexible independence that permits continuous experimentation, change, and reform. Professional educators in the local community emphasize the need for teachers who are lifelong learners, whose theories and practices evolve throughout their careers. While a global world view, environmental literacy, and an insightful understanding of how to utilize 21st Century skills are essential, teachers need to tap the enduring wisdom gleaned from history. Their pupils need reassurance that the development of human qualities takes precedence over the accumulation of information.

Deliberate appraisal of how and why things are done the way they are (or taken for granted) encourages teacher candidates to listen, empathize, give better feedback, be flexible and life-long learners. Critical reflection is a part of being a teacher scholar (Boyer, 1990)—a professional who contributes to learning communities as a habit of mind.

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