

I. Preface

In 1989, the faculty at the Department of Education at The Catholic University of America developed a conceptual framework that was consistent with the University's mission. That framework put reflection at the heart of teacher education. In developing the framework we were driven by what we saw as candidates' willingness to adopt practice in the field without question and to situate the problem in the student without examining other factors such as the curriculum, the teacher, the school, and the community context (Schwab, 1973; Posner, 1985). Therefore, we wanted to infuse the technical aspects of teaching with moral considerations so that candidates would think beyond the "how to" to examine the goals, consequences, and values of their words and actions from multiple viewpoints.

For many years this original reflective framework served the teacher education program well by capturing the essence of the kind of candidates we wanted to prepare. It functioned as an integral part of all teacher education programs, guiding and facilitating the reflective processes of all faculty members, candidates, and the professional community by providing a structure and language to talk about teaching and education. The faculty, professional community, and most of the candidates found the conceptual framework a useful and innovative tool to approach instruction, reflect on a situation, and use reflection to improve one's practice.

Faculty in the teacher education program worked hard to incorporate the framework into all courses. Components of the framework were introduced during the sophomore year introductory classes, with different classes emphasizing different aspects through class work and field experiences. The framework was thoroughly referenced and used in the methods classes during the junior year where all assignments were designed to make candidates think about not only the instructional methods they were using but also the contexts and consequences of their own actions and their impact on P-12 learning. During the senior year student teaching experience, candidates had to write an Action Research Paper (ARP) as part of the capstone experience that strongly encouraged them to internalize the framework by using it meaningfully to guide their thinking and action. That semester was not a test; it was a richly supported semester in which candidates began to see the linkage among the framework, their thinking, their actions, and their impact on student learning.

Because the framework was complex, it brought with it certain problems. First, because it was philosophical, it was more easily incorporated into some of the courses than others. The framework was not as well used in the other programs conducted in the department, with only spotty application in the professional development workshops and non-teacher education graduate programs. Even though the faculty was familiar with the framework, it was not as obvious how to include it in an assessment workshop or a graduate statistics class, for example.

Second, we found that some of our candidates were more successful than others in incorporating elements of the conceptual framework into their teaching practice. Over time the faculty observed that when candidates had the knowledge, skills, and dispositions to lead a classroom, they used the framework both in their practice and in their capstone action research projects. In doing so, these candidates seemed to successfully "teach against the grain" (Cochran-Smith, 1993) and their student teaching

and action research projects were well integrated. On the other hand we found that when candidates experienced difficulty with teaching, it was frequently difficult for them to reflect since survival in the classroom used up all of their cognitive energy (Anderson, 1993). This resulted in the struggling candidates who could have greatly benefited from the reflective process having the greatest difficulty in using it. The greatest challenge throughout the program was to make the conceptual framework developmentally appropriate for the candidates. Efforts were made to emphasize those aspects of the framework that had the most obvious connections to specific course content, especially early in the program. Candidates were required to interact or observe students for all courses. Explicit scaffolding of more elaborate applications helped most candidates succeed, but some candidates completing the teacher education programs never fully internalized the reflective process or recognized the power of reflective practice in general.

After the Department of Education's successful accreditation visit in 2000, the faculty agreed that it was time to revisit our reflective framework. A Conceptual Framework Committee was drawn from members of the existing Assessment Committee to form a new conceptual framework. The new conceptual framework needed to reflect new accreditation requirements by revisiting the philosophy, vision and mission of the department to ensure that (1) the teacher education programs were in accordance with new standards and recent research findings, and (2) that a Unit Assessment System was in place to evaluate the effectiveness of our teacher education programs. Apart from the requirements for accreditation, the new framework had to meet three additional departmental goals: (1) to distinguish between the philosophical component of **Reflective Practice** and the implementation aspect of the **Reflective Process**, (2) to speak more clearly and meaningfully to all stages of teacher development by reducing jargon and (3) to tie together all programs offered by the department, not just those in the teacher education program. These new goals would allow the department to more easily include the philosophical structure of the conceptual framework in all courses to create a coherent departmental message, vision and mission.

The Conceptual Framework Committee interviewed students and faculty see how the existing conceptual framework was being used in the different programs offered by the department. Faculty members were interviewed about how they understood the model and how the model reflected their own personal educational philosophy and expectations. Not surprisingly, significant differences were found. The Department decided that a common thread or theme must be found that allows for a unified departmental vision while still allowing for various personal interpretations. The committee incorporated everyone's feedback and shared it with the Council on Teacher Education and the professional community with which we work. Having heard their input and feedback, the Committee further modified the document for the faculty's approval in the Department of Education and the School of Arts & Sciences. It was then shared with colleagues in the School of Library and Information Science and the Benjamin T. Rome School of Music, who used it as the foundation for their own on-going reflective process. The following document represents our current understanding of the vision, mission and philosophy of the Department of Education. At the heart of our program is the principle of "reflective practice," so we have every hope that this document will continue to develop. To allow healthy and meaningful reflection, new

information must enlighten the process. Both educational research and the experiences of each candidate and faculty member enrich our own professional understanding of best practices in both P-12 teaching and teacher education instruction and should allow us to use new information in our own on-going reflective process.

1.1 Document Organization

This conceptual framework moves from the most general (vision and mission of the University), to the most specific (Unit Assessment System). We provide the vision and mission statements for the University to allow the reader to understand how our department fits into the larger goals of the institution. The Departmental Vision and Mission provide a snapshot of what we view as long-term success (vision) and essential functions to reach that success (mission). From there, the reader will reach the philosophical essence of the department. *Reflective Practice* represents both the essence of our philosophy (why we teach) and our unifying instructional theme (how we teach). As is true for most, if not all, teacher educational programs, the content of each individual course is built around the professional knowledge, skills and dispositions established by national and specialized professional associations. What makes our program special is this overarching theme of reflection that ties theories and field experiences together.

Out of the professional standards and the departmental philosophy of reflection come the necessary knowledge bases, learning outcomes and departmental standards. The reader will find the knowledge bases, learning outcomes, and departmental standards organized by the various sections described in the reflective practice section, but each is specifically linked to the related professional standards. There are also some general learning outcomes that are categorized as *professional* and are not linked to a particular reflective practice section. These include, for example, appropriate knowledge, skills and dispositions with respect to technology in the classroom, or with respect to professional career skills, including the development of electronic portfolios. Once the desired knowledge, skills and dispositions are identified in the learning outcomes and departmental standards, the Unit Assessment System shows the specific requirements that students need to meet as they move through the gates from application to the teacher education program to graduation and licensure.

2. The Vision and Mission of The Catholic University of America

The Catholic University of America is a community of scholars, both faculty and students, set apart to discover, preserve, and impart the truth in all its forms, with particular reference to the needs and opportunities of the nation. As a university, it is essentially a free and autonomous center of study and an agency serving the needs of human society. It welcomes the collaboration of all scholars of good will who, through the process of study and reflection, contribute to these aims in an atmosphere of academic competence where freedom is fostered and where the only constraint upon truth is truth itself. (*CUA Announcements, 2004-05, p.17*)

The Catholic University of America, the national university of the Roman Catholic Church in the United States, was founded in 1887 with the purpose of contributing to the advancement of knowledge through research and to the progress of people and society. Today it works as an institution to assure a Christian presence in the academic world to confront the great problems of society and culture. The Catholic University of America (CUA), an academic community of teaching, learning, research, and service, was founded on the following core values: *faith* upon which CUA was established; *scholarship* of the highest quality; *excellence* in research, teaching, learning, and service; *integrity* as intellectual honesty and personal moral accountability; *respect* for all people; *freedom* in the search for truth; *responsibility* for CUA's unique character, purpose, and mission; and *confidence* in CUA's identity, vision, mission, and values.

3. The Vision of the Department of Education

The vision of the Department of Education echoes the vision of the university through its goal of preparing future educators who embody the core values of personal faith, scholarship, excellence, integrity, respect and confidence (USCCB, 1995). By building upon the rich legacy and nationwide reputation of CUA, we strive to maintain a leading role in Catholic, private and public teacher education. We envision that our candidates leave our programs as professional and reflective educators who distinguish themselves as educators equipped with all necessary knowledge, skills and dispositions to fulfill their mission as teachers.

The Department of Education recognizes and values the importance of professional educators and expects our candidates to embody the best that our profession offers. We envision future teachers who will maintain the highest possible standards of professional behavior. This includes a lifelong pursuit of educational *excellence* in their own classrooms and continued *scholarship* through professional development. We expect our candidates to become leaders as they teach in a manner that reflects *confidence* in their convictions and abilities even in challenging educational environments. We require that our students demonstrate *respect* for all people through a commitment to diversity and the ability to provide and adapt instruction to meet the needs of each child. By working to see each child as a unique and valuable individual, we expect our future educators to carry out the key elements of their own *faith* in a way that validates the worthiness of each child while acting as an active role model of personal *integrity*. We anticipate future educators who understand the role of technology in the modern classroom, both as tools for students to master and as an educational tool to enrich learning opportunities.

Beyond general preparedness as classroom teachers, we expect our graduates to carry with them an understanding of the power of *reflective practice* as an educational philosophy that values continued growth and constant consideration of the multifaceted nature of every learning environment as well as the skills of a structured *reflective process*. We see our graduates making meaningful, informed changes to their own educational practices that improve the ability of each child to make the most of his or her inherent strengths. Through active reflection based on both the best of current educational research and a thorough understanding of the individual context of each child, our

graduates will act as change agents who have a positive and lasting impact on the child, the school and the community.

The CUA program is not concerned solely with developing basic teaching skills. While we recognize the need for candidates to demonstrate a basic level of technical competence, we view that achievement as only the beginning of their professional preparation. We are primarily concerned with the development of critical, reflective minds in morally grounded, self-motivated action. Moral decision-makers are grounded in a social justice orientation under-girded by Catholic social teaching and tradition (USCCB, 1999). They are devoted to the service ministry of education for the holistic development of the individual student (SCCE, 1982), and are committed to the common good of the local, national and global community (USCC, 1991). This institutional and departmental approach is grounded in the Catholic tradition of valuing the right of every student to have a quality, child-centered education (USCCB, 1995).

Our candidates become self-directed teachers who use professional knowledge and well-honed processes of reflection to confront actively, persistently and carefully the moral and ethical dilemmas in education in order to improve their practice to allow their students the greatest opportunities in a global and diverse world.

4. The Mission of the Department of Education

The Department of Education, a scholarly community of faculty and students, shares in the general mission of The Catholic University of America in recognizing the important role of education in shaping humanity. The teacher education program functions within this community to prepare teachers for Catholic, private, and public schools. To this end, our mission is to provide extensive opportunities for hands-on experiences in varied school settings with developmentally appropriate scaffolding in the context of rigorous departmental courses. This allows our candidates to obtain the necessary knowledge, skills and dispositions to be reflective educators who guide, assist, and motivate their P-12 students to be successful learners and contributing members of society. The faculty in the Department of Education is committed to the highest standards in teaching, research and service according to the guidelines and standards set forth by state and national accreditation agencies. In addition to these standards, the teacher education programs are designed based upon theories, research findings and identified best practices.

To foster the development of reflective practitioners, the Department has an obligation to model the reflective framework, constantly working to improve practice at the individual course level and at the program level. Candidates must be instructed on the use of reflective practice as philosophy and a useful reflective process as an implementation tool. Candidates must understand all of the elements that make up a learning environment, the questions that should be asked to analyze a given situation, and a method of identifying and addressing dilemmas that arise. Candidates must be provided with ample opportunity to reflect on their experiences both within individual courses and over the entire program in order to develop a well-considered educational philosophy.

5. Reflective Practice

5.1 Reflective Practice as Philosophy

The phrase “Reflective Practice” captures the two strands of educational philosophy at work in the Department of Education at The Catholic University of America. First, the concept of “reflection” as a tool to reach greater truth is in keeping with the Catholic Idealist/Realist educational tradition. Catholic education acknowledges the power of both faith and reason as paths to truth. We expect our candidates to value reflection as a method to personally improve in an on-going effort to become virtuous and mindful human beings. This reflective way of life extends to classroom practice in two ways. First, reflection on the educational process should become second nature. Constant consideration of how current routines and responses compare to ideal best practices should influence all decisions. Secondly, educators need to help their own students develop personal reflective skills that allow them to develop as virtuous members of society.

Complementing this idea of reflection is the second concept of “practice” that encompasses the Experimental philosophical approach proposed by Dewey. In this approach to living and learning, it is assumed that people learn from doing, from recognizing the value in what they do and from seeing how their new experiences compare to their own lives. This second branch ties in nicely with a strong emphasis in the ability of each individual to construct her or his own understanding of the world on both a social level and at the biological level. Not only do our courses rely heavily on personal field experience to inform the learning of our candidates, our candidates are constantly asked to consider how life experiences interact with the classroom experiences, both for themselves and for their own students. From these two traditions we find support for our belief that children can benefit from an understanding of the great world traditions that is developed through an experiential knowledge base grounded in the realities of children’s lives. Knowledge is acquired through sensory experiences in the world and then abstracted through reflection to guide future understanding and decision-making.

A guiding principle to our own philosophy for our candidates is found in the tradition of the Catholic Church as it applies to education. This includes a focus on the intrinsic value of all human beings as God’s creations and an acknowledgement of a spiritual dimension of human nature that requires nurturing and development. In the seminal document, *To Teach as Jesus Did* (1972), the Bishops of the United States articulated the importance of an educational experience that provided students with opportunities to learn Jesus’ message, to experience a Christian community, and to provide service to others. These elements are supported through the educational experiences that Department of Education provides its candidates. An application of the Catholic educational heritage grounds our program in core values that provide a set of principles for decision making within Catholic education (Schuttloffel, 1999) and also within a wider context (USCCB, 1995). Candidate experiences are not, however, limited to parochial school settings, and candidates are expected to consider how the various traditions of students from other cultural heritages can be respected and supported in a way that validates each child as a unique and worthy creation.

Besides preparing candidates with a strong foundation of knowledge, skills and professional dispositions, one of our most important goals has always been to foster a set of dispositions that embodies the intellectual and emotional aspects of teaching that are fundamental to reflective practice and affects a person's intellectual, moral spiritual, and physical development. Among the principles listed by the Catholic bishops of the United States for the reform of education are:

- All persons have the right to a quality education
- Parental rights and responsibilities are primary in education
- Students are the central focus of all education
- Quality teaching is essential to the learning process
- Quality education must address the moral and spiritual needs of students (USCCB 1995)

One assumption that guides our program is that pre-service teachers can be taught to reflect on their experiences. This can only be accomplished when candidates are given many opportunities to practice reflection in different contexts and situations. For this reason, all coursework and related field experiences are infused with content and assignments that promote the central goal of increasing reflective thought. A second assumption is field experiences, in unto themselves, are not sufficient to promote meaningful reflection. Candidates must be provided with tools that allow systematic observation and analysis. Candidates are presented with a reflective process to use when considering situations encountered in their own teaching experiences or observations. This process requires candidates to examine multiple elements of the learning environment, consider moral implications of their decisions and to draw on relevant research and theory for solutions in order to integrate knowledge across coursework and field experiences when making classroom decisions.

On a more fundamental level, we find that our departmental philosophy shapes the way we view each piece of our reflective process. Each element of the learning environment and each component of reflective deliberation can be approached in many ways. The departmental philosophy of education shapes the teacher candidate's learning experiences, just as each candidate's personal philosophy will shape the learning experiences of her/his future students. While we have a general goal of producing reflective professionals, we also have a specific goal in keeping with the institutional vision and mission of CUA of producing moral decision-makers. Our own reflective practice has led us to emphasize particular theories and philosophical positions in our program. Each aspect of the departmental reflective process is based on a rich history of educational research and philosophy described in more detail in the next section.

5.2 Reflective Practice as Process

Principles from cognitive psychology suggest that conceptual frameworks work like scaffolds (Perkins, 1987). Frameworks act, therefore, as artificial structures that enable candidates to process and organize information at a more advanced level than they could carry out independently. Frameworks can help candidates organize information and make connections across course content in ways that otherwise would be unavailable

to them. Garman (1984) has also argued that for supervision purposes, teachers and supervisors need a common language or framework that presents teaching in a manageable way. As such, the Department of Education at CUA has worked to include in this conceptual framework a device that helps the candidate understand how the abstract reflective practice can be used to develop a working process which links directly to their own experiences and the professional standards that they are trying to meet. This **Reflective Process** springs out of the dual nature of the departmental philosophy, where the *interpretation* of what is *experienced* in light of that which is ideally *desired* forms the three-part essence of reflection. These three aspects include *elements of the learning environment* (what different things are playing a role in this situation?) and *educational dilemmas* (what can be done when different values come in conflict?) and the *components of decision-making process* (what questions should I be asking myself to systematically improve the teaching/learning process?). The program is grounded in the belief that the reflective educator is one who is best prepared to analyze and respond to the myriad of challenges that face modern educators at all levels.

We use Berlak and Berlak's (1981) definition of reflection to guide the teacher education program at CUA. Berlak and Berlak point out the importance of standing apart from the self to examine critically one's actions and the context of those actions for a more consciously driven mode of professional activity. Indeed, through the use of the framework, we hope to expand the quality and scope of candidates' reflection, whereby,

- improving the quality of one's reflection involves relating knowledge to practice, viewing a situation from multiple perspectives, and seeing alternatives to one's thinking and actions, and
- the scope of reflection involves analyzing one's own teaching and the school context for the purposes of transformative action, seeing the consequences of one's actions, and understanding the broader social, political and moral context of teaching and schooling.

In other words, reflection is not merely asking a lot of questions or narrowly evaluating one's teaching strategies. Rather, reflection is broad in scope, normatively oriented and linked to action. These actions then serve as the starting point for further reflection as the results are again considered from multiple perspectives and in light of both narrow educational outcomes and broad social, political and moral contexts. The most pronounced goal of our programs in teacher education is to prepare teachers who are reflective about their work so they are able to assess and improve *continually* their own teaching through scholarly inquiry and collaboration with colleagues in order to improve the lives of their students in and out of the classroom. In keeping with this emphasis on continual reflection and assessment, candidates are shown how to reflect in (on-going), on (past) and for (future) practice.

5.2.1 Components of the Decision-Making Process

To help our students master the vital skill of self-reflection, the program identifies three ways, or modes, of examining all learning environments. These intertwined approaches allow the developing and experienced educator to consider how the different elements of every situation interact and how best to respond to the current situation.

These three components of the decision-making process are based on Van Manen's (1977) work on ways of knowing or of doing social science, but emphasize the interactive nature of those methods of inquiry over the strictly hierarchical approach implied in Van Manen's work.

As represented in the figure below (Figure 1), the three components of the decision-making process are the *philosophical*, *interpretive* and *descriptive*. Each is characterized by questions that help the reflective practice.

The *philosophical mode* of reflection builds from a philosophical tradition that involves a constant critique of the often-overwhelming impact of institutions and repressive forms of authority. All educators must prepare candidates to work within a larger society, and since CUA places a strong emphasis on the role of social justice and community service for all of its students, the Department of Education feels a special pressure to sensitize our teacher candidates to issues of justice, equality and freedom. Each element of the learning environment can and should be considered in light of the larger social needs of the learner. Being concerned with the worth of knowledge and the

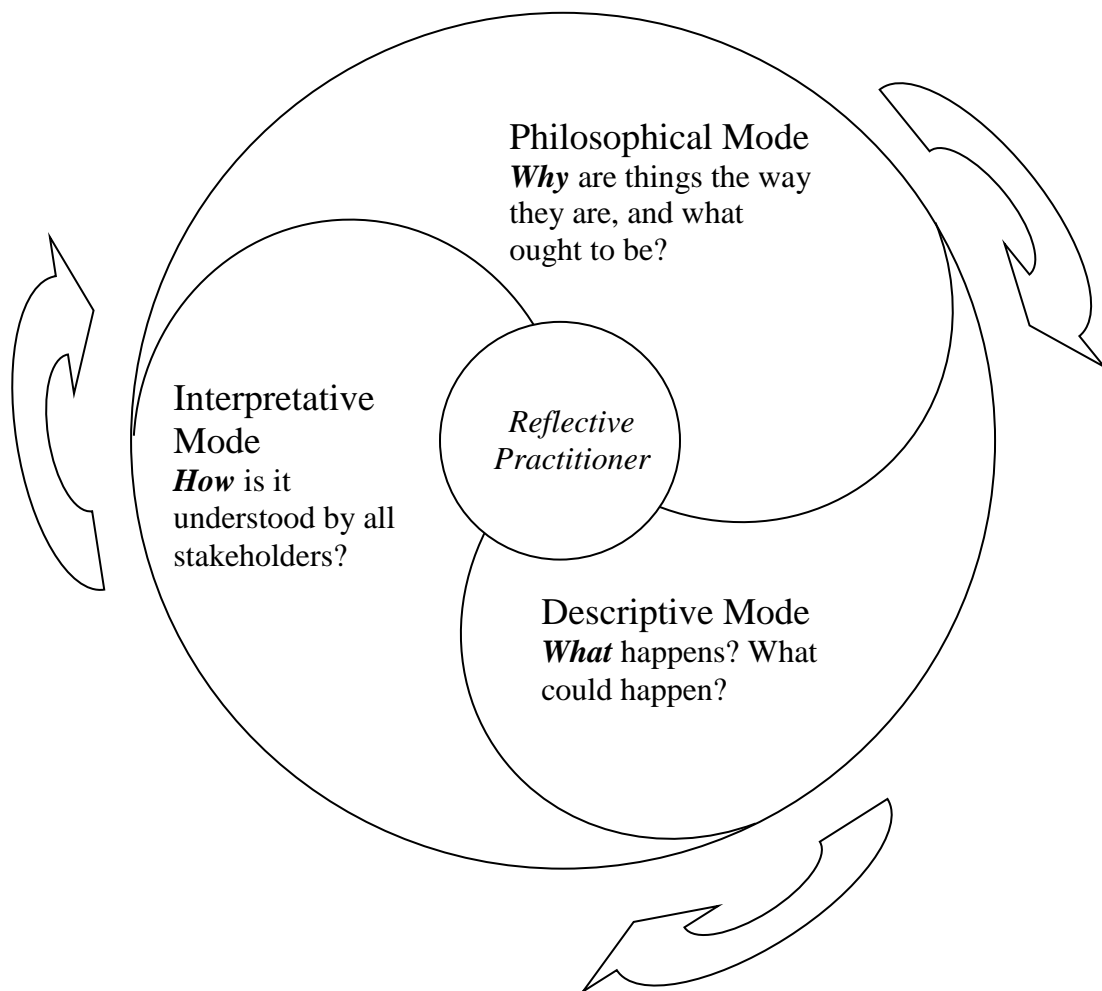


Figure 1: Components of the Decision Making Process:
In, on and for Reflective Practice

role of education as a road to social power is a fundamental hallmark of the reflective practitioner in the CUA teacher education program. The key questions that need to be addressed in this form of inquiry include: *Is this the most worthwhile solution and for whom? (the teacher? the learner?) Why is it “good” or “not good”? Is it ethical? Is it just? Does it have merit, value? By whose criteria or philosophy? Does it recognize each learner as a unique, spiritual being?*

The *interpretive mode* is taken from a philosophical tradition that emphasizes the role of personal experience in shaping the creation of knowledge. This approach employs the process of analyzing and clarifying individual and cultural experiences, meanings, perceptions, assumptions and pre-judgments through communication and common understandings. To make meaning in this approach, the educator must consider how prior experience shapes future understanding not only for her- or himself, but also for all stakeholders. Personal meaning for all concerned then influences how philosophical decisions and pedagogical choices are made. Key questions that need to be addressed in this form of inquiry include: *What meaning did it have for whom? What message was sent by this decision? How do individuals and groups experience events?*

The *descriptive mode* is based on a philosophical tradition that, in turn, is taken from the principles or standards of technological progress, such as economy, efficiency, and effectiveness with a concern for means rather than ends. This mode of reflection, if used in isolation, is at the heart of a teacher-as-technician approach to education. Van Manen (1977) emphasized a purely explanatory interpretation of this form of inquiry where the educator simply stated what was done in a given situation. In Van Manen’s model the “technical” level of reflection was considered the lowest level of practical rationality for determining curriculum choices and decisions.

The descriptive component as presented in the CUA framework is more active. Educators are expected to consider both the options that were not taken as well as choices that were made. While this mode of deliberation is the least abstract, it represents the “data” for further analysis, completing the interconnected loop of reflective practice. It is important to treat the descriptive component of decision making as an integral part of a three-component process. Since the descriptive approach is the most concrete of the three modes, it is the easiest to explain, if not always the easiest to implement fully. Educators must guard against oversimplified answers that can be reached if the interpretive and philosophical modes of reflection are not also considered. Key questions that need to be addressed in the descriptive form of inquiry include: *What exactly is going on? What actions and behaviors are involved? What techniques are used? What techniques could have also been used? What external pressures are shaping classroom actions?*

It is important to keep in mind that the decision making process does not ensure that every educator comes to the same conclusion about the best solution strategy in a particular situation. These modes of reflection prompt the reflective practitioner to ask certain types of questions, but the answers each individual produces are grounded in the experiences and beliefs s/he holds. The decision making process is used to help the educator consider the teaching/learning process in general and in its specific application in a way that allows a coherent and morally defensible approach to teaching. By emphasizing the interactive nature of reflection and practice, reflective practitioners can work for steady improvement in the learning of all students.

5.2.2 Elements of the Learning Environment

In order to help candidates understand the complexity of any learning environment, the Department of Education has identified eight elements that can be used to describe, individually and in combination, the many aspects of educational circumstances. These are visually represented by Figure 2. All educators must have a working knowledge of each element that makes up learning experiences, just as they must accept the responsibilities and appropriate dispositions necessary for professional practice. As is true of the three components of the decision-making process described above, these elements are intertwined and cannot be truly considered in isolation, but different situations tend to emphasize different elements. We expect our candidates to demonstrate both a thorough understanding of each element and an ability to act as critical thinkers and problem solvers when evaluating the conflicting needs of each element for each student. It is from conflicting needs of the various elements that many problems and potential dilemmas arise, and educators who are not comfortable considering the elements in combination as well in isolation are not prepared to find the approach that best meets the needs of their students. It is in the discussion and reflection on each component that our candidates establish the content and pedagogical **knowledge bases** that will serve them after graduation. It is also here that the ability of the Department of Education to meet the professional standards expected of our graduates is most easily mapped.

A reflective practitioner uses the three essential pieces (components of the decision-making process, elements of the learning environment, and consideration of educational dilemmas) of the reflective process to consider continually each element

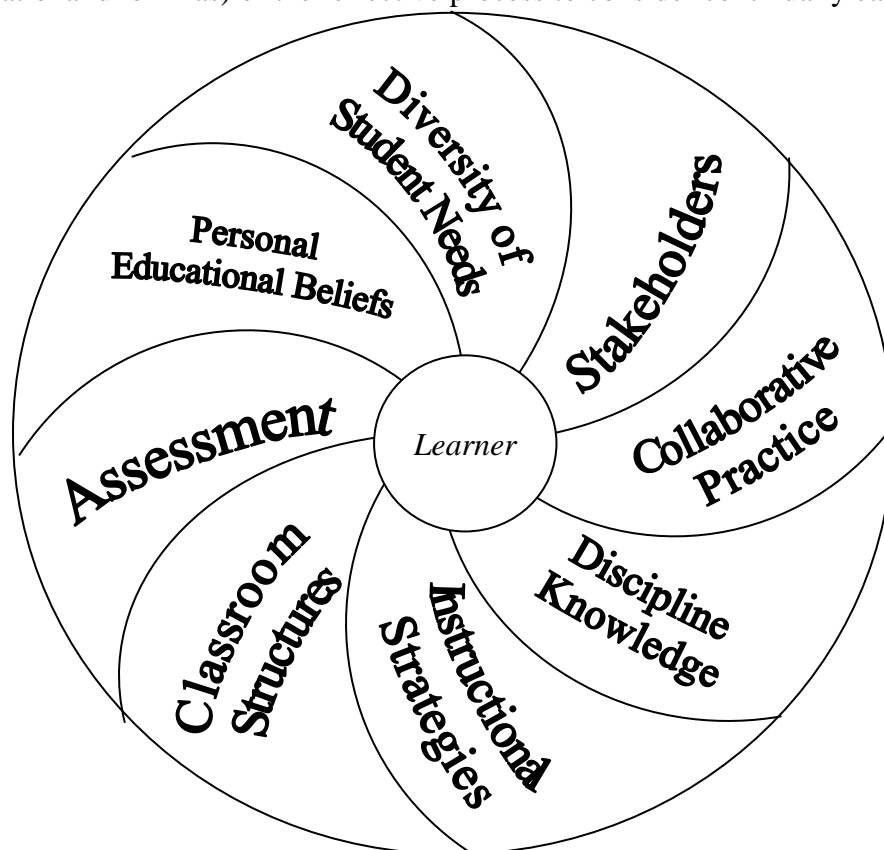


Figure 2: Elements of the Learning Environment

within the system and then modifies instruction accordingly. As each element is described below, examples are provided of possible conflicts that can emerge and of important issues that must be considered. More specifically:

5.2.2.1 Personal Educational Beliefs (INTASC Principle 9)

The Department of Education believes that educators are instrumental in shaping the future and have a responsibility to consider the larger social consequences of the actions they take in and out of the classroom. Reflective practitioners have an active understanding that the personal educational beliefs guide their pedagogical choices and shape their interpretation of all educational events. Since individual beliefs are grounded in previous experience it is possible that a well-meaning educator could have a narrow view of education. It is therefore important that reflective educators are exposed to how educators and theorists have viewed education in the past and how those beliefs have shaped society. These two pieces (personal experiences and historical perspectives) then act as the starting point that informs a reflective practitioner's own personal educational belief. We train our candidates to articulate their educational philosophy and its consequences to others and to explain the significant theories and personal experiences that have contributed to that personal perspective. . The conceptual framework provides a structure to foster the type of objectivity necessary to reflect meaningfully on one's own personal educational beliefs and their consequences.

It is important to distinguish between the philosophical component of the decision-making process described above and the personal educational beliefs that make up one of the eight elements of every learning environment. The philosophical mode of reflection prompts the reflective practitioner to ask and answer questions concerning worth and merit of the entire teaching/learning process while an educator's personal educational belief is one of the aspects questioned during that reflective process.

5.2.2.1.1 Integrating Personal Educational Beliefs into the Conceptual Framework:

Every educator needs to maintain a clear understanding of his or her own philosophical biases and priorities and how those beliefs shape classroom decisions. This element should be assessed using each of the three components of decision-making just as any other element. The reflective educator must consider what her or his personal educational beliefs are and how they might be changing (descriptive), how others might interpret actions as a representation of the educator's beliefs, and what meaning others might draw from their understanding of those personal beliefs (interpretive), and what greater impact that personal philosophy plays in the preparation of each learner (philosophical). An educator's personal educational beliefs can also be a key factor in control dilemmas that arise between students and teachers, and teachers and other stakeholders as defined below.

5.2.2.2 Diversity of Student Needs (INTASC Principles 2, 3)

It is important for candidates to understand the needs of each child, including intellectual, emotional, social and physical needs. Our candidates must demonstrate the ability to personalize instruction based on diverse backgrounds, developmental levels,

special needs and learning styles. We draw heavily on the works of Ogbu (1978), Gay (1983), Nieto (1996), Banks & Banks (1997), and Bennett (1999) to help our candidates understand why and how to adapt instruction based on differences of gender, class, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, race, cultural and linguistic diversity, learning styles and special needs. We draw on the works of Piaget (1952) Erikson (1963) and Vygotsky (1986) to help them learn about the nature of development, motivation, and constructivism.

5.2.2.2.1 Integrating Student Diversity into the Conceptual Framework:

The majority of teachers in American public schools are white women, while an increasing percentage of students are children of color. This disparity may present a dilemma for teachers. For example, candidates who have grown up valuing students who sit straight in class, work quietly and cooperatively, and speak only when recognized are confronted by teenagers whose cultural backgrounds prize spontaneity, non-verbal responses and behaviors that conflict with the candidate's preferences must consider what the consequences of requiring such students to conform to their preferred behavior in terms of the ultimate goal of facilitating each student's learning.

5.2.2.3 Stakeholders (INTASC Principle 10)

Reflective practitioners have an understanding of how different stakeholders in the educational experience can have different goals for, and interpretations of, learning experiences. Each student, parent, administrator, future employer and community member has a stake in how schools function, as do social institutions that oversee and interact with the education process. In the current age of high stakes standardized testing, it is important to consider how educational structures created through governmental organizations also represent a stakeholder of sorts that shapes instruction. Our candidates demonstrate the ability to take all those perspectives into account when developing learning opportunities for students and are able to explain how they resolved conflicts between competing stakeholders. In order to balance the often-conflicting demands of competing stakeholders, candidates must learn how to identify the needs of each of them (Apple, 1993, Giroux, 1983, Ladson-Billings, 1994, McLaren, 2003). We not only encourage the development of a reflective practitioner who continually evaluates the effects of his or her own choices and actions on others, but urge the candidate to consider how other stakeholders influence the classroom teacher directly and indirectly.

5.2.2.3.1 Integrating Stakeholders into the Conceptual Framework:

Classroom teachers can choose instructional strategies and assessment tools that take into account stakeholders' long-term goals of education and allow effective feedback from all stakeholders on progress toward those goals (descriptive). Educators that recognize the validity of competing perspectives and work to allow various voices to be heard can deepen their own understanding of how the educational process is affecting their students (interpretive). On a philosophical level, the acceptance of a reasonable difference of opinion allows for a more reflective consideration of all aspects of the educational process. Reflective practitioners understand that the construction of personal meaning

tends to confirm previous expectations, so they look for alternative meanings in the goals and understanding of other stakeholders.

5.2.2.4 Collaborative Practice (INTASC Principles 6, 10)

Reflective practitioners have an understanding of the importance of effective communication and collaboration with and among students, families, professional colleagues and other community members. (Walther-Thomas, Korinek, McLaughlin & Williams, 2000). Conflict resolution is also emphasized as an important skill for candidates (Fisher, Ury, and Patton, 1981). In addition, candidates need to learn how to collaborate with colleagues and community members in order to improve the learning opportunities for their students. Our candidates see good models of education teams and get practice themselves working in such teams. They are then given the opportunity to evaluate their own contributions to the effectiveness of the team's functioning. Some candidates also prepare for co-teaching and consultation roles. Candidates rely on foundational and contemporary educational research as a form of professional collaboration to enrich their own decision-making processes. Our successful candidates demonstrate the ability and habit to communicate and collaborate with other candidates and other educators, which foster their continuing growth as education professionals. Candidates are asked to reflect on the collaborative nature of their own action research projects (Levin, B. and Rock, T., 2003).

Reflective practitioners must be strong advocates for best practices in teaching, even when that means changing their own and working to influence the behavior of others. Being an advocate can be tiring and demoralizing when change does not come easily; thus, candidates benefit from the support of their colleagues. (Wenger, McDermott, & Snyder, 2002). By including collaborative practice as an essential element of the learning environment, candidates are encouraged to constantly look for ways to share resources.

5.2.2.4.1 Integrating Collaborative Practice into the Conceptual Framework: To address issues of collaboration, Special Education candidates organize and hold a collaborative meeting including the student's parents, general education teacher, and other stakeholders. Having conducted the meeting, candidates reflect on the successes and difficulties experience during the meeting. Other candidates might analyze a case where a teacher and a parent do not agree on the educational goals for a child. As part of this exercise candidates learn to identify the relevant facts in the case and look to the relevant educational literature to identify possible solution strategies (descriptive), consider possible outcomes for handling the case and the impact of one's decision from the perspective of the student, the teacher, and the parent (interpretive). Finally, candidates are to choose appropriate resolutions and articulate what educational goals are served by their choice of resolutions (philosophical).

5.2.2.5 Discipline Knowledge (INTASC Principles 1,2)

Professional standards require that teachers possess knowledge of the subject matter, or discipline, that they are teaching, and the ability to create meaningful learning

experiences that reflect their understanding of both the subject matter being taught and learner needs. A strong, liberal arts background provides a broad understanding of discipline knowledge and the structure and processes of inquiry specific to each discipline. Schulman (1987) goes so far as to define discipline knowledge as the very incorporation of content-specific knowledge (the subject matter that candidates teach) and pedagogical content knowledge (the ability to interpret, reflect on and adapt subject matter knowledge in order to make it accessible to the learner). In this respect, discipline knowledge is integrated across knowledge bases and requires, beyond any body of knowledge, consideration of students, subject matter and teaching/learning context (Cochran, DeRuiter & King, 1993). The role of technology in a particular discipline is of particular interest, as we expect our candidates not only to demonstrate the use of technology within different fields, but to use educational technology to enhance various instructional strategies.

5.2.2.5.1 Integrating Discipline Knowledge into the Conceptual Framework: A dynamic view of discipline knowledge is required to meet adequately the demands of preparing teachers and students for a changing technological and global society. With regard to technology as a component of discipline knowledge, for example, teachers must be prepared to model authentic uses of technology in the classroom, going beyond a technical, skills-based approach (descriptive) to a more abstract view that questions the role of technology in and beyond the classroom (interpretive) (Otero, et al, 2005). We ask our candidates to consider critically the use of technology (philosophical) as outlined by Schwartz (1996): Does the use of technology encourage a focus on information rather than ideas? Do learners have equal access to technology resources in school and in the home? Does use of technology promote literacy or interfere with literacy development? What is the role of government in regulating use of technology?

5.2.2.6 Instructional Strategies (INTASC Principles 4, 7)

The wider the array of research supported instructional strategies are from which to choose, the better equipped the reflective practitioner is to use a strategy appropriate to the needs of his/her students. The instructional strategies that we teach our candidates are rooted in a pedagogy devoted to differentiation (Thomlinson, 1999). As content area experts, our candidates consider how various types of instruction support their students' specific domain goals and can articulate the pedagogical content knowledge that informs their own choices. They demonstrate the ability to implement appropriate strategies based on the knowledge of the learner, the task and the context. Our candidates are taught social models like cooperative grouping (Slavin, 1983) that can build on and expand student interaction. We emphasize the learner-centered approaches of Dewey (1938) that foster the development of inquiry and problem-based learning. We teach candidates teacher-centered approaches such as direct instruction and concept teaching that rely heavily on an information process approach. With a multitude of models at their disposal, our candidates can choose which one(s) best suit their classroom environment.

5.2.2.6.1 Integrating Instructional Strategies into the Conceptual Framework: When approaching an instructional task, candidates may ask which strategies will allow them to help their students meet short-term instructional objectives. They consider the impact of the possible choice(s) on all students and what the teacher can do to help students who need additional support (descriptive). Candidates need to explore what large messages are sent by individual strategy choices. Do students understand their role in the learning process differently if they are regularly encouraged to work in groups rather than independently, for example (interpretive)? Candidates must also consider which strategies will best achieve their overall educational goals and objectives for their students (philosophical). CUA candidates use technology appropriately within instruction to enhance student learning and consider technology as one of many resources to attain carefully differentiated instruction. Our candidates demonstrate the ability to consider alternative strategies when planning instruction and work to make the most of each student's personal strengths.

5.2.2.7 Classroom Structures (INTASC Principle 5)

Reflective practitioners have an understanding of classroom structures, including organization, management, and curriculum. Classroom structures can help to create a community where students care about themselves and others and are oriented toward learning (Charney, 1998).

Many of new educators harbor a fear of “losing control” in a classroom and failing to reach the academic objectives they have set for their students. Studying and reflecting on classroom structures help candidates practice the creation of learning environments that are psychologically safe, are democratically and socially just, encourage positive social interaction and self-motivation and provide the challenges and successes that students need. As candidates develop the skills to create an environment conducive to learning, we encourage them to reflect on what messages the educator, peers and curriculum send to each student, what the student is communicating about his or her needs through behavior, and how meeting a student's needs relates to societal values. Our candidates learn that effective teachers plan, organize, create procedures, have clear instructional goals, differentiate instruction, and provide feedback in ways that enhance student engagement and prevent or limit disruption (e.g. Brophy, 1983; Emmer & Evertson, 1981). Our candidates understand how to establish positive teacher-student and peer relationships, communicate with families and colleagues, and when to use problem solving and positive behavior supports.

5.2.2.7.1 Integrating Classroom Structures into the Conceptual Framework: Our candidates also worry whether they will successfully address all of their students' personal and academic needs, given all their administrative tasks. Is there sufficient time for instruction? Is there adequate individualization of instruction? Candidates practice identifying dilemmas associated with classroom structures. Once dilemmas are identified, candidates examine them using the various components of the decision making process. For instance, one dilemma that often comes up in the classroom concerns the type of motivation that is the most conducive to learning. Using the descriptive mode, candidates think about what learning opportunities can be created for all students to allow them to experience success to foster intrinsic motivation and what types of extrinsic

motivation reinforces each individual student. In the interpretive mode, candidates address what kind of a message is sent to the children about the relevance and value of knowledge when learning is presented as meaningful, interesting, and fun or when learning is valued as a tool to achieve some other external reward. Finally, in the philosophical mode, candidates can ponder why intrinsic motivation is normally presented as superior to extrinsic motivation in a society that measures success in terms of material gain. They understand that the organization and philosophy of their particular institution and community impact the management and dynamics of their classrooms on a day-to-day basis.

5.2.2.8 Assessment (INTASC Principle 8)

Reflective practitioners understand that formative and summative assessment involves multiple sources of information and methods of evaluation. Our candidates demonstrate the ability to use the results of formative and summative assessment to modify their own instructional choices. They can also appraise student progress using a variety of techniques and communicate the results of that assessment, including the results of standardized tests, accurately to students, parents and other professionals. The external pressures of high-stakes testing are considered influential on classroom decisions.

5.2.2.8.1 Integrating Assessment into the Conceptual Framework: The notion of assessment, as is true for each element of the learning environment, can be considered at multiple levels. On one level, a candidate may simply look at achievement scores of a student or group of students in order to assign a letter grade or place them in a category. In this mode, candidates must have a thorough understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of different forms of assessment (descriptive). At the interpretive level, a candidate might design and use an assessment tool for diagnostic, not achievement, purposes. Here the goal would be to interpret what the students' current knowledge base is and subsequently use that information to guide instruction, as well as future assessments. This use of assessment has been applied successfully in educational psychology (e.g., Anderson & Schunn, 2000; Anderson, Douglass, & Qin, in press), and to help students interact with intelligent computer tutors. Candidates can also question how the students and parents understand the forms and results of assessment. At the philosophical level, candidates might be asked the value or worth of certain forms of assessment: for example, is standardized or high-stakes testing a fair indicator of achievement for all students, or are some segments of society advantaged while others are left at a disadvantage, or what positive or negative impact does high-stakes testing have on other aspects of the learning environment?

5.2.3 Educational Dilemmas

In keeping with the philosophical emphasis on reflective practice, the Department of Education at CUA tries to emphasize the difference between *problems* (with clear, if

difficult, solutions) and *dilemmas* (which put values in conflict and have no single best answer). The word dilemma can be understood as a situation demanding a choice between equally undesirable outcomes. Dilemmas in education come about daily, and often because a teacher has to decide between equally desirable ends due to a lack of time (Music or art? Literature or creative writing?) A dilemma can arise whenever values are in conflict and teachers balance competing needs without ever fully defining and/or satisfying any particular goal. Within the conceptual framework of the Department of Education at CUA, the issue of “dilemma” is vital. Rich, reflective practice allows one to distinguish between problems and dilemmas, and provides a tool to reach an informed decision on how to best meet the needs of the learners.

Berlak and Berlak (1981) used the word dilemma in conjunction with education to describe neutral views or perspectives that are held by teachers on fundamental educational issues. Based on the teacher’s knowledge and beliefs about learning and teaching, teachers’ actions in the classroom might be plotted on axes bounded at the extremes by opposing ideas or views about various control, curriculum and societal issues. In an absolute sense, these views cannot be regarded as right or wrong. Rather these ideas simply represent different, but legitimate, perspectives on an issue. Consider the range between “child as student” and “whole child.” Should schools focus on teaching “academic” skills or on “life” skills? Should schools focus on school or home environments? Should money be spent on new books or free breakfast? Where a teacher is found on such a continuum will dramatically impact how the teacher will decide how to act in a specific situation. By analyzing common classroom situations in light of these broad essential questions, the reflective practitioner can reach a deeper understanding of how other ethically responsible educators can come to different conclusions in the same situation. This allows the reflective practitioner to consider a broader variety of possible solution strategies. The reflective practitioner who then employs the components of the decision making process to examine the issues will be aided in making informed, principled choices. In all cases, the teacher’s personal experiences, philosophy of education, and knowledge of educational theory and practice will influence the decisions that the teacher as a reflective practitioner will reach.

As mentioned above, Berlak and Berlak (1981) summarize their sixteen “dilemmas”, or essential questions into three categories. It is important for the reflective practitioner to keep in mind that these do not represent every possible issue that could be represented as an ethical spectrum in education, but they do act as a convenient starting point. These three categories are described below.

5.2.3.1 Control dilemmas

Control dilemmas address perspectives on the sharing of power in the schools and the type of responsibility the school takes for its children. The example above (“whole child” vs. “child as student”) fits into this category. (Is the school responsible for meeting a wide range of needs and developing a wide range of skills or only for intellectual and cognitive areas?). The area also includes many issues that are key to classroom management (control of time, control of activities, etc).

5.2.3.2 Curriculum Dilemmas

Curriculum dilemmas focus on the perspectives on knowledge itself, its worth, creation, and purpose for the individual. An example of this type of dilemma could address the idea of “knowledge as public” or “knowledge as private” (Should schools emphasize a set body of facts and skills valued by mainstream society or experiential knowledge that is useful to the individual learner?)

5.2.3.3 Societal Dilemmas

Societal Dilemmas address both the role of education in larger society as an instrument for the transmission of culture and as an agent for change, and the role of the educational setting as an intact community with questions of justice and governance comparable to that of the larger world. An example of this type of dilemma could address equal vs. differential allocation of time, materials and resources (Should time, materials and resources be distributed evenly regardless of individual student characteristics or differentially among learners?)

5.2.3.4 Dilemmas in the Reflective Process

Normally educators fall somewhere in the middle of the possible extremes, shifting toward one end or the other depending on the situation, but are expected to maintain a fairly consistent approach to each type of problem based on experience and personal educational philosophy. It should be made clear that the Department of Education at CUA, both as a unit and as individual faculty members, is not neutral. The courses and required elements for graduation emphasize social justice and student-centered learning. Candidates are actively encouraged to see students as individuals who construct their own knowledge through all the experiences they have in and out of school. Candidates are expected to address issues of control, curriculum and society at all levels of the program and are pushed to compare their own experiences with those of students in struggling inner city public schools. It would be disingenuous to suggest that we as a department do not have strong opinions on where educators should fall on the continuums described above, but we hope that even candidates who hold differing views are stronger by struggling with these issues.

Through their use of the reflective framework, candidates should acquire the ability to articulate a personal philosophy of education that will in turn guide their informed decisions about the many dilemmas of teaching, help them consider the impact of those decisions on students, parents and communities, and encourage their growth as professional educators.

5.2.3.4 Dilemmas in the Reflective Process

As each candidate develops an ever-deepening understanding of the elements of the learning environment, it becomes possible to recognize possible dilemmas as values come into conflict. We expect our candidates to seek information and experts to inform their use of the multiple components of decision making to reach decisions that are best suited for their students. With deepening understanding of the elements embedded in each learning environment comes the opportunity to view each learning environment as embedded within larger social contexts (see figure 3). At each stage in their growth as

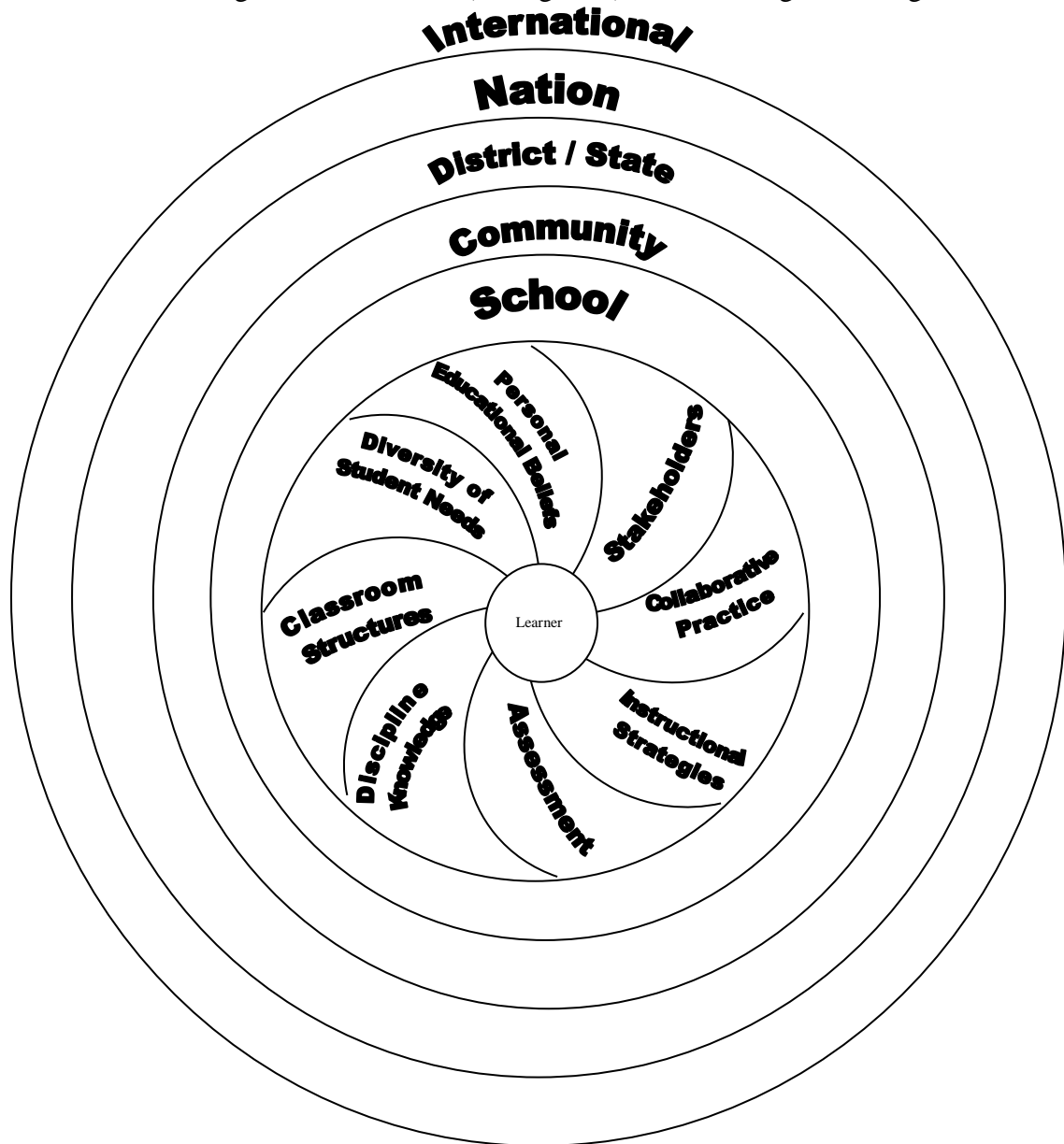


Figure 3: Global Perspectives

educators, candidates are prompted to consider larger social issues. Eventually the candidates are able to understand the role of education in a larger world setting while maintaining a clear view of each individual student at the heart of each learning

opportunity. By the time our candidates complete our program, we hope they are beginning to connect pressing societal issues to their own classrooms. It is through this deepening understanding of the place of education in the larger world context that reflective practitioners can come to appreciate the importance of individual teacher decisions in the lives of children.

5.2.4 Reflective Process in Action: The Action Research Project

In keeping with the departmental philosophy of reflective practice, candidates have the opportunity to use the reflective process during student teaching, when their teacher education program experience most closely resembles the educational settings that they will experience after completion of their program. As a capstone exercise, all candidates must conduct an action research project during their student teaching semester. This task is broken into a series of activities designed to scaffold the candidate through the complexities of moving from the abstract consideration of a possible problem to implementation and evaluation of a solution strategy that has been chosen using the reflective process. Candidates begin by analyzing the school and community setting in which they will be working. They are expected to consider stakeholders in and out of the classroom setting as well as the impact of the school philosophy on the students. This exercise encourages them to consider the philosophical and interpretive modes of questioning before they identify a particular area of concern. The next exercise moves the candidate to the descriptive component of decision-making where the candidate gives a rich description of what is happening. At this point the candidate is expected to choose an aspect of the learning environment that will become the focal point of the rest of the project. If a candidate were to choose a classroom management issue, for example, every effort is made to document how and when the situation comes about. By considering all eight of the elements of the learning environment, candidates search for way in which subtle interactions might influence the issue under study. Do tensions over high-stakes testing, for example, impact instructional strategies that negatively impact a particular child? Does the classroom teacher have access and opportunity to discuss the needs of the child with parents in a collaborative, rather than confrontational manner? Does the classroom management issue arise at particular times of day and classroom settings but not others? These types of questions help the candidate move beyond a treatment of discrete behavioral symptoms to a solution designed to respond to more general causes. In this assignment, candidates document their impact on the P-12 learner, paying close attention to how students have been affected by the implementation of the candidate's action plan.

Subsequent activities move the candidate from passive observation to active analysis. Brainstorming on possible causes, for example, early in the semester helps the candidate revisit the classroom environment with fresh eyes to gather data that supports or contradicts one or more hypotheses before committing to a particular strategy. Candidates look to educational resources in the school and in the research literature to identify possible solutions that seem best suited to meet both short-term classroom needs and long-term educational goals based on the most likely causes. This might be seen, for example, in a strategy that focuses on socialization skills for a combative student rather

than a strategy of reinforcement and punishment of a specific set of disruptive behaviors. Each Action Research Project activity includes a prompt that directs the candidate to consider each observation and possible solution strategy using each of the components of decision-making. After choosing a particular strategy, candidates are expected to document the implementation process carefully, examining the initial conditions and clearly identifying the measures of success or failure. While it is hoped that every intervention has a strong, positive outcome, candidates must also learn to recognize the signs of an unsuccessful strategy. The candidates then analyze the results of the intervention and make recommendations for future work. At least as important, however, is the reflective analysis that concludes the Action Research Project. The candidate discusses how her/his perception of the original problem has changed, and what might have caused that shift in perspective. Through this concluding activity, it is hoped that the candidate can move full-circle through the components of the decision-making cycle and see how moving from reflection to action leads back to reflection in a recursive loop.

6. Learning Outcomes

By considering (a) the reflective model (modes of deliberation applied to interacting elements of the learning environment), (b) the standards and guidelines established by state and national accreditation agencies, such as Washington D.C. P-12, NCATE, and INTASC standards and those of the specialized professional associations (ACEI, ACTFL, CEC, ISTE NETS, NAEYC, NCSS, NCTE, NCTM, NSTA) as well as the NBPTS, and (c) the theories and research findings that identify and explain educational best practices, the Department of Education at CUA has identified key learning outcomes that mirror our own philosophy and are easily associated with the professional standards for educators.

These outcomes can be broken into two categories, those associated with reflective practitioners and more general characteristics associated with all professional educators.

6.1 Learning Outcomes for Reflective Educators

6.1.1 With respect to the elements of the learning environment, reflective practitioners:

6.1.1.1 Personal educational beliefs (INTACS Principle 9)

... have an active understanding of their own personal educational philosophy that guides their pedagogical choices and shapes their interpretation of all events. They can articulate their educational philosophy and its consequences to others and can explain the significant theories and personal experiences that have contributed to their personal perspective. They value democratic values of equality and participation and work to model the expression and use of those values. They value reflection, assessment and learning as ongoing processes and work to improve continually all aspects of the learning environment.

6.1.1.2 Diversity of student needs (INTACS Principles 2,3)

... have an understanding of the intellectual, emotional, social and physical needs of students. They personalize instruction based on diverse backgrounds, developmental levels, special needs and learning styles. They value the individual strengths that all learners bring to each learning opportunity and work to use those strengths to benefit learners as individuals and as members of the classroom community. They value all aspects of the learner's well-being (cognitive, emotional, social, and physical) and work to create a learning environment that is aware of, and responsive to the needs of each learner on all levels. They value the strengths community and cultural traditions lend to the learning environment and work to show learners how the education process builds on the customs of the large society.

6.1.1.3 Stakeholders (INTACS Principle 10)

... have an active understanding of how different stakeholders in the educational experience can have different goals for, and interpretations of, learning experiences. They can summarize those perspectives through the use of the elements of each learning environment. They can describe how community characteristics and school standards impact learning. They demonstrate the ability to take those perspectives into account when developing learning opportunities for students. They value the roles other members of the learning environment (in and out of the schoolhouse) play in the life of learners and work to use all available resources in designing the best possible learning opportunities, while respecting the privacy and confidentiality that is due all learners.

6.1.1.4 Collaborative practice (INTACS Principles 6,10)

... have an understanding of the importance of effective communication and collaboration with students, families, and other community members. They have the ability to use resources within the school and the broader community to build inclusive, democratic and socially just learning environments. They encourage students to communicate and collaborate with each other, and they seek out opportunities to work with other educators as a key element in their continuing growth as education professionals. They work to find new information and perspectives to enrich their own understanding. They value the effectiveness of socially constructed knowledge and work to scaffold peer learning and positive social relationships. They value the fundamental nature of communication in all aspects of human interaction and work to encourage self-expression and respectful and active listening on the part of all members of the learning community

6.1.1.5 Discipline knowledge (INTACS Principles 1,2)

... have an understanding of the content matter to be presented. They exhibit thorough discipline knowledge and have the ability to match teaching strategies to desired goals. They value life-long learning for themselves as well as their students, and look for ways to deepen their understanding of the material to be shared in the classroom. They value the evolving nature of self-constructed knowledge. They are comfortable using

technology in their own learning and in showing students how they can further their own understanding through available information systems. They value critical thinking, problem solving, and authentic learning and work to make meaningful learning the underlying goal of every learning opportunity.

6.1.1.6 Instructional strategies (INTACS Principles 4,7)

... have an understanding of educational best practices and a wide array of research-supported instructional strategies. They demonstrate the ability to implement appropriate strategies based on the knowledge of the learner, the task and the context. They consider alternative strategies when planning instruction, and work to make the most of each student's personal strengths. They have the ability to use technology to strengthen student understanding. They value the potential of all learners and work to help all learners achieve success by differentiating instruction and motivation to challenge all learners. They value the informed responsiveness and flexibility that comes only from thorough preparation and work to consider multiple avenues to reach learning objectives.

6.1.1.7 Classroom structures (INTACS Principle 5)

... have an understanding of classroom structures, including organization, management, and curriculum. They have the ability to design and manage learning environments in ways that promote cognitively stimulating, safe, supportive learning environments to help all students be successful. They look for ways of individualizing structured curricula to maximize effectiveness of learning opportunities.

6.1.1.8 Assessment (INTACS Principle 8)

... have an understanding that assessment involves multiple sources of information and methods of evaluation. They have the ability to appraise student progress using a variety of techniques and communicate the results of that assessment accurately to students, parents and other professionals. They can interpret and explain the results of standardized testing. They can also use the results of formal and informal assessment to modify their own instructional choices. They value ongoing assessment as a tool to improve the teaching and learning experience for all members of the learning community and work to use assessment to both monitor and promote student learning.

6.1.2 With respect to the dilemmas of education, reflective practitioners:

...can explain how each element impacts a classroom situation, particularly with regards to educational dilemmas that pit competing values against each other. They can analyze various classroom dilemmas in terms of more elemental dilemmas of education (societal, curricular, and control). They consider how their own positions on these fundamental

dilemmas impact their decisions and how other positions would result in different decisions.

6.1.3 With respect to the components of the decision making process, reflective practitioners:

...have a thorough understanding of how philosophical, interpretative and descriptive components of the decision making process interact to shape educational decisions. They have an understanding of how prior experiences shape current philosophical and pedagogical choices. They strive to distinguish between observable events and their own interpretation of those events. They ask questions that help them understand the meaning created by other educational stakeholders from the same events. They consider how the construction of personal meaning tends to confirm previous expectations and, therefore, actively look for alternative meanings. They question their own personal educational beliefs and examine whether their educational choices are consistent with their own understanding of the role of education in society.

6.2 Learning Outcomes for Professional Educators

Professional educators are able to function as capable and reliable members of a school faculty. They are able to present themselves and highlight their own skills in a manner that allows them ever-increasing responsibility. Professional educators act as role models and mentors for less-experienced educators, and seek out opportunities to improve the education for all students inside and outside their own classrooms. They understand and value their role in the community and work to maintain strong ties between the school and all stakeholders. Professional educators are comfortable using technology as a teaching tool but also value technology as a content area to be presented to their students. They look for ways to constantly improve communication within their classroom and among other stakeholders, utilizing all traditional and technologically advanced methods available.

7. CUA Conceptual Framework Standards

The learning outcomes based on the conceptual framework described above have been translated into a set of standards. The departmental standards emphasize the reflective practitioner, rather than the professional educator learning outcomes since it is the former that we feel capture the unique nature of our program, while the latter are adequately represented in the general professional standards shared by all in the profession. The faculty utilizes these standards in much the same way they use the NCATE, INTASC or other published sets of standards in their syllabi and grading rubrics.

CUA 1. ELEMENTS OF THE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

CUA 1.1 Demonstrates understanding of all eight elements of the learning environment

- CUA 1.2 Uses the elements while observing and analyzing the teaching/learning process
- CUA 1A Personal educational beliefs
 - CUA 1A.1 Understands the ways one's own personal education beliefs affect the teaching/learning process
 - CUA 1B.2 Understands the cultural, historical and philosophical influences on education
- CUA 1B. Diversity
 - CUA 1B.1 Understands the intellectual, emotional, social, and physical development as well as cultural and spiritual needs of students
 - CUA 1B.2 Understands the impact of a student's interest, prior knowledge, exceptionalities and learning style on his/her learning
- CUA 1C Stakeholders
 - CUA 1C.1 Understands the roles and impact of various stakeholders on the educational enterprise
 - CUA 1C.2 Communicates intelligently and sensitively with students, parents, colleagues, and other stakeholders
 - CUA 1C.3 Understands institutional and legal factors, which affect each situation
- CUA 1D Collaborative practice
 - CUA 1D.1 Uses effective communication skills in collaboration with stakeholders to meet each individual child's unique needs
 - CUA 1D.2 Able to access and share various resources (colleagues, educational research, and best practices)
- CUA 1E Discipline knowledge
 - CUA 1E.1 Possesses well developed understanding of content knowledge
 - CUA 1E.2 Possesses sufficiently broad liberal arts knowledge to allow development of cross-disciplinary thematic units
- CUA 1F Instructional strategies
 - CUA 1F .1 Links subject matter to students' interest and prior knowledge
 - CUA 1F .2 Plans instruction within broadly conceived, integrated units
 - CUA 1F .3 Understands a wide variety of effective teaching strategies including various materials and technologies
 - CUA 1F .4 Implements a wide variety of effective teaching strategies
 - CUA 1F .5 Differentiates instructional strategies to meet the needs of individual students
- CUA 1G Classroom structures
 - CUA 1G.1 Creates and maintains a positive learning environments in and out of the classroom using preventive measures whenever possible

- CUA 1G.2 Uses classroom management and instructional techniques to increase/maintain high motivation in learners
- CUA 1G.3 Understands institutional and legal factors which affect each situation

CUA 1H Assessment

- CUA 1H.1 Understands the different types of assessments for classroom use (formative vs. summative, informal vs. formal)
- CUA 1H.2 Uses appropriate assessment and applies its outcome to improve instruction
- CUA 1H.3 Understands the nature, purpose and results of standardized assessment and can communicate it to others

CUA 2. EDUCATIONAL DILEMMAS

- CUA 2.1 Understands how student learning is affected by various types of educational dilemmas
- CUA 2.2 Understands how different personal educational beliefs can result in multiple, defensible solution strategies for educational dilemmas
- CUA 2.3 Describes observed educational phenomena in terms of educational dilemmas

CUA 3. THE DECISION MAKING PROCESS

- CUA 3.1 Asks morally oriented questions about the worth, values, purpose, goals and outcomes of learning and instruction using the philosophical component of the decision making process
- CUA 3.2 Analyzes a situation from several different perspectives and ponders the meaning and impact of various courses of action using the interpretive component of the decision making process
- CUA 3.3 Considers various instructional and management options to improve student learning using the descriptive component of the decision making process
- CUA 3.4 Understands and uses the different components of the decision making process in, on, and for reflection
- CUA 3.5 Uses the complete decision making process to address educational problems and dilemmas in the learning environment
- CUA 3.6 Articulates educational decisions based on educational values and philosophy, curriculum and learning theories, research findings, student or societal needs