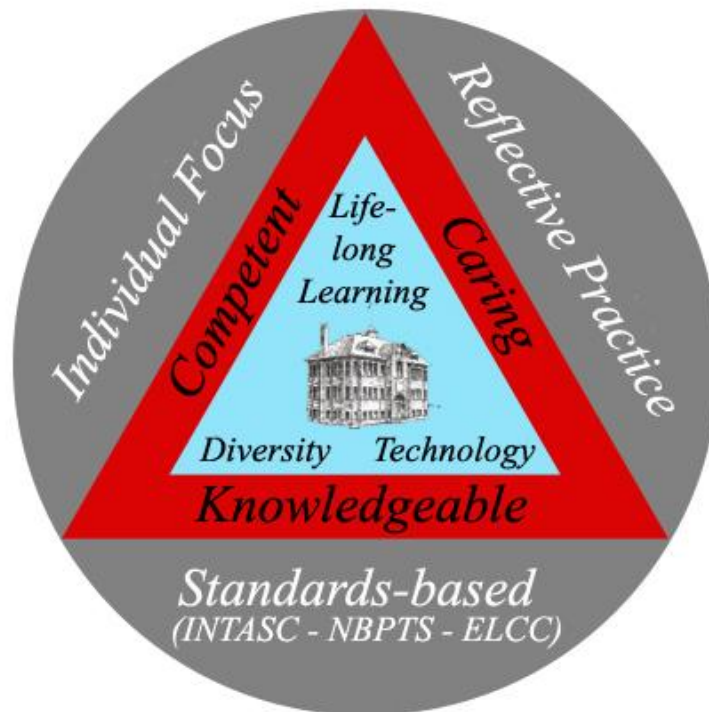


Southern Utah University Professional Teacher Education Program – Success Model

*The Beverley Taylor Sorenson College
of Education and Human Development*



*Advancing Education, Human Performance,
and Family Development Through,
Knowledge, Compassion, and Action*

Distinguishing Features of the Professional Teacher Education Program

The Program Success Model represented in the figure above represents those things that distinguish the Professional Teacher Education Program at Southern Utah University as one of the best in the western United States. The basis for understanding the program at SUU is dependent on understanding the success model. The Beverley Taylor Sorenson College of Education and Human Development provides students with an exceptionally unique professional experience that offers a distinctive Southern Utah University touch that includes:

- A focus on the individual
- A model of reflective practice

- Standards-based programs
- Personalized, high quality instruction
- A well-trained, highly qualified teaching faculty
- Relevant, practical, and cutting-edge curriculum

A Focus on the Individual

The College of Education views its primary mission as supportive of the University mission to provide students a personalized learning environment which fosters meaningful experiences involving the mind, the heart and the hands. SUU's Professional Teacher Education Program supports the tenets of Invitational Education (Zeeman, 2006). A defining quality of Invitational Theory is that it is counter-intuitive: it assumes that people are always motivated. It is anchored on four principles (respect, trust, optimism, and intentionality) and identifies levels of functioning, choices, and dimensions involved in any human interaction. To accomplish these goals, PTEP faculty employ a variety of methods. They include, but are not limited to:

- Respect for the individual
- Creating a positive culture in their class
- Teaching to all learning styles
- Creating engaging classroom discussions
- Incorporating positive classroom management strategies
- Adding variety to a lecture format class
- Providing service learning, civic engagement, and cooperative learning strategies during instruction
- Motivating students to learn
- Building on student talents, strengths, and abilities

A Model of Reflective Practice

The Professional Teacher Education Program's (PTEP) reliance upon candidate involvement in assessment, record keeping and communication is aimed not only at certifying the competence of program completers but also at maximizing that competence, especially in the areas of reflective practice and assessment of student learning. A candidate-centered approach, as well as the complexity of the PTEP's expected outcomes and the multifaceted nature of the program's classroom and field based experiences, mandates a system of multiple assessments which utilize a variety of assessment modes and strategies. To accomplish this, traditional testing and grading are supplemented by numerous performance tasks and self-assessments completed in both simulated and authentic contexts. Authenticity in assessment as described by Wiggins (1993) means:

- *Engaging, worthy problems which require use of knowledge in effective and creative applications;*

- *Replicas of or tasks that are analogous to those of the profession;*
- *Options, constraints, and access to resources that are faithful to real-life contexts rather than arbitrary or efficient;*
- *Real problems that are non-routine and multistage;*
- *Tasks that require quality products and/or performances;*
- *Transparent or demystified criteria and standards;*
- *Interactions between assessor and assessee;*
- *Concurrent feedback and possibility of self-adjustment during assessment;*
- *Trained assessor judgment related to clear and appropriate criteria; and,*
- *Search for patterns or response in diverse settings to observe consistency of work and assessment of habits of mind in performance (pp. 228-230).*

These types of assessment are embedded throughout the course work and field experience components of the PTEP's professional education program. The backbone of the assessment system requires candidates to complete a series of four progressively more complex and rigorous teacher work samples, and to assemble and present a portfolio providing evidence of their abilities relative to core standards at strategic points throughout their teacher preparation experience.

Standards-Based Programs

The PTEP maintains current information about the Teacher Education Accrediting Council (TEAC) and other applicable professional standards and conducts systematic reviews and evaluations of existing professional education programs for the purpose of program improvement. The PTEP, via a standing committee of the Professional Education Coordinating Committee, systematically reviews and evaluates university admissions requirements to enter undergraduate professional education programs leading to licensure. Through the Student Recruitment, Admissions, and Retention Committee of the PECC, the PTEP explores a variety of procedures and reviews resources, efforts, and activities to recruit a diverse student body. The PTEP disseminates information relating to professional education programs and curriculum to appropriate councils within the University based on all appropriate education standards to insure the highest quality teacher education program possible.

Personalized, High-quality Instruction

As stated in Southern Utah University's institutional mission statement and goals, teaching is of primary importance at the University. The fact that several professional education faculty members have been named by their colleagues and students as SUU Distinguished Educators is evidence of the PTEP's reputation for excellent teaching. Consistent with the Program Success Model, PTEP faculty integrate diversity and technology throughout their teaching. In addition, faculty use multiple instructional strategies and multiple forms of assessments, including performance assessments, in the courses they teach.

The quality of teaching in the PTEP is systematically assessed through course evaluations completed by candidates every semester. Data from the course evaluations indicate that faculty are indeed modeling best practices in teaching. For the Fall 2006 and Spring 2007 semesters, 86.29% of candidates surveyed strongly agreed or agreed that their professors demonstrated effective teaching.

A Well-trained, Highly Qualified Teaching Faculty

Both professional education faculty and clinical faculty possess the academic credentials and professional experience that qualify them for their assignments. Of the 34 full-time professional education faculty in the PTEP, 27 (79.4%) hold a doctoral degree in the area they teach. All 7 non-tenure track faculty are assistant professors who hold masters degrees and have extensive experience in K-12 schools that qualify them for their roles as teacher educators. 25 faculty, or 73.5% of the College of Education full-time faculty have experience in K-12 schools as teachers, principals, superintendents, and counselors. Collectively, the PTEP's professional education faculty have spent over 320 years in schools working directly with K-12 students. Professional education faculty demonstrate scholarly work related to learning, teaching, and their fields of specialization as evidenced by their publications and presentations at conferences and professional association meetings. In the last five years, faculty members have collectively been involved in over 375 publications or professional presentations of scholarly work. Professional education faculty make candidate and K-12 student learning central in their professional work as evidenced by their curriculum development activities. Faculty collaborate with members of the university and the professional community to improve teaching and learning in K-12 schools and teacher education.

Relevant, Practical, and Cutting-edge Curriculum

The PTEP is committed in philosophy and in practice to purposeful, systematic, and ongoing evaluation, not only of candidate performance but also of the effectiveness of the PTEP itself. Program effectiveness, faculty performance, alignment of curriculum and instruction and assessment of the assessment system itself are under constant scrutiny by the program's Internal Audit Committee, PTEP faculty, the Professional Education Coordinating Council (PECC) and other stakeholders including candidates and K-12 teachers and administrators. The assessment system is a methodical and deliberate approach to planning, implementing and evaluating a program which ensures that all candidates who exit the PTEP possess the knowledge, skills and dispositions necessary to facilitate learning for all students in K-12 classrooms.

SUU is a candidate for accreditation through:



*Teacher Education
Accreditation Council*