Summary: The Hannibal-LaGrange University (HLGU) Teacher Education Program ensures that its graduates have a broad general education, a firm grounding in professional education, and a strong competency in the student’s area of specialization. “Preparing future teachers to be reflective decision-makers and to use knowledge for service” is the motto of the teacher education program. Based on the reflective teaching model, the program embraces teaching as a complex task that requires the capacity to reflect on and revise decisions on the basis of one’s observations, knowledge and insights. Teachers must have comprehensive understandings of teaching and learning, subject matter, and learners, as well as the interrelationship of these components in the educational process.
Development of the Conceptual Framework

This document presents a broad-based description of a shared vision which is our Conceptual Framework. The HLGU Teacher Education Committee, composed of the Division of Education faculty and representatives from each certification content area, has been involved in shaping the document, from development of the program mission and philosophy, to the establishment of the Knowledge Base. The Conceptual Framework document evolved from an earlier version that was expanded by the Education Division faculty before being shared and polished by the Teacher Education Committee. We believe that an effective teacher education program must be based on shared beliefs about teaching and learning that guide program development and instruction, from planning through assessment and evaluation.

The Conceptual Framework document provides a set of assumptions, expectations, knowledge, skills, and learning outcomes adopted by our program. This organizing framework shapes the structure of our program by providing a system for ensuring coherence among curriculum, instruction, field experiences, and assessment across a candidate's program (Karmon, 2007). The document, as well as the program itself, is continuously reviewed, evaluated and modified to incorporate new knowledge and experience about best practices in education. Data collected from student assessment, student evaluations, recent graduates, and members of the professional community is utilized to help make necessary modifications and improvements. Teacher Education Committee members take part in this continuous evaluation process.

Aspects of this Conceptual Frameworks document are included in the university catalog, on course syllabi, and on evaluation tools. In addition, the document is available for review by members of the professional community and other interested individuals.

Hannibal-LaGrange University Mission

The mission of Hannibal-LaGrange University is to provide an excellent education in both liberal arts and professional disciplines in a distinctively Christian environment that integrates Christian faith and learning in preparing graduates for both personal and career effectiveness. The University motto, “Knowledge for Service,” further exemplifies our mission.

Teacher Education Program Mission and Motto

The mission of the Education Division is to provide an excellent education in the professional fields of early childhood, elementary and secondary content teaching in a distinctively Christian environment that integrates Christian faith and learning in preparing graduates for personal and career effectiveness.

The motto of the Teacher Education Program is to prepare future teachers to be reflective decision-makers and to use knowledge for service.
Teacher Education Program Philosophy

We believe education program graduates:

- Should have a substantial, sound general education in liberal arts, humanities, and social, biological, and physical sciences.

- Should be role models displaying personal, social, ethical, and spiritual qualities that reflect competence and deserve respect as adult citizens in a democracy.

- Should have knowledge of the historical, social, and philosophical foundations of education.

- Should have a superior understanding and current knowledge in their area(s) of subject matter concentration.

- Should have a personal formal philosophy of education and a personal professional commitment to teaching and to the education of the citizenry.

- Should possess professional skills required to teach. These skills are based on an understanding of the physical, psychological, and social needs of children, regardless of race, creed, gender, economic status, or ethnic origin.

- Should have a variety of opportunities to observe, teach, and assess students in the public schools so they can directly apply the methods and skills they are learning in University coursework.

- Should have best practices in education consistently taught and modeled so they will implement them in their teaching.

- Should have varied and meaningful experiences with innovative educational technology and a practical knowledge of its curricular implementation.

Purpose of the Hannibal-LaGrange University Teacher Education Program

Teacher quality is the most important schooling factor influencing student achievement (Goldhaber, Liddle, Theobald, 2013). The purpose of the Teacher Education Program is to ensure that its graduates have a broad general education, a firm grounding in professional education, and a strong competency in the student’s area of specialization. Furthermore, the program will prepare teachers who apply knowledge of subject matter, teaching and learning, and the learner to make appropriate decisions regarding students, curriculum, and instructional strategies. The program will encourage the development of educational practitioners who engage in reflection leading to life-long professional growth and commitment to their schools and communities.
Hannibal-LaGrange University Knowledge Base

One express purpose of education is to improve the quality of life in the community. The knowledge base of the Hannibal-LaGrange University (HLGU) Teacher Education Program reflects knowledge and skills that have been gathered from research of learned societies and from reported effective practices. The faculty is committed to assisting pre-service teachers to acquire the knowledge and dispositions necessary to develop the potential of their future students to the fullest.

Students in the Teacher Education Program at Hannibal-LaGrange University are given many opportunities to study current educational philosophies, observe and utilize a variety of teaching methods and classroom management strategies, and participate in authentic learning. Graduates of the Teacher Education Program are well prepared as emerging teachers with the ability to further their knowledge and use it creatively in building a nucleus of resources to increase their effectiveness in all aspects of teaching.

University students have observed teaching for years as pupils in elementary and secondary schools and often see teaching as a matter of telling. We are preparing teachers, however, for classrooms that are quite different from the ones in which they were educated (McEwen, 2008). At Hannibal-LaGrange University, this simplistic notion is replaced with grounded understanding of subject matter, teaching and learning, and learners which will inform their teaching judgments and actions. Students in the Teacher Education Program at Hannibal-LaGrange University will not only have deep understandings of these three areas, but will also understand the interrelationship of these factors in the teaching-learning process. Such understanding will help students develop frameworks for thinking about the cognitive, social, and emotional demands of teaching which are essential for reflective decision makers who use knowledge for service.

The Hannibal-LaGrange University Teacher Education program utilizes the Knowledge Base to design, assess, and continually improve the program. All course syllabi and assessment tools reflect the three knowledge domains to ensure that all students in the program are well prepared.

The discussions in the previous sections provide the foundation for the knowledge bases in the curriculum model. Our motto “Preparing Future Teachers to be Reflective Decision-Makers and to use Knowledge For Service” is defined and discussed below. Additionally, each of the knowledge domains is discussed briefly and reference is made to the literature that is representative of knowledge that is included in the domain.
The Reflective Decision Maker

Teachers make many decisions each day (Danielson, 2007). Thus, training in the analysis of teaching situations and making appropriate decisions that affect student learning and achievement is a vital part of the Hannibal-LaGrange University Teacher Education Program. How a teacher reflects on student learning and makes plans to improve that learning contributes significantly to a teacher’s success with students (Danielson, 2007). Therefore, our training additionally involves reflection on both theoretical and practical knowledge.

Teacher educators must model the practice of collaborative curriculum design and implementation in teacher education coursework (Kahne & Westheimer, 2000). Thus, the Hannibal-LaGrange Teacher Education Program utilizes the following techniques and strategies to help educate our students to make informed decisions:

- **modeling** decision-making behaviors,
- **reflection** on consequences of decisions, and
- **clinical experiences** that allow students to make and implement instructional decisions.

According to Dewey (1933), reflection proceeds from a “real-life situation in which there is experienced obscurity, doubt, conflict…into a situation that is clear, coherent, settled, harmonious” (p. 100-101). Reflective practitioners are empowered to think beyond what is to what might be. Thinking about practices that worked and didn’t work helps one understand situations which, when encountered again, can elicit intentionally automatic actions (Salmon, et. al., 2008). Reflection by teachers as a way to improve practice is included in the NBPTS and InTASC standards. By critically examining their practice on a regular basis, teachers “deepen knowledge, expand their repertoire of skills, and incorporate new findings into their practice” (Burden & Byrd, 2013, p. 5). Reflection is critical to effective teaching.

Knowledge for Service

The foundation of all future learning is our existing knowledge (Lambert & McCombs, 1998). Griffin (1995) suggests three conceptions of knowledge in teacher education: theoretical knowledge (developed out of practical philosophical understandings), propositional knowledge (ideas put forth as proposals), and craft knowledge (the accumulation of practices, methods, and materials that have been effective time and time again). Teachers using such knowledge serve the community by helping its future leaders reach their fullest potential through education. They are able to go beyond the content given moving towards critical thinking, reasoning and problem solving (Borich, 2014). Embracing the motto of Hannibal-LaGrange University, “Knowledge for Service,” graduates of the Hannibal-LaGrange University Teacher Education Program are committed to providing service to their community and profession.
Knowledge Domains

Knowledge of Subject Matter (Content Knowledge)
In this domain, teacher education candidates are expected to develop a strong background in their specific subject matter, which teachers must have to teach effectively within a particular content area (Kilbane & Milman, 2014). Knowledge of content and application of pedagogical content knowledge are key to classroom effectiveness (Burden & Byrd, 2013).

Candidates are exposed to foundations of education theory and are expected to have knowledge of a body of work representative of their chosen content and specialty areas.

HLGU professional education graduates must demonstrate knowledge of and/or competence in:

- their discipline, based on available national and state standards (Mo-SPE Standards and Beginning Teacher Competencies)
- Missouri Grade Level Expectations (GLE’s), Course Level Expectations (CLE’s), Pre-K Standards, and CCSS.
- organizing and structuring subject matter in multiple ways utilizing students’ prior knowledge
- engaging students in methods of inquiry within the discipline
- creating interdisciplinary learning experiences
- utilizing appropriate technology within the discipline
- recognizing the importance of life-long learning

Knowledge of Teaching and Learning (Pedagogical Knowledge)
In this domain, teacher education candidates are expected to develop knowledge and understanding of a range of approaches to analyzing teaching and learning in the classroom. Teaching is no longer seen as a linear process of transmitting knowledge from teachers or educational materials to students. Skilled teaching involves structuring the learners’ environment so that change will occur thus enabling learners to do what they could not do before (Stones, 1994). Teachers must learn to choose among various learning materials and instructional methods, to plan lessons and methods of assessment, and to determine the pace and order of the lesson—all based on student needs (Karmon, 2007). Teacher education candidates are expected to develop an understanding of best practices for interacting with learners to plan instruction and create optimal learning opportunities.

Learning involves understanding information so that it may be used for future problem solving (Cooper, 2005). Moreover, teachers must be provided with many opportunities to engage in teaching and reflection on their experiences if they are to become reflective practitioners (Bendixen-Noe & Naizer, 2000). Teachers need to be willing to analyze their own traits in relation to what takes place in their classroom (Burden &
Byrd, 2013). Field experiences provide additional opportunities for learning (Giebelhaus, 1994). Providing preservice teachers with a variety of classroom teaching experiences broadens their knowledge of theory in practice. Educators hope to prepare teachers to thoughtfully use education theory and research to inform their practice (Kahne & Westheimer, 2000).

Candidates are expected to have knowledge of a body of theories represented by, among others, Bloom, Bruner, Clay, Dewey, Gardner, Glasser, Goodlad, Holdaway, Hunter, Johnson and Johnson, Kagan, Kohlberg, Marzano, Maslov, Montessori, Piaget, Vygotsky, and Webb.

HLGU professional education graduates will demonstrate knowledge of and/or competence in:

- foundations of education and theories of learning
- legal and ethical aspects of education
- communication and problem-solving skills
- instructional strategies and technological applications
- effects of teacher decisions and actions on others
- resources available for professional development
- teacher’s role in long-range planning and development, implementation, and evaluation of curriculum based upon student, district, and state standards
- importance of life-long learning
- teacher’s role in promoting education reform and change relating to public/private schools and state/federal legislation
- importance of providing service to the community and profession
- Missouri and federal educational policies
- effective schools research
- performance-based Teacher Evaluation
- working effectively with parents, colleagues, and other school community members
- cultural implications of learning
- differentiated instruction
- classroom management and motivation theories
- formal and informal assessment strategies, including Bloom’s Taxonomy

Knowledge of the Learner (Professional Knowledge)
In this domain, teacher education candidates are expected to understand students’ cognitive characteristics in order to plan instruction to compensate for or enhance those characteristics (Anderson, 1989). The experiences learners bring with them to their learning tasks influence what and how they learn. Teacher education candidates need to make adjustments in instructional and management practices to successfully meet the diverse needs of the learners (Burden & Byrd, 2013). Individual differences, developmental level, motivation, and self-concept must be taken into consideration in designing instruction (Gredler, 1992). Successful learners are active learners who
assume responsibility for contributing to their own learning (Lambert & McCombs, 1998).

Candidates are expected to have knowledge of a body of work represented by, among others, Bloom, Bruner, DeVries, Dewey, Fosnot, Gardner, Kamii, Katz, Kounin, Payne, Piaget, and Slavin.

HLGU professional education graduates will demonstrate knowledge of and/or competence in:

- approaches to learning
- learning styles and multiple intelligences research
- creating differentiated instructional opportunities to meet the needs of diverse learners
- theories of development
- enhancing critical thinking, problem solving abilities, and performance skills
- accessing specialized services to meet the diverse needs of the learner, including an understanding of Response to Intervention (RTI)
- connecting prior experiences of learners with their family, culture, and community through appropriate curriculum selection
- classroom management strategies, motivational theories, and behavioral management techniques that encourage positive social interaction
- group dynamics processes and learning strategies as they relate to overall effectiveness in self-motivation of the learner

The Teacher Education Program at Hannibal-LaGrange University prepares future professionals to work successfully with culturally diverse students in the school environment by using models that reflect equity and an understanding of historical, philosophical, national, and global perspectives. Thus, candidates and graduates will be characterized by:

- Skill in realizing educational equity for all learners
- Sensitivity toward, and effectiveness with, people from diverse backgrounds
- Appropriate and creative use of independent and collaborative experiential learning
- Multicultural and global perspectives in thinking and practice

**Instructional Processes**

Karmon (2007) suggests that “the critical content of any learning experience is the method or process through which the learning occurs” (p. 3). The teacher education faculty recognizes that there is no one best way to teach all students. Thus, the instructional processes selected and modeled for the students will be varied, including, but not limited to:

- Self-directed learning
- Cooperative group learning
• Lecture, discussion, and questioning strategies
• Action research
• Demonstration/modeling
• Reflection journals
• Peer teaching
• Field experiences
• Site-based cooperative teaching
• Inquiry-based instruction
• Instructional technology
• Assessment to inform instruction

Assessment of Competencies

Certification requirements, established by the Missouri State Board of Education, provide minimum competency requirements for teacher preparation. Courses in the Hannibal-LaGrange University Teacher Education Program have been created and aligned to meet and exceed these requirements. Candidate attainment of the program competencies is continuously assessed and evaluated using multiple means. The assessments include, among others: traditional classroom testing, state achievement and performance testing, observations, research and concept papers, personal philosophies, performance assessments, interviews, and field evaluations. Assessment procedures are in alignment with the HLGU Conceptual Framework, national standards, and the Missouri Standards for Professional Educators (MoSPE).

The final professional requirement prior to graduation and/or certification is the candidate’s Professional Semester. The goal for this student teaching period is to prepare the preservice teacher to become a reflective decision maker that uses knowledge for service by providing a long-term, realistic experience in planning, organizing, managing, assessing, reflecting, and teaching in a classroom. During the Professional Semester, candidates are required to complete a teacher work sample, to be used as evidence of their developing identity as a teacher. The Teacher Work Sample is evaluated by members of the Teacher Education Committee using specified criteria and must be passed in order to successfully complete the professional semester.

Program Evaluation

The Hannibal-LaGrange University Division of Education ensures that the education program is meeting the needs of beginning professionals and their employers. This is accomplished by collecting and analyzing data from several sources.

Course evaluations from both the Division of Education and the university administration are utilized to solicit feedback and make necessary changes for program improvement.
The results of the evaluations are shared with individual faculty members who are asked to consider areas where their courses could be more beneficial to students.

Evaluations of candidates by their field experience mentors are also utilized to determine patterns of program strengths and weaknesses. Program-wide areas of concern are brought before the Teacher Education Committee for discussion.

To ensure that our Teacher Education Program is meeting the needs of beginning professionals and their employers and students, surveys are sent to HLGU's program graduates who are first-year and second-year teachers and their employers each spring. Aggregated and disaggregated survey results are distributed and discussed by the Teacher Education Committee each May as part of our Student Learning Improvement Plan. Proposed program modifications are discussed at length and are implemented as recommended by the committee and recorded in Teacher Education Committee meeting minutes.

**Beginning Teacher Assistance**

Each year, school districts welcome first-year teachers to the teaching profession. In an effort to assist local school districts and first-year teachers, HLGU hosts the MSTA Beginning Teacher Workshop designed to help first-year teachers get the year off to a great start. The goal is to provide excellent professional development to first-year teachers and to allow school districts to save travel time and money by offering this workshop locally.

The workshop is designed to meet Missouri’s Initial Professional Certification requirement for beginning teacher assistance. Participants are involved in discussions and activities focusing on classroom organization and management, technology, differentiated instruction, and cooperative learning.
References


