The English as a Second Language Teacher Preparation Program and the Longwood University Conceptual Framework

**CF Standard I: Content Knowledge:**

*LU Educational Professionals possess an extensive working knowledge of the content of their profession and are able to deliver or assist in delivery of content in a manner that is consistent with best professional practices and that positively impacts student learning.*

Our curriculum is multi-disciplinary: English as a Second Language teacher candidates demonstrate content knowledge in many areas through a rigorous curriculum in English language, linguistics, grammar and literature, as well as course options in Language Development, Language and Culture, Intercultural Communication, Cross-Cultural Psychology, and required advanced courses in a foreign language. Emphasis is placed upon developing the skills of reading, writing, speaking, listening and cultural knowledge. To enhance their proficiency in another language and to develop cultural awareness, candidates are required to spend a semester studying and taking advanced courses in a country where English is not spoken.

**CF Standard II: Planning:**

*LU Educational Professionals possess the ability to develop individual and group outcomes using appropriate techniques, strategies, technology, and available resources to meet state standards, other educational goals, and student needs.*

As effective educators, Longwood University alumni entering the teaching profession demonstrate expert knowledge in how to plan for instruction. They possess the ability to develop individual and group objectives using appropriate strategies, technology, and available resources to meet the PreK-12 English Language Proficiency Standards (TESOL 2006) and state curricular goals.

Teacher candidates receive extensive practice in planning for instruction during their methods class, “Approaches to Teaching English as a Second Language,” and during their professional semester. In their plans, students design lessons in which communicative activities are the focus. In addition, beginning in 2010, students began taking “Inquiry into the Classroom Community,” a course in which students have a school placement, giving them further practice with planning, as well as a Teacher Work Sample that will address all standards of Longwood’s Conceptual Framework.

A fundamental requirement for all ESL licensure candidates is a semester of student teaching (clinical experience). This experience provides the opportunity for the candidate to put into practice, under supervision of a cooperating teacher and a university supervisor, the theoretical and practical knowledge and skills they have developed through their previous coursework and practical experiences. During this final clinical experience, teacher candidates plan for instruction daily as they work in individually assigned classrooms with a cooperating teacher, taking over all of the planning and teaching duties.
**CF Standard III: Learning Climate:**

*LU Education Professionals are able to create for all students a positive and supportive environment that is conducive to learning, developmentally appropriate, and encourages mutual cooperation and respect.*

Through their methods class and field experiences, candidates become proficient in creating a positive and supportive environment that is conducive to English language acquisition. Candidates learn how to lower the students’ affective filters, and allay the natural fears that inhibit many language learners. Candidates practice techniques for making their classroom an enjoyable experience and learn to assess and provide activities for all learning styles.

**CF Standard IV: Implementation/Management:**

*LU Education Professionals design and use effective strategies that motivate students to have high expectations while encouraging critical thinking and creative problem solving.*

As concerned practitioners trained in the art of critical pedagogy, teachers from Longwood University know how to implement and manage instruction. They use effective lesson designs and provide appropriate instruction that motivates students to have high expectations while encouraging critical thinking and creative problem solving. During their clinical experiences, teacher candidates implement and can manage their instruction through:

- lesson planning,
- teaching to standards
- reflective practice.

**CF Standard V: Evaluation/Assessment:**

*LU Education Professionals use a variety of appropriate appraisal and evaluation methods to assess student learning and growth and to evaluate and improve on their professional practices.*

As thoughtful educators well grounded in evaluation and assessment procedures, graduates of the ESL teacher preparation program at Longwood University approach instructional assessment tasks reflectively. They use a variety of appropriate appraisal and evaluation methods to assess lesson objectives and to help make instructional decisions about the quality of learning and the quality of their teaching. They are held accountable for the quality of instruction and the adequacy of learning through responsibility for multifaceted assessment plans including formative and summative assessments. Teacher candidates are required to engage in program specified activities such as:

- Developing and carrying out lesson plans that include assessment components
- Reflective self-evaluation techniques
- Curriculum-based assessment projects that evaluate the impact of instruction on student learning
- Collecting, analyzing and using assessment data
- Assessing students during their field placements and then making instructional decisions based upon the data secured
- Summarizing and reporting progress in conferences with students and parents
Candidates have opportunities to learn and practice the assessment techniques appropriate for assessing students’ skills in all areas of English language acquisition, reading, writing, speaking, listening and cultural awareness, during their methods class and field experiences. Candidates learn to design and use rubrics and to align their assessments to the National PreK-12 English Language Proficiency Standards. Candidates learn how to use their assessments to assure that their teaching has a positive effect upon student learning/acquisition.

**CF Standard VI: Communication:**

*LU Education Professionals possess the ability to communicate in a variety of contexts and with a variety of audiences, including students, parents, colleagues, and administrators, and value such communication as a means to provide opportunities for all students to grow and develop to their fullest potential.*

The very core of developing teachers as reflective leaders is enhancing the candidates’ competencies in disseminating information (Boyer, 1995; Costa & Kallick, 2000; Fairbanks et al., 1995; Hole & McEntree, 1999; Jadallah, 1996; Lucas, 1999; Martin & Kragler, 1999; Perone, 1997; Snell & Swanson, 2000; Swanson, 2000; Wesley, 1998; Yost & Forlenza-Bailey, 2000). To be an effective agent of change, the Longwood University teacher candidate must possess the confidence and ability to clearly and concisely convey information to small and large groups. Effective communicators fluidly use their skills in organization, summation, reflection, oration, and administration to seamlessly guide small and large groups through diverse complex issues. Developing these skills cannot be an afterthought addressed by a single course, rather systematic and explicit formal and informal academic opportunities designed to perfect the students’ communication skills are provided throughout the curriculum (Robbins, 2001; Timm & Armstrong, 2000).

Communication is at the heart of the Teaching English as a Second Language program. Our teacher candidates learn to communicate in a variety of contexts and with a variety of audiences in the language they will be teaching, English, as well as in at least one foreign language at the advanced level. The candidates learn how to teach students communication skills in English through the training they receive in our content area classes as well as the methods class and student teaching semester. “Communication” is the central component in the National PreK-12 English Language Proficiency Standards; teacher candidates receive a solid foundation in these communicative skills, and learn how to teach the four skills of speaking, listening, reading and writing for communicative competence.

**CF Standard VII: Technology:**

*LU Education Professionals utilize appropriate media, technology, and available resources for planning and implementing instruction, assessing and communicating learning results, and engaging students in instruction.*

The effects of technological advances have continued to play an important role in Longwood University’s mission to develop “Citizen Leaders”. The degree to which technology is included in the overall vision of the development of a “Citizen Leader” is indicated by the role technology plays in Longwood University’s 5-year mission statement. Candidates are required, before graduation, to demonstrate competency with technology-based applications in academic and field placements. This candidate application is a clear example of the University’s commitment
to pragmatic technologically-based infusion of technology into the curriculum. Longwood University is also dedicated to providing candidates, faculty and staff with the technological tools that will allow them to integrate information technologies throughout the Longwood community. The following is a list of “Commitments” that Longwood University has promised members of its community.

- All candidates and staff will have access to robust, high bandwidth, ubiquitous network that provides access to the institution’s electronic services, information sources, the Internet and global electronic learning resources. Candidate use of technology will be one of the centerpieces of the institution’s program. Each candidate is required to have a computer. Longwood will provide training in basic and advanced computer skills and support for all related computer needs.

- The use of instructional technology will be widespread, prevalent and integrated into the learning environment. Longwood will provide equipment and faculty support for skills training, curriculum development and classroom implementation.

- The effectiveness and efficiency of institutional operations and decision-making will be improved through state-of-the-art technological administrative support and communications systems. Library technology has been enhanced to provide network-based resources, especially electronically formatted books and journals. The availability of emerging technologies that can be integrated into and improve the Longwood community will be evaluated continuously.

Many forms of technology have long been used in foreign language and ESL classes: overheads, music on CD, language labs with recording capabilities and video. But today we go beyond those traditional technological tools to bring the real world to our language classrooms. Not only do our teacher candidates benefit from the use of newer technologies in their content area courses, but teacher candidates learn to employ a wide variety of cutting-edge technological tools to bring foreign language and culture to their own students. The use of technology to aid language acquisition as well as cultural studies is emphasized in the methods course and during the student teaching semester. Technological tools are not limited to such programs as Power Point and use of the internet, but include newer technologies such as Wimba Voice Board and Wimba Live Classroom, to name a few.

**CF Standard VIII: Diversity:**

*LU Education Professionals value diversity as an opportunity to enhance the learning of all students. They are deliberate in using what each child brings to the learning situation and facilitating learning experiences crafted to each student’s learning needs. They also challenge students to reflect upon and transform their own beliefs about a diverse society as well as to challenge stereotypes and negative assumptions about diverse cultures, languages, economic resources, and abilities.*

Reflective leaders rely on their analytical skills to develop mastery in their teaching abilities. This vehicle of critical analysis and reflection is essential in producing solutions to the difficult problems facing our diverse public schools. Reflection is a major vehicle in producing teachers who are agents of change in the public schools. Rich, diverse, and varied pre-service experiences are also necessary to produce the robust decision-making skills required to become a citizen leader in education who is sensitive to diversity issues. Exposure to diverse individuals,
experiences, instructional procedures, situations, and assessments, allow Longwood graduates to assimilate their new experiences into reflections that accurately allow them as teachers to determine the individual and specific needs of their students (Banks, 2001). In short, the more unique and diverse experiences and opportunities each pre-service teacher has, the more accurately the reflective teacher will assess and help to meet the needs of his or her school. Sensitivity to diversity issues and components, as a teacher competency, involves exposure to diverse content, individuals, and experiences. Diverse content refers to exposing students to content from many different viewpoints. Major issues regarding education produce varied responses from different constituents. Longwood courses are designed to integrate different perspectives into coursework. Candidates use their collaborative and communication skills to digest the complex academic and social issues of today and formulate action plans that value all participants. Diversity in content or content integration emphasizes the need for teachers to use examples and content from a vast array of cultures and groups in order to highlight key concepts, principles, generalizations, and theories within their discipline (Banks, 2001). The infusion of content integration allows for equity in pedagogy. Longwood candidates use the information from contextual analysis and content integration to modify their teaching according to best practices in order to maximize the academic achievement of students from diverse racial, cultural, and social-class groups. One of the positive residual benefits from these diverse educational opportunities is prejudice reduction. Biased and prejudiced behavior is a by-product of misinformation and stereotypes. Through well thought out classroom experiences, the students broaden their conceptual understanding of what it is to be diverse. This new understanding enhances the pre-service teachers’ ability to foster the idea of public schools as the great equalizer. Diversity with individuals refers to the direct exposure of the Longwood candidate to varying cultural, racial, and socio-economic groups. Via Longwood’s elaborate international, regional, and local partnerships, the pre-service teachers will have a variety of opportunities to work in diverse environments that will develop their knowledgebase regarding diverse students.

Diversity of field experiences builds on the diversity of curricular opportunities afforded to the Longwood candidate. The teacher preparation programs provides eclectic and varied placements and assignments to allow pre-service teachers to experience unique and diversified learning settings that shape them into well-rounded educators and future citizen leaders. Diverse settings, experiences and content allow Longwood candidates to develop their teaching abilities in a manner commensurate with a variety of educational settings and demands. Such educational flexibility is a highly valued competency for teacher leaders who are prepared to meet the demands of the diverse population, curricular offerings, and societal changes that characterize public schools of the 21st century.

Teacher candidates in the Teaching English as a Second Language program at Longwood University engage in many experiences to help them learn to value diversity as an opportunity to enhance their own lives as well as those of their students. Candidates learn to demonstrate an understanding of the relationship between the practices and perspectives of the cultures of areas from which their students come, and the relationship between the products and perspectives, or underlying beliefs and values, of these cultures. Through their content area
courses., their study abroad experience, and in their professional preparation courses and field experiences, teacher candidates use these skills to reflect upon and transform their own beliefs about society and gain first-hand experience in recognizing and challenging stereotypes about diverse cultures. In this way, they learn to appreciate and celebrate the differences that are represented in our own society, and become able to teach appreciation and tolerance to their own students.

**CF Standard IX: Professional Dispositions:**

*LU Education Professionals demonstrate dispositions associated with the profession by their valuing of learning, personal integrity, diversity, collaboration, and professionalism.*

As reflective leaders, Longwood University candidates maintain their professional responsibilities in an exemplary manner. They understand and respect school division policies and regulations and know that participation in professional development activities and professional organizations is essential for their continued growth and development as educators. They relate effectively with colleagues, community, parents, and students in a style that is congruent with professional ethics. Longwood candidates are also prepared to conduct themselves as professionals in their manner of dress, actions, and attitudes. They are expected to place duties ahead of personal desires and to accept the responsibilities that are a part of the profession and characteristic of citizen leaders. They are taught to safeguard confidential information and to use it for professional purposes only.

ESL teacher candidates model dispositions associated with the teaching profession by their value of diverse cultures, personal integrity, collaboration and professionalism, and are admitted to the teacher preparation program, later to student teaching, and finally to the profession based upon demonstration of these dispositions.