

School of Education

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Creating Exemplary Professionals

Creating Exemplary Professionals is the conceptual framework for professional education at The College of New Jersey, guiding all programs in the School of Education and throughout the College. Based on current thinking, research, and practice regarding the nature of learning, teaching, and schooling, the framework supports the creation of an active, reflective, interactive educator, who is not only effective but exemplary. The mission, themes, and outcomes define our shared vision of Creating Exemplary Professionals.

Mission Statement: The mission of the School of Education is to create exemplary professionals prepared to enrich the lives of the people of New Jersey through education and, consequently, to provide a national model for the preparation of educators. Through their practice and scholarship, members of our professional community model the outcomes candidates are to attain as they prepare for and develop in their professions as teachers, administrators, counselors, and clinicians. Commitment to exemplary professionalism is expressed thematically, in all programs and across the continuum of professional practice, with focus on knowledge and inquiry; excellence in practice; multiculturalism, diversity, and inclusion; leadership and advocacy; and the preparation of professionals who function effectively and reflectively in multiple contexts and communities.

Themes and Associated Learning Outcomes: The themes and learning outcomes, presented next, are emphasized in all courses and field experiences in the School of Education. Five programmatic themes support and define the overarching concept of Creating Exemplary Professionals. The phrases listed immediately beneath each theme are dispositions that develop the meaning and intent of the theme and become significant as directions for action and guidelines for programs. These are followed by the associated learning outcomes expected to be attained by graduates at the completion of their programs of study.

Knowledge and Inquiry

- Learners viewed as active constructors of knowledge.
- Knowledge generated and disseminated by faculty, students, and professional community partners.
- Teaching based on research, best practice, inquiry, and analysis.
- Reflection practiced for professional development and program improvement.

TCNJ graduates demonstrate highly advanced communication and ethical decision-making skills in their interactions with others.

They apply and transform the growing knowledge bases in the content and practice of their professions.

They value inquiry, critical thinking, connected knowledge, creativity, independent thinking, and interdisciplinary conversation.

As reflective, effective educational decision makers, they attain and demonstrate efficacy in the best educational practices.

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Excellence in Practice

- Instructional strategies exemplifying best practice.
- Technology as a tool for teaching and learning.
- Collaboration to enhance growth for all members of the learning community.
- Ethical behavior and integrity modeled.

TCNJ graduates work to maintain excellence across the continuum of educational practice through ongoing inquiry and learning.

They use defensible, appropriate instructional/therapeutic strategies, grounded in the knowledge bases of their profession and on assumption of personal responsibility for effective practice.

They use technology effectively as a tool to support and enhance learning, and they understand how technology changes teaching and learning including the contexts in which learning may occur.

They make connections among theory, research, and practice; between content and pedagogy; between special and general education; between the contexts of the classroom or clinic and the community; between ethics and actions; and among professionals.

Multiculturalism, Diversity, and Inclusion

- Knowledge about and respect for human commonalities affect practice.
- Knowledge about and respect for human differences affect practice.
- Equity and social justice through education.

TCNJ graduates work successfully with learners and clients of increasingly diverse backgrounds, many of whom speak English as a second language, and who come from communities different from their own.

They are knowledgeable about how universal characteristics of human development interact with individual and cultural differences to influence learners and are competent in using that information to promote development in all populations and with all persons they serve.

Multiple Contexts and Communities

- Efficacy demonstrated in multiple contexts that include urban, multicultural, multilingual, and global.
- Positive interactions in multiple communities that include families, neighborhoods, schools, and agencies.

TCNJ graduates are collegial and professional in their interactions and competent in collaborating with others in a community of learners to create positive educational environments.

They demonstrate success in multiple contexts and with members of multiple communities, acknowledging the potency of context and relationships and using that knowledge positively.

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Leadership and Advocacy

- Providing service on behalf of students and clients.
- Developing leadership for the enhancement of practice and the profession.
- Promoting individual development and social justice through education.

TCNJ graduates are leaders in the improvement of practice in their professions.

They are active advocates for their students and clients.

They are active in establishing policy that has a positive impact on those they serve.

Requirements for Teacher Education Candidates:

1. A cumulative grade point average (GPA) of at least 2.75 is required for students to successfully complete their teacher education program and be recommended for certification and licensure. To help assure that students at The College of New Jersey meet their requirement by graduation: 1) admission to candidacy in all teacher education programs, following completion of 16 course units, requires a 2.5 minimum GPA; and 2) admission to student teaching in all teacher education programs requires a 2.75 minimum GPA. Exceptions involving admission will be considered on an individual basis and granted upon approval of the chair and coordinator of the department(s) offering the program and the dean of education.
2. Students must meet a state hygiene/physiology requirement, and pass the appropriate Praxis examination before receiving a certificate of eligibility to teach in the state.
3. A Mantoux or tuberculosis test is required of all students in the School of Education and in teacher preparation programs by their junior year. This test is a state requirement and can be obtained through the Health Center at The College of New Jersey or through a private physician. Further information is available through the Office of Support for Teacher Education Programs (STEP).
4. As required by New Jersey law, the Department of Education of the State of New Jersey will not issue a teaching certificate to anyone with a criminal history of certain disqualifying offenses. As a result, all students enrolled in a teacher preparation program will be required, prior to the Sophomore, Junior, and Senior Year field experiences, to sign a statement attesting that he or she has not committed any offenses that may disqualify him or her from state teacher certification. A list of applicable offenses will be provided. This certification will be to ensure the continued safety and security of TCNJ students and the faculty and students in the participating field placement districts. Students with convictions or charges pending may jeopardize their eligibility to continue in the teacher preparation program until pending charges are appropriately settled. Students are encouraged to contact the STEP office to discuss their eligibility.

Students should also be aware that the curriculum for the teacher preparation programs are designed to comply with the State of New Jersey Core Curriculum Standards and Administrative Codes. Consequently, the School of Education may have to alter the graduation requirements of the undergraduate teacher preparation programs to comply with any changes to the state teacher certification requirements.

Students majoring in early childhood education, elementary education, special education, and education of the deaf and hard of hearing/elementary education (dual

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certification program) must also complete an approved second major. To avoid extending their program, students should declare their majors at the start of their freshman year.

Students enrolled in the Schools of Art, Media, and Music; Culture and Society; Engineering; and Science who are preparing to teach must complete the approved academic major as well as the required sequence of teacher-preparation courses.

Departments within the School of Education maintain the right and responsibility to dismiss from a given major those students who have not made satisfactory progress in completing the major component of the program or fulfilling department requirements or expectations.