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Dear University Supervisor,

Mercer’s Tift College of Education appreciates your willingness to work with our teacher candidates. Your guidance and mentorship in candidates’ classroom experiences make an invaluable contribution to their teacher preparation. Whether it’s a pre-practicum field experience or student teaching, you are an important team member in our teacher preparation program.

The Office of Field Placement wants all candidates and supervisors to have positive experiences. Please ask any questions and express any concerns that you have about the program or about the student who has been assigned to you. It is our goal to work with you as closely as we can to make the field experience as meaningful as possible.

Again, let me express the appreciation of the entire Tift faculty to you in the important task of preparing teachers. Please feel free to contact me at any point during the semester. Thank you for your support.

Warm regards,

Carlene Russell  
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Conceptual Framework

Theme

The Professional Education Unit’s Conceptual Framework is the underlying foundation for its teacher education and educational leadership programs and is organized around the theme, “The Transforming Educator,” at both the initial and advanced levels of study.

“The Transforming Educator,” a living link in the educational process, is an educator who is changing internally through understanding, practicing, and reflecting such that, individually and collaboratively, he or she implements for all learners appropriate and significant life-changing experiences that effectively provide for the needs of the individual, actively engage students in the learning process, and promote life-long learning. (The term “Transforming Educator” is used throughout this document when referring to issues, theory, principles, characteristics, etc. that are common across all programs. When reference is made specifically to the educational leadership program, the term “Transformational Leader” is used.)

The Conceptual Framework

Within the context of a distinctive Baptist heritage and the knowledgeable blending of theory and practice, the Professional Education Unit has chosen To Know, To Do, and To Be as organizing principles of the Conceptual Framework that undergirds its teacher education and educational leadership programs at Mercer University.

The Conceptual Framework principles, To Know, To Do, and To Be, prepare the candidate to adapt to and meet the needs of a current and changing society while highlighting the Baptist tradition of promoting mediation, settlement, compromise, and understanding in the classroom, in the school system, and in the community. Preparing the candidate to be a Transforming Educator is vital to successful educational practice in increasingly diverse settings. Blending theory with field experiences helps to actualize this preparation both for teachers and educational leaders.

Teachers and educational leaders who are Transforming Educators must embrace the processes of understanding, practicing, and reflecting, which are indeed vital components of transformation. Each of these three processes is important and meaningful in itself, but the three are also interconnected in very real ways. Understanding informs practice. The wisdom developed through practice increases and modifies understanding and, ideally, leads to rich and meaningful reflection. Reflection causes teachers and educational leaders to enhance their levels of understanding and to make substantive as well as subtle changes in their practice. These processes of understanding, practicing, and reflecting are themes that are infused in and richly woven throughout the principles of the Conceptual Framework: To Know, To Do, and To Be. Moreover, The Transforming Educator demonstrates the following three characteristics in classrooms and other school settings: engagement of students in learning, the ability to work with a diversity of students in meaningful and respectful ways, and the ability to be involved in effective collaboration with students, other educators, parents, and the community.
History of Development of the Conceptual Framework

The “To Know,” “To Do,” and “To Be” principles were first embraced by the Professional Education Unit faculty in 1996. During fall 1999, the faculty critically examined the Conceptual Framework, refining the meanings of “To Know,” “To Do,” and “To Be” and condensing the descriptors of each principle several times until there was agreement on three descriptors for each of the principles. Further discussion led to a more encompassing theme, “Preparing the 21st Century Teacher,” that incorporated the reflection and decision-making abilities necessary for successful mediation in a culturally diverse world and provided a knowledge base and a set of field experiences that would enable an educator to adapt effectively to a changing and technologically advanced society, to new and innovative teaching pedagogy and resources, and to the continuing diverse needs of children. Faculty members approved the new theme and revised Conceptual Framework in late fall 1999.

In March 2000, the unit reviewed the theme of the Conceptual Framework again with input from an outside consultant. Critical attention was given to the global dimensions of the theme, “Preparing the 21st Century Teacher” – a theme that created difficulties in defining what it meant in general, what it meant in terms of the Mercer graduate, and what outcomes could be delineated succinctly. Reflecting again on the visions and missions of Mercer University and the Professional Education Unit, faculty members re-examined the Baptist heritage of the institution, the Paideia ideal, and the principles of Jesse Mercer, the founder of the University. Combining their understanding and knowledge with the realities of what unit faculty members believe and with the strengths and characteristics of Mercer University graduates, faculty members moved toward a more specific Conceptual Framework that would describe the uniqueness of educators prepared at Mercer University. Rich reflection and discussion led to the theme, “The Transforming Educator.” Review then was made of the outcomes of the Conceptual Framework. Having further condensed the outcomes in fall 1999, the faculty revisited a prior list of more specifically written and demonstrable outcomes. The faculty discussed and approved the theme and the outcomes at its faculty meeting in March 2000. The faculty revised the framework in 2005 to make more explicit the professional dispositions it values. Following the faculty’s articulation of a set of seven dispositions and the piloting of a dispositions assessment, the faculty approved the addition of an eighth disposition in spring 2006, based on the recommendation of an ad hoc committee that studied the data, the assessment process, and recent literature on the topic.

As the Conceptual Framework is a living document, it is often revisited and richly discussed by unit faculty members and students, faculty members from various departments across the University, and members of the Site-Based Councils on Professional Education. Research on transformative educators has expanded in breadth and depth during the past five years, and the Professional Education Unit has thoughtfully integrated more current research into the Conceptual Framework’s knowledge base.

Get the “The Transforming Educator: To Know, To Do, To Be” (PDF)

Visual Model of the Conceptual Framework
Getting Started

Prior to the beginning of the semester, become familiar with the Teacher Education website for:

- Announcements: [http://education.mercer.edu/students/office-of-field-placement/announcements/](http://education.mercer.edu/students/office-of-field-placement/announcements/)
- TOFES: [http://education.mercer.edu/students/office-of-field-placement/apply-for-field-experience/](http://education.mercer.edu/students/office-of-field-placement/apply-for-field-experience/)
- University Supervisors: [http://education.mercer.edu/students/office-of-field-placement/university-supervisor-info/](http://education.mercer.edu/students/office-of-field-placement/university-supervisor-info/)

- Obtain an identification badge for visiting schools (see Office Coordinator if you do not have one).
- Note important dates – particularly midterm, finals, edTPA, and E-Portfolio due dates as well as the due date for semester grades. These dates can be found on the Teacher Education website.
- Be familiar with the syllabus for the level of students you are supervising.
- Obtain the most current Class Roster. Cross Check in MyMercer and Livetext
- Make contact with each cooperating teacher. Collect contact information(email) and Code for CT access in TOFES. [See Help guide CT access](#).
- To Request Travel Reimbursement: By the end of each month, submit an auto mileage expense report to the Office of Field Placement.

Student Orientation

The University Supervisor will attend the student orientation for the specific field experience. The Director of Field Placement and Certification will review the syllabus with students and supervisors, and the University Supervisor will meet with students at the conclusion of the student orientation.

- Personal Introduction and Contact Information
- Expectations (see attached template and adapt to your needs)
- Assignment Due Dates (included)
- Future Seminar Dates
  - Remember: Students do not receive credit for attending, but they will be deducted 5 points each time they do attend a seminar; edTPA Support Sessions for Student Teachers/Interns are voluntary.
  - The dates for Student Teaching/Internship Seminars 1-3 have already been scheduled. You will decide other seminar dates and give students a list of dates. Keep in mind their class schedules, assignment due dates, etc.
  - OFP will initiate sign in, but you will need to keep a sign-in sheet for seminars.
- Students may voluntarily provide you with cell phone numbers in the case of an emergency. Please let students know that you will be using their Mercer email addresses for contact.
Attendance

Supervisors are responsible for posting student attendance. Since Field experience does not meet daily, you will only need to record the first three weeks. We base attendance off our Mandatory Orientation.

Roll Reconciliation – Posting Attendance

Roll reconciliation must be done through MyMercer for all classes for at least the first three weeks of class. Please post attendance as soon as possible after each class meeting. Best practice would be to post attendance for the entire term.

Go to the class “Gradebook” from your portal homepage by selecting the class from Class Center or from My Classes tab.

To post attendance for classes with set meeting days:

On the bottom half of the Gradebook page you will note a two-month, color-coded calendar. Each class meeting day has a color block:

Green (G) = fully posted
Red (R) = requires posting
Gray (G) = Scheduled Pale
Blue (B) = Holiday
Orange (O) = Cancelled

1.  Click on a specific class day A student roster will appear for that class
2.  2. Click “edit” located in the lower right hand corner of the student roster.
3.  3. Attendance for each student has a default setting of present. You will only need to click the box and select absent for students who did not attend. If you choose, you can record reasons or comments for a particular student on that day.

To post attendance for on-line class or class with individualized meetings:

1. Under Attendance tab, select Student Specific Time button on lower right.
2. Enter or select the date(s) to use as a meeting date(s)
3. Click Build Grid button.
4. Attendance for each student has a default setting of present. You will only need to click the box and select absent for students who did not attend. If you choose, you can record reasons or comments for a particular student on that day.

•Be aware that the system will not allow you to post attendance ahead of the day that the class meets.

•Course rosters can also be printed from the Gradebook page.

•Once your work in Gradebook is complete, be sure to click “Update” to save your work. 

Revised 8.16.2016
Logging off the Faculty Portal

When your work in the Faculty Portal is complete, be sure to Log-out of the portal.

This is easily done by clicking on the log-out link found at the top of the page beside your salutation as well as at the bottom right of your portal homepage.

Grading

1. Please use the appropriate rubric when grading.
2. Do not score the rubric Indicators (far left column on rubric).
3. Please grade all assignments within seven (7) days.
4. If you cannot see a student assignment in LiveText, please let the student know immediately. If you are not going to grade the assignment right away, please be sure it is viewable in LiveText.
5. Be consistent in your grading.
6. Provide constructive feedback.

Live Text and Rubric Discrepancies: There are just a few assignments where the rubric grades do not match the grades on the Grade Submission Form. In these cases, you are not using the grade on the rubric, but you will use the percentage to calculate the assignment grade.

You may also post assignment grades in Blackboard. If you are interested in receiving directions, please let us know and we will assist you.

Supervisors will submit final course grades through the faculty portal homepage on the MyMercer webpage (https://my.mercer.edu/).

Entering Course Grades Through MyMercer

Log in to MyMercer (Faculty Portal)

1. From your home page, click on Gradebook on top right of screen
2. Select the appropriate term from the drop down – your class schedule will appear.
3. Click on the class for which you want to enter grades.
4. Click on ‘Final Grades’ tab. You will see a list of your students.
5. Under ‘Letter Grade’ heading on the far right, select the drop down box by each blank grade field.
   You may either select the correct grade from the list or type in the correct grade (ignore ‘numeric grade’ -entering anything in that field will not apply because numeric grading is not valid).
6. After entering grades and making sure they are correct, click on ‘Save Final Grades’ at the bottom right of the screen. Continue as above with your other classes.
LiveText

We use LiveText as our electronic portfolio and assessment system for program evaluation and accreditation purposes. Each student has created a portfolio. Assignments are entered as artifacts into the portfolio, and the student submits the portfolio to you for evaluation. When the student submits the portfolio to you, it’s a snapshot of what’s included in the portfolio at that specific time. In addition, students also complete journal entries, forms, and surveys in LiveText. As a University Supervisor, you will evaluate assignments using a provided rubric and complete student dispositions evaluations using a provided rating scale.

Helpful Hints for LiveText

1. Practice, Practice, Practice!
2. Read all instructions for each lesson completely.
3. Do not have students submit Word documents for assignments unless the directions ask them to specifically submit a Word document.
4. Be sure to view the rubric before grading the assignment.
5. Do not score the Indicators (far left column) in the rubric. In other words, please do not click the Indicators column. You should get a percentage score for each student when you grade the rubric correctly.
6. Place the due date in your LiveText account for each assignment prior to the student orientation.
7. If a template is provided with the assignment, students are to use the template.
8. Templates should only be downloaded for an assignment one time.
   Students should save their work, and the template they started can be viewed in their “Documents” tab.
9. Students should be led to READ the directions for each assignment carefully.
10. For local LiveText technical support, please contact tftltsupport@mercer.edu. For support after regular business hours and on weekends, you may call LiveText Technical Support at 1-866-LiveText (1-866-548-3839).
Seminars

Seminars are scheduled strategically throughout the semester, and your participation is extremely important.

- **Student Teaching/Internship Seminars** are designed to include whole-group instruction on edTPA tasks with break-out sessions for supervisors to meet individually with candidates. Seminars 1-3 have been scheduled; the University Supervisor schedules Seminar 4.
- **Practicum/Mentored Practicum Seminars** are scheduled by the University Supervisor.
- **Pre-Practicum Seminars** are scheduled by the University Supervisor.

The following is a guide for seminar break-out sessions or individually scheduled seminars.

**Seminar 1**

Center time around your expectations/candidate observation and participation in the classroom.

- Assignment due dates
- Future seminars
- Collect information from each candidate
- Various assignment details/instructions
- Evaluation schedule

**Seminar 2**

- Various assignment details/instructions

**Seminar 3**

- Various assignment details/instructions

**Seminar 4**

- Should be scheduled at the end of the semester
- Collect all paperwork for end of semester

Supervisors reserve the right to schedule another seminar for these experiences, if needed. Please refrain from using your personal residences for any Mercer-sponsored seminar.

*Pre-Practicum Seminar 3 will follow this guide.*
Creating a TOFES Account

1. Go to the Tift Online Field Experience System. ([https://apps.mercer.edu/tiftfeapp](https://apps.mercer.edu/tiftfeapp))

2. Click Create Account tab at the top of the page.

3. Enter all required fields and click Create Account under the form.
   a. If you don’t have a Mercer email, enter yourlastname@mercer.edu where yourlastname is replaced with your last name.
   b. If you don’t have an MUID, enter any 8-digit dummy number of your choosing. You will need to write down this number, as it will be your password into the system.
   c. For Site of majority of classes, enter the site where most of your students are enrolled.

4. You will receive a message that reads Thank you for creating your account.

5. Log into the system with your last name and the MUID you entered when creating your account.

6. There will be a green arrow pointing to the New Application link. Click this link. A window will open with a list of the current active field experience application periods.

7. Search for the semester listed as For Supervisors. Click apply for this application period.

8. Once you have created your application, click the update my program information at the top of the application.
   a. Choose the program that matches the majority of the students you are supervising.
   b. Another drop down menu will appear underneath Program.
   c. Choose the concentration of the handbook that you will need, or select N/A if no concentration applies. (This will generate edTPA Materials for your Student Teachers) Click on the edTPA Docs link in the left-side navigation. A list of links to the documents you need should appear in a window.
   d. The message Your program information has been updated will appear. You can close this window.

**For Supervisors Covering Multiple Content Areas - To access other content areas, just start step 8 and repeat the steps with a different content area. If you have any problems with this process, please contact Jeff Osmus (osmus_ja@mercer.edu).
Helping your Cooperating Teacher Gain Access in TOFES

In order for Cooperating Teachers to assess their teacher candidates each CT will need to have access in TOFES. This is very IMPORTANT. Please complete the following:

Step 1: Provide the Office of Field Placement with the following information:

- CT Name. CT School E-Mail. Code
  - Cooperating Teachers need to create a code in order to enter their account in TOFES. Example: MU0604 the first part is in relation to the school and the second part is 4 digits relevant to the CT. The MU is for Mercer University, and the 0604 is the last 4 digits of my SSN.

Step 2: Send Spreadsheet to Jeff Osmus for him to create the CT accounts

- Please keep this for your records in case the CT has trouble logging in, or remembering their “code.”
- Do not share this with any Teacher candidate.
- Please do not discuss or share this information in front of the Teacher candidate as this is confidential.

Step 3: Once account it created the Cooperating Teacher will be prompted to complete their “profile”. Please check to make sure that your Cooperating Teacher have filled out there profiles and their assessments. This can be checked in your supervisor account, TOFES.

- When the CTs log in, there is an assessments tab in the navigation at the top of the page, but no assessments will appear until they are ready to be filled out.

In addition to the specific assignments for the field experiences, the Office of Field Placement collects other data and evaluations in LiveText:

Cooperating Teacher Profile: Each Cooperating will need to complete a CT profile, found in TOFEs. This will need to be done the FIRST week of experiences. As a US you will be able to see what CT’s have complete this process.

Disposition Assessments: The Supervisor will complete the Disposition Assessment at the end of the semester. The Dispositions Assessment can be found under the Assignments tab. The Supervisor will also need to enter the Disposition Assessment CT data in LiveText.

End-of-Course Surveys: Student Teachers/Interns and Practicum/Mentored Practicum students complete End-of-Course surveys that are not viewable by Supervisors.

Content Knowledge Forms for Student Teachers/Interns: These forms are not completed in LiveText. The Cooperating Teacher will complete this form via the Tift Online Field Experience System (TOFES).
Observation Evaluations

Helpful Hints for Evaluations

- Collaborate with the student to schedule the observation evaluations. Please contact the student immediately if the observation is postponed due to an emergency.
- Teacher Candidates should email the Supervisor the lesson plan no later than the day before the observation and should have the lesson plan viewable when you arrive to observe.
- Use the Evaluation Rubric to score observations. The rubric is also available online at https://education.mercer.edu/mu-education/students/office-of-field-placement/cooperating-teacher-information/upload/Evaluation-Rubric.pdf
- Provide constructive feedback.
- Observe the entire lesson.
- ALWAYS make comments on the Formative Evaluations. There should always be a correlation between the Formative, Mid-Term, Summative, and Disposition evaluations.
- Conference immediately following each observation.
- Be sure to have the teacher candidate sign all evaluations.
- Formative Evaluations should be spaced several weeks apart to give the candidate time for improvement.
- The Mid-Term Evaluation should be completed at the mid-point of the semester.

Note: The evaluation instrument used for all evaluations is called CAPS and can be accessed in TOFES. This will be used for formative and summative evaluations by the supervisors and the cooperating/mentor teachers.

Mentoring

Helpful Hints for Mentoring

- You are a mentor, a coach, but not a friend. Please be very cautious of the relationships you build. You should remain professional at all times.
- Never challenge the CT or criticize the CT or other school staff.
- Please contact the Director of Field Placement and Certification at the FIRST sign of trouble. Please remember that if CTs are concerned, we should be concerned.
Office of Field Placement Staff

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Tift College of Education  
Office of Field Placement  
P.O. Box 2140  
McDonough, GA 30253-1730
Resources

Our website contains forms, calendars, syllabi, and other related documents for students, University Supervisors, and Cooperating Teachers.

- Please check the Announcements tab frequently for updates.
- Specific syllabi are listed with each separate field experience.
- Travel Expense Vouchers are found under Documents and Forms
  - Please make sure that you use your mercer ID and round Miles to the nearest whole number.
- Room Reservations
  - If you would like to reserve a classroom on one of our campuses please email the office of field placement. We will need: date, start time-end time, number of students, and if you will need a projector, computer, etc.

Link: [http://education.mercer.edu/students/office-of-field-placement/](http://education.mercer.edu/students/office-of-field-placement/)

Please join the University Supervisor listserv so that you receive important updates.
You may subscribe to the listserv by sending an email exactly as follows:
To: mailserv@lists.Mercer.edu
No subject line
Body of Message: subscribe TCEFieldSupers-L

If you experience difficulties in your attempt to subscribe, please contact the Mercer Help Desk:
e-mail: helpdesk@mercer.edu
website: [http://it.mercer.edu/faculty/](http://it.mercer.edu/faculty/)
phone: 478.301.2922 or 678.547.6310