Vision and Mission of the Institution

Carson-Newman College is a Christian, private, liberal arts institution. Ranked by Forbes as being in the top three percent of America’s Best Colleges, Carson-Newman has been named to the President’s Higher Education Community Service Honor Roll, the highest federal recognition a college or university can receive for its commitment to volunteering, service-learning, and civic engagement. The college’s reputation is born from its commitment to Christian excellence and academic rigor as manifested through 54 undergraduate majors across nine Schools and graduate programs in business, counseling, education, nursing, and religion.

Mission
The college mission is to help our students reach their full potential as educated citizens and worldwide servant leaders by integrating academic excellence and Christian commitment within a caring community.

Vision
The college vision is to become a premier Christian liberal arts college with a world-wide impact.

Vision and Mission of the Unit

Vision
The unit envisions that it provides an environment in which candidates initially learn how to teach and perform other school-related roles effectively by the manner in which they are taught and advised. Through interactions with faculty who teach in the general education program, their major fields of study, and in their professional education course work, students experience first-hand the strategies that are used by faculty who are, first of all, professionally competent, and who also demonstrate a sense of calling to their profession and a sense of caring in their interactions with the candidates. The work of the faculty and its communications with candidates is imbued by spirituality, commitment to faith, and joyfulness of heart.

Candidates will recognize that they are the primary focus of the unit, and that all course work, field experiences, and assessment strategies are designed to help them develop the knowledge, skills, and dispositions to become effective teachers, leaders, and counselors in a world that is characterized by change and diversity. The unit believes that effective preparation for teaching, counseling, and educational leadership in an ever-changing environment requires interaction with the world of practice, combined with regular and systematic reflection upon those experiences. As candidates progress through their preparation programs, they develop the skills to analyze the impact of various influences upon their own professional development. They recognize the impact of federal, state, and local standards, the influence practitioners with whom they work in their field experiences, and the unique influences of the communities in which they work. The unit has a vision that candidates will respond proactively to the forces that influence their teaching, leadership, and counseling, and that through Christ they will become agents of change within their own schools and professional communities. Within the context of schools
and the educational process, they will, indeed, become participants in the process by which Carson-Newman’s graduates have a “world-wide impact.”

**Mission of the Unit**
In line with the vision and mission of the college, the unit seeks to prepare caring and professionally competent teachers and other school personnel who feel called to lifelong commitments to leadership, learning, and service.

**Unit Philosophy, Purposes, and Goals**

**Philosophy**
The philosophy of the unit rests on the following beliefs:

*Definition of Education*
Education is defined as the lifelong process by which each person reaches his or her full potential, or stated another way, the lifelong process by which each person lives out God’s will for him or her in the world.

*Role of Education in a Democratic Society*
A democracy depends upon an educated citizenry. The quality of the society rests upon decisions made by its citizens; therefore, all citizens should have an adequate knowledge base to solve the daily problems of living in a democracy, and they should have the ability to think critically about issues that face them not only on a daily basis, but to analytically examine issues that face their communities, states, and nation. Further, effective citizens will be inclined to participate in the democratic process by being informed and taking appropriate actions on behalf of themselves and others in the society. As Freire has said, “the teaching task also requires the capacity to fight for freedom, without which the teaching task becomes meaningless” (1998, p. 4). From a Christian standpoint, issues of social justice are a concern for every citizen.

*Nature of The Learner*
Each individual is unique, both in terms of genetic make-up and the way in which the individual interacts with the world. All persons are created in God’s image, and therefore have the potential for goodness. All individuals can learn, and all individuals desire to learn. God’s will for each person is that each individual will make the best use of his or her gifts and talents to serve God.

*Nature of Knowledge Bases*
The ability to function effectively, whether as a citizen in a democratic society or a teacher, principal, or counselor in an educational setting, depends upon basic skills and knowledge, along with the ability to process new information appropriately (Jukes, McCain, & Crockett, 2010). The knowledge bases for effective living are in a continuous state of change, and the effective individual is one who can evaluate, integrate, and use new knowledge within an existing knowledge base (Freire, 1993a, 1993b; Friere & Friere, 1994).
Nature of the Learning Process
Because all individuals can learn, it is a matter of finding the appropriate approach in order to help each person learn and to discover and maximize the use of his or her gifts and talents. All individuals begin learning out of their own prior knowledge and experiences, and they develop knowledge, skills, and dispositions through interactions with people, materials, and media in their environments (Vygotsky & Kozulin, 1986).

Nature of the Christian as Educator
Drawing upon Biblical themes, Palmer (1993) succinctly stated the role of truth and accountability for Christian educators:

“Where conventional education deals with abstract and impersonal facts and theories, an education shaped by Christian spirituality draws us toward incarnate and personal truth. In this education we come to know the world not simply as an objectified system of empirical objects in logical connection with each other, but as an organic body of personal relations and responses, a living and evolving community of creativity and compassion. Education of this sort means more than teaching the facts and learning the reasons so we can manipulate life toward our ends. It means being drawn into personal responsiveness and accountability to each other and the world of which we are a part.” (p. 14-15)

Teacher, Administrator, and Counselor Roles in the Learning Process
In order for a teacher, principal, or counselor to help individuals learn, the educator must establish climate that encourages the learning process for all individuals. The integrated spirituality of the teacher/principal/counselor is exemplified in the environment provided for students. Teachers must establish positive relationships with individuals in their classrooms in order to begin to facilitate the learning process. They must be able to assess the needs of the learner, provide appropriate experiences for the learner, and build upon the child’s strengths (Brendtro & Larson, 2006). The teacher must also be knowledgeable about the direction in which the learner should be headed; that is, the teacher must know the reasonable and appropriate expectations for individuals. The teacher serves as a mediator between what is expected of the learner and the knowledge, skills, and dispositions that currently characterize the learner (Dewey, 1938). As Parker Palmer has stated, “good teaching cannot be reduced to technique; good teaching comes from the identity and integrity of the teacher” (Palmer, 1998, p. 10). The role of the counselor is to provide support for individual students, teachers, and other school personnel in order to help each student reach his/her potential (Noddings, 2002a, 2002b; Kohn, 2000) teachers, administrators, and counselors must provide appropriate models for learning for a lifetime.

Purpose
The purpose of the education unit is to collaborate with the professional community to prepare teachers, counselors, and administrators to serve children and families from culturally diverse backgrounds effectively within the context of the P-12 educational community.
Goals

The goal for the unit is to provide the environment and experiences that prepare candidates to teach/counsel/lead effectively in diverse P-12 settings.

Mission for the Liberal Arts Core

The goals for the institution’s general education program, referred to as the Liberal Arts Core, are central to the goals for candidates in the unit. The mission of the Liberal Arts Core program is stated:

In order to help students reach their full potential as educated citizens and worldwide servant leaders, the Carson-Newman College Liberal Arts Core provides an introduction to a broad base of knowledge, Christian values, and skills that are essential for personal, intellectual, and professional growth. Underlying the core courses are foundational skills that are common to liberal arts courses: critical reading and thinking, oral and written communication, and information literacy.

Goals of the Liberal Arts Core

The Liberal Arts Core at Carson-Newman provides an introduction to the Liberal Arts and studies in Biblical traditions, communications, mathematics and science, personal and social awareness, and global perspectives. Through these core components, students:

1. Gain knowledge of the history of Christian Liberal Arts;
2. Acquire knowledge of the scholarly study of the Judeo-Christian scriptures and their content;
3. Develop effective communication skills in both written and spoken English;
4. Exhibit scientific literacy and quantitative reasoning skills critical for making informed decisions;
5. Demonstrate the ability to think critically and to apply appropriate research techniques to the study of human behavior, social systems, and cultures of the world; and
6. Display a broad knowledge of human actions, imagination, and expression.

The unit plans an environment and experiences that help each candidate to meet the following goals:

1. Establish appropriate goals and objectives to plan for instruction that effectively meets the needs of diverse learners;
2. Use knowledge of the subject matter, the student, and instructional strategies to teach in ways that all students learn;
3. Use appropriate assessment and evaluation strategies that can be used to make effective instructional decisions and to communicate student progress to students, parents, and other professionals;
4. Provide a learning environment in which all students’ abilities are nourished and in which
resources are used effectively;
5. Continue to engage in activities that promote professional growth, including reflecting on one’s own practice, collaborating with others, continuing with formal training, and performing professional responsibilities effectively and efficiently; and
6. Use appropriate nonverbal, verbal, and written techniques to communicate effectively with students, parents, teachers, and others.

Bronfenbrenner’s Theory of Human Ecology as an Organizing Structure for the Conceptual Framework

Professional education programs offered through the education unit at Carson-Newman College are undergirded by a conceptual framework that drives the development of the curriculum, the choice of instructional strategies, the planning of field experiences, and the ongoing assessment and evaluation of the overall program. Bronfenbrenner’s model of human ecology serves as the primary organizing theory for the conceptual framework for programs leading to licensure within the education unit at Carson-Newman College; a graphic of the human ecology model is provided at the end of the narrative for the conceptual framework, as well as a graphic illustrating Carson-Newman's adaptation of the model for its conceptual framework. In order to understand the conceptual framework for licensure programs, a brief overview of Bronfenbrenner’s theory is provided (Bronfenbrenner, 1979, 1986a; 1986b; Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 2006).

Bronfenbrenner theorized that forces in both the near and far environments serve as powerful influences on a child’s development, but he also recognized the important ways in which a child influences those forces as well. Bronfenbrenner uses the terms microsystem, exosystem, and macrosystem to describe the influence of environmental factors. The microsystem refers to those factors that are located within the immediate environment of the child, such as people and events in the home and classroom life of a child. These factors have the greatest impact on the child, because the child experiences them directly and concretely.

The term exosystem is used to describe those factors that lie beyond the immediate environment of the child, such as the neighborhood in which the child lives. The exosystem also may include abstract factors, such as parents’ work schedules—the child does not directly experience the work environment, but the child is affected by the arrangement of the parents’ work schedules.

The macrosystem includes larger societal factors, such as overall economic conditions, cultural values and mores, and federal laws. For example, when Congress passed the Family and Medical Leave Act, the amount of time parents might be able to spend with a newborn or adopted child was affected, although the child had no direct participation in the legislation. The federal mandates of No Child Left Behind have had an enormous influence on both what and how teachers teach and, thus, on what children learn.

Within each of the three systems proposed by Bronfenbrenner, the child or groups of children have the potential to influence people and events. For example, at the microsystem level, a child who is temperamentally difficult will elicit different discipline strategies from parents than one
who is placid and calm. Given the example of work schedules at the exosystem level, a sick child may affect the parents’ work schedule and activities. At the macrosystem level, it is difficult to imagine how one child may influence the entire society; however, much has been accomplished in the interest of one child. Police now use nationwide alerting systems because of the abduction of Amber Hagerman and schools now provide limited medical support services because of Garrett Frey.

Bronfenbrenner includes two other systems, the mesosystem and the chronosystem, in his ecological theory. The mesosystem describes the way in which factors in two or more microsystems interact. Parent-teacher conferences, in which people from the home and the school interact, is an example of a mesosystem. The chronosystem is used to account for the influence of time on development; for example, if a divorce occurs in a child’s family during the preschool period, it will have a different impact than if the child is an adolescent or young adult. In summary of Bronfenbrenner’s theory, development occurs as a dynamic and reciprocal process of interaction between individuals and environmental factors, both concrete and abstract.

Bronfenbrenner’s Theory of Human Ecology

Source: Santrock 2011
Bronfenbrenner’s Theory as Applied to Professional Education Programs at Carson-Newman

Just as the child is the central focus in Bronfenbrenner’s theory, the Carson-Newman College education candidate is the central focus in the teacher education unit, and the college environment serves as the primary microsystem of socialization of the candidate. Faculty recognize the developmental characteristics of candidates, both traditional and non-traditional, graduate and undergraduate (Perry, 1999). The unit recognizes the importance of candidates’ prior experiences and religious heritage. The Christian ideals of truth, beauty, and goodness are operationalized through the college mission and goals statements and the general education program. The departmental goals, philosophy, objectives, and curriculum support the overall liberal arts program of the college. Each licensure program at the undergraduate level, for example, is planned around a general education core, an academic major in a discipline, with the professional education courses being added to ensure that candidates develop the knowledge and skills necessary to enter the teaching profession.

At the exosystem level, the licensure programs designed for the Carson-Newman student are influenced by forces beyond the campus, including state department requirements for licensure programs, accreditation standards, and curriculum standards established by professional organizations/standards groups. In addition, two other powerful exosystem influences are that of the Baptist heritage and professional educators with whom students and faculty interact. Professional educators exert an influence indirectly in early field experiences and then become much more important to candidates as they complete their student teaching and internship experiences (Portelance & Colette, 2009; Rajuan, Beijaard, & Verloop, 2010).

At the macrosystem level, the larger values influencing the preparation of the Carson-Newman student include societal demographics, traditional educational philosophy and developmental theory, current research and trends in education, and the general attitudes and ideologies of the culture, with special emphasis upon Christian ideology. The major groups of developmental theorists are incorporated in all programs: Cognitive/developmental (Piaget and Vygotsky); psychoanalytic (Freud and Erikson); behaviorists (Skinner and Watson); social learning theorists (Bandura and Walters); ethologists (Lorenz); and educational philosophers (Dewey).

Standards for the profession, as published by the National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE, 2008), the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO, 2010) in the InTASC standards (Interstate Teachers Assessment and Support Consortium), and the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS, 2002) are major components of the macrosystem influence on all programs in teacher/counselor/administrator preparation. Research evidence related to school and teacher effectiveness is a significant component of all programs (Stronge, 2002; Stanovich & Stanovich, 2003; Wilson & Floden, 2003). Because classroom management continues to be a significant issue for most beginning teachers, the classroom management literature is also infused throughout the curriculum (Marzano, Marzano, & Pickering, 2003; Sugai & Horner, 2009). Within each discipline, standards for curriculum and effective instruction and assessment strategies are derived from the standards and literature provided through the specialized professional associations, such as AHPERD: American

At the chronosystem level, changes in any of the other system levels (micro, exo, meso, macro), in addition to the passage of time, may prompt changes in the way in which courses are framed and instructional strategies selected. At the present time, five points have been selected for emphasis within the teacher education unit. Those points of emphasis are reflection; home, school, and community relationships; assessment; technology; and cultural and developmental diversity. As times change, and as Carson-Newman College students change, the emphasis areas may change as well.

Because the systems model is one that incorporates the idea of reciprocity of effect (factors do not simply influence students—students have an influence on the department, the college, the immediate community, and the society at large), the key to facilitating the development of the qualities of lifelong learning, leadership, and service is the use of reflection. Throughout the college curriculum, teacher education candidates are encouraged to think critically about the factors that are influencing them in their own development as education professionals (Friere & Faundez, 1989; Killen & DeBeer, 1994; Chubbuck, 2010). They are guided to become increasingly independent in making decisions about their own choices of curriculum and teaching; principalship and leadership styles; or counseling styles, techniques, and strategies.

The home, school, community relationships aspect of the framework is seen as an increasingly important component of successful teaching, leadership, and counseling. Because the unit programs are based on Bronfenbrenner’s theory of human ecology, which emphasizes the importance of environmental factors on development, educators must acknowledge and interact with the environmental influences, other than school, that affect a child’s development.

Assessment then becomes a critical factor in teaching and counseling. The use of multiple methods of ongoing assessment are essential for teachers and counselors to be effective in meeting the needs of a diverse student population.

The Office of Educational Technology (2010) informs us that 100% of the nation’s school districts keep student data on electronic files, 97% of districts have local area networks to enhance learning goals and more than 75% of the nation’s schools have online library catalogues. Pre-service teachers, counselors, and administrators must be able to walk into a school with a rich background in the use of educational technology. As the school population and society continues to become increasingly culturally diverse, educators must consider how
teaching, school leadership, and counseling decisions are influenced by the population now being served in the schools. Methods and strategies must be selected that will meet the needs of all children.

**Candidate Proficiencies**

The National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education (2008) defines dispositions as “Professional attitudes, values, and beliefs demonstrated through both verbal and non-verbal behaviors as educators interact with students, families, colleagues, and communities. These positive behaviors support student learning and development” (p. 88-90). The Council for the Accreditation of Counseling and Related Education Programs (2009) uses similar language to discuss its concept of professional identity.

The conceptual framework for the unit describes the system in which professional education preparation programs take place. The system recognizes that factors in the near and far environments both influence, and are influenced by, candidates in professional education programs. The unit seeks, through the dynamic interaction of the candidates and the factors that have an impact on their development as professional educators, to encourage the following dispositions in its candidates:

**Called**

Candidates understand that teaching is a special way to answer God’s call to serve; they strive to live out their Christianity in the context of school and the community at large as servant leaders; and they apply their faith to their profession and all parts of their lives (Palmer, 1998, 1999).

**Caring**

Candidates demonstrate care and concern for meeting the diverse academic and developmental needs of all children; they are sensitive to the cultural and family backgrounds of all students; they believe that all children can learn; and, they seek to be fair in all interactions with every child. Studies of effective teaching indicate that caring teachers are perceived to be more effective than those who do not communicate a sense of caring to their students (Bosworth, 1995; Stipek, 1996). The specific behaviors that are indicative of caring are described in the literature as well (Noddings, 2002a, 2002b; Council of Chief State School Officers, 2010; Cochran-Smith, 2003). However, caring is especially significant in the context of an institution that is Christ-centered. The scriptures are filled with mandates to “love one another” as well as to care for one’s neighbor. From the books of law in the Old Testament (Leviticus 19:18) throughout the Bible to the words of Christ in Matthew 22:39 and the writings of Paul in Ephesians 4:32, Christians are taught to love and care for their neighbors.

**Professional Competence**

Candidates possess a knowledge base in theory, research, and technology, along with the ability to apply skills to best practices (Stigler & Hiebert, 1999); they have a commitment to continued professional development in order to maintain intellectual rigor and epistemological curiosity (Friere, 1994). In terms of the themes associated with the chronosystem level of the conceptual framework, the professional competence of candidates requires that they are disposed to:
Continuously reflect on their practice:
Reflective practice is at the heart of effective learning and teaching, particularly in a world that is rapidly changing. Mary Catherine Bateson (1994, p. 6) states, “Men and women confronting change are never fully prepared for the demands of the moment, but they are strengthened to meet uncertainty if they can claim a history of improvisation and a habit of reflection.” Much earlier, Dewey (1938, 1933) claimed that reflection is “at the heart of the disciplined mind.” Schon, building on Dewey’s emphasis on reflection, discusses two types of reflection—reflection on action and reflection in action. The first type occurs when an individual has an experience and then carefully considers the experience, extracting from the experience meaning that can be applied to new situations. Reflection in action occurs when an individual, such an architect or medical doctor, is in the midst of a design or operation and continuously monitors the process to make adjustments to ensure a successful outcome. Effective educators will be those who can reflect-in-action and use problem-solving skills effectively (Schwartz, Mennin, & Webb, 2001). Increasingly, educators are also engaging in reflection-before-action, in which they plan for the desired outcomes, and then implement a plan and a process that helps them achieve the desired outcome (Wiggins & McTighe, 1998).

Both InTASC (Interstate Teachers Assessment and Support Consortium) and NBPTS (National Board for Professional Teaching Standards) principles and propositions place a value on the capability of beginning and experienced teachers to reflect upon their own practice. The ninth InTASC standard states that, “The teacher is a reflective practitioner who uses evidence to continually evaluate his/her practice, particularly the effects of his/her choices and actions on others (students, families, and other professionals in the learning community), and adapts practice to meet the needs of each learner” (Council of Chief State School Officers, 2010, p. 19), and the fourth NBPTS proposition states that “Teachers think systematically about their practice and learn from experience.” Candidates in the unit are asked to reflect continuously upon their own learning processes and upon their preparation as an educator. Reflection may take the form of writing in open-ended journals, responding to specific prompts either in class or following practicum experiences, engaging in problem-solving and case analysis, and/or using a variety of reflective models. All candidates are required to analyze their initial efforts at implementing lesson plans, and by the time they reach student teaching, they complete a pre-reflection process, the lesson plan, and a post-reflection process designed to help them learn from each experience. The pre- and post-reflection processes are used throughout student teaching, and it is also a part of the Tennessee Framework for Evaluation and Professional Growth (Danielson, 1996).

Use technology as a tool to maximize learning in the classroom, manage professional responsibilities, and promote their own continued professional development:
The 21st century is the age of information and technology. The skills required for processing information involve technology, and students who do not have the opportunity to acquire technology skills will be deprived of information as well as the opportunities to develop skills that will help them learn effectively throughout their lives. Candidates need to develop the skills to use technology in their teaching, as well as to manage data from their students. The ISTE National Educational Technology Standards (2008) for teachers identify five standards with performance indicators that are to be included in preservice teacher education programs. Candidates should facilitate and inspire student learning and creativity; design and develop
digital-age learning experiences and assessments; model digital-age work and learning; promote and model digital citizenship and responsibility; and engage in professional growth and leadership. In addition, candidates use the Technological Pedagogical Content Model (TPCK) to consider best practices in the use of educational technology. Appropriate links for current technology information include:

21st Century Fluency:  http://www.21stcenturyfluency.com/fluencies.cfm
21st Century Literacies from NCTE:  http://www.ncte.org/governance/literacies

Use varied assessment strategies to plan effectively to meet the needs of all children: Assessment is defined as the process by which teachers and/or counselors collect, synthesize, interpret, and use information about students’ present level of knowledge, skills, and dispositions to aid in decision making (Airasian, 2004). The purposes of assessment are to help advance the learning and development of the student by monitoring student progress and evaluating student achievement, and to improve educational programs at all levels by reflecting and analyzing instruction and curricula (McIntosh, Horner, & Sugai, 2009; VandeWalle, Karp, & Bay-Williams, 2009; Wiggins, 1998; Wiggins & McTighe, 1998). Because all students learn differently, candidates must develop the skills to create, select, and use multiple forms of assessment.

Assessments should be valid and reliable, that is, they should be a true demonstration of the knowledge, skill, or disposition under investigation (McMillan, 2010). Assessment should be ongoing and continuous, and should include both informal and formal strategies (Kohn, 2000). When assessments are used for evaluation purposes, standards by which the evaluation is made, as well as data from the assessment method, should be effectively and accurately communicated to students and parents. InTASC Standard Six states that “The teacher understands and uses multiple methods of assessment to engage learners in their own growth, to document learner progress, and to guide the teacher’s ongoing planning and instruction” (Council of Chief State School Officers, 2010, p. 16).

Respectfully consider the needs of children and families from diverse cultural backgrounds: Cultural background is defined as “the context of one’s life experiences as shaped by membership in groups based on ethnicity, race, socioeconomic status, gender, exceptionalities, language, religion, sexual orientation, and geographic area” (NCATE, 2008, p. 86). Cultural diversity refers to the differences among groups of people and individuals based on their cultural background. To say that the society is becoming increasingly culturally diverse is trite; the statistics abound that document this fact. Current projections indicate that there will be no majority culture by the year 2050, and in some cities this is already true (Parker, 2001). Candidates need to be aware of cultural differences and their impact on learning and communication styles, respect and appreciate cultural differences, and use appropriate
instructional and assessment strategies to meet the needs of students and their families from varied cultural backgrounds, and they must learn to collaborate with individuals may be quite different from themselves (Strand, Marullo, Cutforth, Stoecker, & Donohue, 2008). InTASC Standard Two states that “The teacher uses understanding of individual differences and diverse cultures and communities to ensure inclusive learning environments that allow each learner to reach his/her full potential” (Council of Chief State School Officers, 2010, p. 12). As candidates plan instruction, they are required to consciously consider the modifications that must be made for students in their classrooms (Banks & Banks, 2003; Copple, 2003; Delpit, 1995; Sue, 2010).

Facilitate desirable relationships between home, school, and community:
The relationship between parent involvement and academic achievement and overall effectiveness of schools is well documented. The statement “It takes a village to raise a child” was probably never more true than it is today. Because the society is becoming increasingly culturally diverse, the need for good relationships between the home, school, and community increases (Delpit, 2006). It is the school’s responsibility to facilitate positive relationships with the home and community. Schools should be places that invite parent involvement (Purkey, 2002).

Candidates understand that parents are their children’s first teachers and that all parents should be treated as though they want the best for their children. Candidates need a variety of skills for working effectively with diverse families and communities; specifically, they need excellent communication skills, including the ability to listen actively and the ability to communicate in a variety of ways. InTASC Standard Ten states that “The teacher collaborates with students, families, colleagues, other professionals, and community members to share responsibility for student growth and development, learning, and well-being” (Council of Chief State School Officers, 2010, p. 20). Considering this prominent status, numerous educators and researchers have examined the relationship between the family, the community and the formal education of children. Consequently, more than a few studies have confirmed the positive correlation between family involvement and academic achievement (Henderson & Mapp, 2002).

In alignment with established research and Bronfenbrenner’s theory regarding the complex layers of a child’s environment, the unit includes courses in each candidate’s program that focus on the development of the knowledge, skills, and dispositions necessary to engage in effective communications and to build constructive relationships among diverse populations within the school environment and the local community. Furthermore, a significant body of research highlights the importance of preparing teacher candidates to work effectively with families and the community for the overall development of the student (Ferlazzo & Hammond, 2009; Glasgow & Whitney, 2009; Shumow, 2009; Taylor & Whittaker, 2009; Weiss, Kreider, Lopez, & Chatman, 2009). In addition to the role of the family and community in the academic achievement of students, all candidates should be sensitive to the interactions between the various factors in the child’s maturing biology, the immediate family and community environment, and the extensive societal landscape that influences a child’s development.
Alignment of Candidate Proficiencies with Professional, State, and Institutional Standards
Incorporation of the Tennessee Framework for Evaluation

The institution’s general education program serves as the underlying liberal arts foundation for candidate proficiencies, and the conceptual framework incorporates the mission and vision of the institution. The goals of the unit are aligned with the Tennessee Framework for Evaluation and Professional Growth, which was developed through the consideration of InTASC, NBPTS, and P-12 curriculum standards. The alignment of the domains and indicators with InTASC and NBPTS principles is shown in the following table.

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<td>2—Learning Differences</td>
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<td>9—Reflection and Continuous Growth 10—Collaboration</td>
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<td>4—Teachers think systematically about their practice and learn from experience; 5—Teachers are members of learning communities</td>
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<td>5—Teachers are members of learning communities</td>
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**Unit Goals and Standard Alignments**

Candidate proficiencies are further explicated through the knowledge and skills documents provided for each licensure area, which also incorporated InTASC, NBPTS, and P-12 curriculum standards. All candidates meet a common set of general and professional education knowledge and skills proficiencies; however, the knowledge and skills statements for candidate proficiencies vary by the major area of study for each licensure area. The proficiencies for each major area of study are aligned with standards from the specialized professional associations and P-12 national and state curriculum standards. The proficiencies in the professional education area are aligned with the InTASC standards. Proficiencies in the Educational Leadership program are aligned with the Tennessee Instructional Leadership Standards (TILS).

In providing this overview of the conceptual framework for the programs offered in the professional education unit at Carson-Newman College, it is hoped that students, faculty, and practitioners in the field will enter into dialogue about the ways in which the framework is evidenced in the preparation and ongoing professional development of teachers and counselors. The dialogue will contribute to the ongoing, dynamic, and developmental process of improving the quality of Carson-Newman’s education programs.
References


Office of Educational Technology.
[http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/os/technology/index.html](http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/os/technology/index.html)


