

**COLLEGE OF EDUCATION**  
**FOUNDATIONAL COMPETENCIES POLICY<sup>1</sup>**  
(November 2010)

**Introduction and Rationale**

The College of Education has a responsibility to the educational community to ensure that individuals whom the University of Maryland recommends to the State of Maryland for certification are qualified to join the education profession. Teaching and other preK-12 and community education-related professions require strong academic preparation and mastery of pedagogy or other professional competencies. These professions also require non-academic competencies, such as communication or interpersonal skills, which are as critical to success as those in the academic domain. This document sets forth those essential non-academic criteria or *Foundational Competencies* that are common to all preK-12 and community professional preparation programs at the University.

Foundational Competencies serve several important functions, including, but not limited to: (a) providing information to those considering preK-16 and community professional careers that will help such individuals in their career decision-making; (b) advising applicants of non-academic criteria considered in admissions decisions made by the University's preK-16 and community professional preparation programs; (c) serving as the basis for feedback provided to candidates in these programs regarding their progress toward mastery of all program objectives; and (d) serving as the basis for the final assessment of attainment of graduation requirements and, where appropriate, recommendation for certification.

All candidates in the UM professional preparation programs are expected to demonstrate that they are prepared to work with children, youth, and/or adults in educational and/or other professional settings. This preparation results from the combination of successful completion of University coursework and field/internship experiences and the demonstration of important human characteristics and dispositions that all educators and professionals should possess. These characteristics and dispositions, the *College of Education Foundational Competencies*, are outlined below.

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<sup>1</sup> The primary source used in the preparation of this document was the policy and procedure document from the University of Texas at San Antonio. Additional sources include, but are not limited to, policy and procedure documents from the University of Rochester Medical Center; University of West Virginia at Parkersburg; University of Wisconsin, Madison; Michigan State University; Medical College of Wisconsin; New Hampshire Technical Institute; Franklin College; and the University of Iowa.

## **College of Education Foundational Competencies**

The College of Education Foundational Competencies are grouped into seven categories: English Language Competence, Interpersonal Competence, Work and Task Management, Analytic/Reasoning Competencies, Professional Conduct, Physical Abilities, and Professional Dispositions.

**Within the professional context to which each candidate aspires, all candidates must demonstrate the following Foundational Competencies:**

### **English Language Competence: *Ability to express oneself in standard written and oral English***

- Communicate effectively in standard written and oral English in order to communicate concepts, assignments, evaluations, and expectations with members of the learning community such as University faculty, students, parents, administrators, and other staff.
  - Candidates write clearly and use correct grammar and spelling. They demonstrate sufficient skills in standard written English to understand content presented in the program and to adequately complete all written assignments, as specified by faculty.
  - Candidates demonstrate sufficient skills in spoken English to understand content presented in the program, to adequately complete all verbal assignments, and to meet the objectives of field placement experiences, as specified by faculty.

### **Interpersonal Competence: *Ability to interact effectively with others***

- Demonstrate communication skills that are responsive to and respectful of different perspectives represented in diverse classrooms and/or other professional environments.
- Demonstrate the necessary interpersonal competencies to function effectively with students and parents, and to function collaboratively as part of a professional team.
  - Candidates communicate effectively with other students, faculty, staff, and professionals. They express ideas and feelings clearly and demonstrate a willingness and an ability to listen to others.
  - Candidates appreciate the value of diversity and look beyond self in interactions with others. They do not impose personal, religious, sexual, and/or cultural values on others.

- Candidates demonstrate an awareness of appropriate social boundaries between students and educators and show that they are ready and able to observe those boundaries.
- Candidates demonstrate positive social skills in professional and social interactions with faculty, colleagues, parents, and students.
- Candidates demonstrate the ability to express their viewpoints and negotiate difficulties appropriately, without behaving unprofessionally with instructors, peers, or students.
- Candidates exhibit respect for all University of Maryland and school personnel, as well as peers, children and their families and members of their communities.
- Candidates demonstrate flexibility, openness to new ideas, and the willingness and ability to modify their beliefs and practices related to their work.
- Candidates interact courteously, fairly, and professionally with people from diverse racial, cultural, and social backgrounds and of different genders or sexual preferences. Candidates adhere to the UM Code of Conduct/University's Human Relations Code (see <http://www.inform.umd.edu/PRES/policies/vi100b.html>).

**Work and Task Management: *Ability to organize and manage multiple work demands***

- Demonstrate the ability to work under time constraints, concentrate in distracting situations, make subjective judgments, and ensure safety in emergencies.
- Demonstrate the ability to organize time and materials, to prioritize tasks, to perform several tasks at once, and to adapt to changing situations.
  - Candidates demonstrate the ability to multi-task and to adapt to and display flexibility in changing situations.
  - Candidates demonstrate the ability to work with frequent interruptions, to respond appropriately to unexpected situations; and to cope with extreme variations in workload and stress levels.
  - Candidates demonstrate the ability to make and execute quick, appropriate, and accurate decisions in a stressful environment.
  - Candidates demonstrate the capacity to maintain composure and to function well in a myriad of situations.

***Analytic/Reasoning Competencies: In their academic work and in their work in professional settings, candidates demonstrate their abilities to think analytically and reason logically about professional topics, issues, and problems.***

- Candidates demonstrate their abilities to understand and extend complex information presented to them in their courses and in their work in professional settings.
- They demonstrate that they are able to analyze, synthesize, integrate concepts, and problem-solve in the ways they understand and respond to events and problems in professional contexts, formulate and use educational assessments, and make professional judgments.
  - Candidates demonstrate the ability to analyze, synthesize, integrate concepts, and problem-solve to formulate assessment, educational, and professional judgments.
  - Candidates demonstrate the ability to think analytically about educational and professional issues.
  - Candidates demonstrate the ability to perform the above skills independently.

***Professional Conduct: Ability to work within a set of reasonable expectations for conduct as defined by the profession and/or workplace.***

- Arrive on time for professional commitments, including classes and field experiences.
- Seek assistance and follow supervision in a timely manner, and accept and respond appropriately to constructive review of their work from supervisors.
- Demonstrate attitudes of integrity, responsibility, and tolerance.
- Show respect for self and others.
- Project an image of professionalism.
  - Candidates meet deadlines for course assignments and program requirements. (A pattern of repeated absences, lateness, and failure to meet deadlines in courses or fieldwork is not acceptable.)
  - Candidates demonstrate that they are ready to reflect on their practice and accept constructive feedback in a professional manner. They demonstrate the ability to act upon reasonable criticism.
  - Candidates demonstrate honesty and integrity by being truthful about background, experiences, and qualifications; doing their own work; giving credit for the ideas of others; and providing proper citation of source

materials. Candidates adhere to the UM Code of Academic Integrity (<http://www.studenthonorcouncil.umd.edu/code.html>).

- Candidates do not make verbal or physical threats; engage in sexual harassment; become involved in sexual relationships with their students, supervisors, or faculty; or abuse others in physical, emotional, verbal, or sexual ways.
- Candidates demonstrate the ability to understand the perspectives of others in the context of teaching, counseling, administration, etc. and the ability to separate personal and professional issues.
- Candidates exhibit acceptance of and are able to make appropriate adjustments for exceptional learners and learners for whom English is not their native language.
- Candidates protect the confidentiality of student information unless disclosure serves professional purposes or is required by law.
- Candidates are free of the influence of illegal drugs and alcoholic beverages in classes and field placements. They abide by the University of Maryland Code of Student Conduct (<http://www.inform.umd.edu/PRES/policies/v100b.html>).
- Candidates demonstrate the ability to deal with current life stressors through the use of appropriate coping mechanisms. They handle stress effectively by using appropriate self-care and by developing supportive relationships with colleagues, peers, and others.
- Candidates use sound judgment. They seek and effectively use help for medical and emotional problems that interfere with scholastic and/or professional performance.
- Candidates demonstrate appropriate personal hygiene habits.
- Candidates dress appropriately for their professional contexts.
- Candidates possess maturity, self-discipline, and good judgment.

**Physical Abilities: Ability to meet the professional demands of the profession and/or workplace**

- Demonstrate the physical stamina to work a contractual day and perform extended and additional duties of a school professional such as parent conferences, after-school events, and other assigned duties.
  - Candidates exhibit the physical abilities required to attend and participate in class and practicum placements.
  - Candidates demonstrate the ability to tolerate physically demanding workloads and to function effectively under stress.

***Professional Dispositions: Demonstrate the belief that all children and adults can learn; Commitment to own continuing professional development; Assumption that they can be responsible agents for the improvement and reform of education.***

- Candidates demonstrate in the full range of their professional activities that they understand that all children and adults can learn, irrespective of racial, social, cultural, linguistic, mental and physical ability differences.
- Candidates understand and accept the responsibility to contribute constructively to efforts to improve the nature and quality of educational experiences for children, youth, and adults, especially in urban and multicultural contexts.
- Candidates accept that learning to be a professional is an ongoing process and apply their analytic and reasoning abilities in reflecting on their own work and on the work of others. They use reflection as a foundation for setting reasonable and appropriate goals for professional development.

### **Implementation and Review Procedures**

During the orientation phase of their professional programs, candidates will receive a copy of the *College of Education Foundational Competencies Policy* and be asked to sign a *Foundational Competencies Acknowledgement Form*. Candidates in the undergraduate teacher preparation programs will be required to submit an updated College of Education Foundational Competencies Acknowledgement Form as part of the College's selective admissions review in the sophomore or junior year.

Self-assessments of candidates and faculty evaluations of students on the Foundational Competencies will occur during each field/internship experience (see *Candidate's Self Assessment* and *Foundational Competencies Evaluation Form*). Candidates will be monitored and given feedback throughout the program. At specified points (e.g., field experiences), they will be notified of inadequacies that may prevent them from progressing through their program. Documentation and consensus regarding the candidate's functioning will be sought before any action is taken. Candidates who experience deficiencies in any areas will be encouraged to seek appropriate professional help from University or other sources. If the problem seems to be beyond remediation, continuation in professional programs, graduation or recommendation for certification may be denied.

### **Assistance For Individuals With Disabilities**

Foundational Competencies may be met with, or without, reasonable accommodations. The University complies with the requirements of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990. Therefore, the College of Education will endeavor to make reasonable accommodations with respect to its Foundational Competencies for an applicant with a disability who is otherwise qualified. "Disability" shall mean, with respect to an individual, (1) a physical or mental impairment that

substantially limits one or more of the major life functions of such individual; (2) a record of such an impairment; or (3) being regarded as having such an impairment. The University reserves the right to reject any requests for accommodations that are unreasonable, including those that would involve the use of an intermediary that would require a candidate to rely on someone else's power of selection and observation, fundamentally alter the nature of the University's educational program, lower academic standards, cause an undue hardship on the University, or endanger the safety of students or others.

Questions or requests for accommodations pertaining to the College of Education Technical Standards/Foundational Competencies should be directed to Dr. Kathy Angeletti, Assistant Dean, College of Education (301/405-2358; [kangel@umd.edu](mailto:kangel@umd.edu)).

For all other requests for accommodations, candidates should contact the University's Disability Support Services and follow established university policy and procedures.

### **Confidentiality**

Unless a candidate has expressly waived his or her privilege to confidentiality of medical records provided to substantiate either a disability or a recommendation for an accommodation, the College of Education administrators to which such information has been communicated shall maintain such information in a manner that preserves its confidentiality. Under no circumstances shall such information become part of a candidate's academic records.

## COLLEGE OF EDUCATION FOUNDATIONAL COMPETENCIES ACKNOWLEDGEMENT FORM

*Within the professional context to which each candidate aspires, all candidates must demonstrate the following Foundational Competencies:*

**English Language Competence:** *Ability to express oneself in standard written and oral English*

- Communicate effectively in standard written and oral English in order to communicate concepts, assignments, evaluations, and expectations with members of the learning community such as University faculty, students, parents, administrators, and other staff.

**Interpersonal Competence:** *Ability to interact effectively with others*

- Demonstrate communication skills that are responsive to and respectful of different perspectives represented in diverse classrooms and/or other professional environments.
- Demonstrate the necessary interpersonal competencies to function effectively with students and parents, and to function collaboratively as part of a professional team.

**Work and Task Management:** *Ability to organize and manage multiple work demands*

- Demonstrate the ability to work under time constraints, concentrate in distracting situations, make subjective judgments, and ensure safety in emergencies.
- Demonstrate the ability to organize time and materials, to prioritize tasks, to perform several tasks at once, and to adapt to changing situations.

**Analytic/Reasoning Competencies:** *In their academic work and in their work in professional settings, candidates demonstrate their abilities to think analytically and reason logically about professional topics, issues, and problems.*

- Demonstrate their abilities to understand and extend complex information presented to them in their courses and in their work in professional settings.
- Demonstrate that they are able to analyze, synthesize, integrate concepts, and problem-solve in the ways they understand and respond to events and problems in professional contexts, formulate and use educational assessments, and make professional judgments.

**Professional Conduct:** *Ability to work within a set of reasonable expectations for conduct as defined by the profession and/or workplace*

- Arrive on time for professional commitments, including classes and field experiences.
- Seek assistance and follow supervision in a timely manner, and accept and respond appropriately to constructive review of their work from supervisors.
- Demonstrate attitudes of integrity, responsibility, and tolerance.

- Show respect for self and others.
- Project an image of professionalism.

**Physical Abilities: Ability to meet the professional demands of the profession and/or workplace**

- Demonstrate the physical stamina to work a contractual day and perform extended and additional duties of a school professional such as parent conferences, after-school events, and other assigned duties.

**Professional Dispositions: Demonstrate the belief that all children and adults can learn; Commitment to own continuing professional development; Assumption that they can be responsible agents for the improvement and reform of education.**

- Demonstrate in the full range of their professional activities that they understand that all children and adults can learn, irrespective of racial, social, cultural, linguistic, mental and physical ability differences.
- Understand and accept the responsibility to contribute constructively to efforts to improve the nature and quality of educational experiences for children, youth, and adults, especially in urban and multicultural contexts.
- Accept that learning to be a professional is an ongoing process and apply their analytic and reasoning abilities in reflecting on their own work and on the work of others. They use reflection as a foundation for setting reasonable and appropriate goals for professional development.

**I have read and acknowledge receipt of the College of Education Foundational Competencies Policy. I understand that if the criteria listed above are not met satisfactorily, I may be denied full admission into the College of Education Professional Preparation Program and/or denied the opportunity to complete the extensive internship component of the curriculum.**

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**Candidate Signature**

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**PRINTED Name**

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**Date**

**NOTE:** The University has a legal obligation to provide appropriate accommodations for individuals with documented disabilities. If you have a documented disability and are seeking accommodations, you should register with the University's Office of Disability Support Services and notify your course instructor, academic advisor, and/or the Office of Student Services (1204 Benjamin Building; 301/405-2364) of your specific needs, as appropriate. Candidates should initiate this process as soon as possible (prior to the start of classes and/or field experience).

**COLLEGE OF EDUCATION**  
**FOUNDATIONAL COMPETENCIES CANDIDATE'S SELF ASSESSMENT**

*Within the professional context to which I aspire (for example, elementary education, school counseling, school administration), I believe I am able to:*

YES	NO	<b>English Language Competence:</b> <i>Ability to express oneself in standard written and oral English</i>
		communicate effectively in standard written and oral English in order to communicate concepts, assignments, evaluations, and expectations with members of the learning community such as University faculty, students, parents, administrators, and other staff;
YES	NO	<b>Interpersonal Competence:</b> <i>Ability to interact effectively with others</i>
		demonstrate communication skills that are responsive to and respectful of different perspectives represented in diverse classrooms and/or other professional environments;
		demonstrate the necessary interpersonal competencies to function effectively with students and parents, and to function collaboratively as part of a professional team;
YES	NO	<b>Work and Task Management:</b> <i>Ability to organize and manage multiple work demands</i>
		demonstrate the ability to work under time constraints, concentrate in distracting situations, make subjective judgments, and ensure safety in emergencies;
		demonstrate the ability to organize time and materials, to prioritize tasks, to perform several tasks at once, and to adapt to changing situations;
YES	NO	<b>Analytic/Reasoning Competencies:</b> <i>Ability to think analytically and reason logically about professional topics, issues, and problems</i>
		demonstrate their abilities to understand and extend complex information presented to them in their courses and in their work in professional settings;
		demonstrate that they are able to analyze, synthesize, integrate concepts, and problem-solve in the ways they understand and respond to events and problems in professional contexts, formulate and use educational assessments, and make professional judgments;
YES	NO	<b>Professional Conduct:</b> <i>Ability to work within a set of reasonable expectations for conduct as defined by the profession and/or workplace</i>
		arrive on time for professional commitments, including classes and field experiences;
		seek assistance and follow supervision in a timely manner, and accept and respond appropriately to constructive review of their work from supervisors;
		demonstrate attitudes of integrity, responsibility, and tolerance;
		show respect for self and others;
		project an image of professionalism;
YES	NO	<b>Physical Abilities:</b> <i>Ability to meet the professional demands of the profession and/or workplace</i>
		demonstrate the physical stamina to work a contractual day and perform extended and additional duties of a school professional such as parent conferences, after-school events, and other assigned duties;

YES	NO	<b>Professional Dispositions:</b> <i>Demonstrate the belief that all children and adults can learn; commitment to own continuing professional development; assumption that they can be responsible agents for the improvement and reform of education</i>
		demonstrate in the full range of their professional activities that they understand that all children and adults can learn, irrespective of racial, social, cultural, linguistic, mental and physical ability differences;
		understand and accept the responsibility to contribute constructively to efforts to improve the nature and quality of educational experiences for children, youth, and adults, especially in urban and multicultural contexts;
		accept that learning to be a professional is an ongoing process and apply their analytic and reasoning abilities in reflecting on their own work and on the work of others; use reflection as a foundation for setting reasonable and appropriate goals for professional development.

*Candidates should submit an explanation for each item checked "NO."*

**I have reviewed the College of Education Foundational Competencies Policy and understand that if the criteria listed above are not met satisfactorily, I may be denied the opportunity to continue in the professional preparation program and to complete the extensive internship component of the curriculum.**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Candidate Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Candidate's **PRINTED** Name

**NOTE:** The University has a legal obligation to provide appropriate accommodations for individuals with documented disabilities. If you have a disability and are seeking accommodations, you should register with the University's Disability Support Services and notify your course instructor, academic advisor, and/or the Office of Student Services (1204 Benjamin Building; 301/405-2364) of your specific needs, as appropriate. Candidates should initiate this process as soon as possible (prior to the start of classes and/or field experience).

**COLLEGE OF EDUCATION  
FOUNDATIONAL COMPETENCIES EVALUATION FORM**

Candidate Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Program Area: \_\_\_\_\_

**Rate the candidate on each of the standards listed below:**

**KEY:** A – Frequently    B – Sometimes    C – Rarely Ever    N/A – Not Applicable/  
Insufficient Opportunity to Observe

A	B	C	N/A	
				<b>English Language Competence:</b> <i>Ability to express oneself in standard written and oral English</i>
				communicates effectively in standard written and oral English in order to communicate concepts, assignments, evaluations, and expectations with members of the learning community such as University faculty, students, parents, administrators, and other staff;
				<b>Interpersonal Competence:</b> <i>Ability to interact effectively with others</i>
				demonstrates communication skills that are responsive to and respectful of different perspectives represented in diverse classrooms and/or other professional environments;
				demonstrates the necessary interpersonal competencies to function effectively with students and parents, and to function collaboratively as part of a professional team;
				<b>Work and Task Management:</b> <i>Ability to organize and manage multiple work demands</i>
				demonstrates the ability to work under time constraints, concentrate in distracting situations, make subjective judgments, and ensure safety in emergencies;
				demonstrates the ability to organize time and materials, to prioritize tasks, to perform several tasks at once, and to adapt to changing situations;
				<b>Analytic/Reasoning Competencies:</b> <i>Ability to think analytically and reason logically about professional topics, issues, and problems</i>
				demonstrates the ability to understand and extend complex information presented in courses and in their work in professional settings;
				demonstrates the ability to analyze, synthesize, integrate concepts, and problem-solve in the ways he/she understands; and, responds to events and problems in professional contexts, formulates and uses educational assessments, and makes professional judgments;

A	B	C	N/A	<b>Professional Conduct:</b> <i>Ability to work within a set of reasonable expectations for conduct as defined by the profession and/or workplace</i>
				arrives on time for professional commitments, including classes and field experiences;
				seeks assistance and follows supervision in a timely manner, and accepts and responds appropriately to constructive review of his/her work from supervisors;
				demonstrates attitudes of integrity, responsibility, and tolerance;
				shows respect for self and others;
				projects an image of professionalism;
				<b>Physical Abilities:</b> <i>Ability to meet the professional demands of the profession and/or workplace</i>
				demonstrates the physical stamina to work a contractual day and performs extended and additional duties of a school professional such as parent conferences, after-school events, and other assigned duties;
				<b>Professional Dispositions:</b> <i>Demonstrate the belief that all children and adults can learn; commitment to own continuing professional development; assumption that they can be responsible agents for the improvement and reform of education</i>
				demonstrates in the full range of professional activities that (s)he understands that all children and adults can learn, irrespective of racial, social, cultural, linguistic, mental and physical ability differences;
				understands and accepts the responsibility to contribute constructively to efforts to improve the nature and quality of educational experiences for children, youth, and adults, especially in urban and multicultural contexts;
				accepts that learning to be a professional is an ongoing process and applies his/her analytic and reasoning abilities in reflecting on own work and on the work of others; uses reflection as a foundation for setting reasonable and appropriate goals for professional development.

Recommendation for program continuance: \_\_\_\_ yes \_\_\_\_ no \_\_\_\_ probationary

Recommendation for program completion and certification: \_\_\_\_ yes \_\_\_\_ no \_\_\_\_ N.A.

Additional Comments:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name/Title

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature/Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name/Title

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Signature/Date

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Signature/Date