KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS, AND PROFESSIONAL DISPOSITIONS
Westminster School of Education
Key Components for Program Success

School of Education students preparing to work in the public school venue must know and be able to demonstrate professional content knowledge, pedagogical knowledge and skills, and the professional dispositions necessary to help all students learn. The term “all students” includes those with exceptionalities and of different ethnic, racial, gender, language, religious, socioeconomic, and regional/diverse origins.

For the purposes of the teacher licensure programs in the School of Education those professional behaviors are defined in the following ways:

**Content Knowledge**
An in-depth knowledge of the content matter one plans to teach. An understanding of major concepts, assumptions, debates, processes of inquiry, and ways of knowing that are central to the discipline(s) s/he teaches.

**Pedagogy**
An understanding of learning theory, curriculum development, student development, motivation and the various ways and means available to make ideas accessible to students. A consideration of how students’ prior experiences and current contexts impact the ways students learn and influence the ways teachers teach.

Also, the ability to create learning opportunities, encourage students’ development of critical thinking, establish classroom climate, and assess student learning using a variety of instructional strategies which can be adapted for or are specifically developed to meet the needs of all students.

**Professional Dispositions**
The tendency to act in particular ways. Two major categories with their particular attributes are outlined below.

- Professional Dispositions in field-based experiences encompasses appropriate behavior specific to field experiences. Behaviors consistent with this standard include but are not limited to:
  - Maintains communication with School of Education faculty and supervisors, parents/guardians, students, Mentor Teachers and other Site personnel
  - Complies with policies, statutes and rules established by UPPAC and local school districts
  - Recognizes and respects diversity
  - Creates a safe learning environment for students
  - Helps develop and maintain positive and accurate perceptions towards all students
  - Seeks, develops, and continually refines practices that address the needs of individual students
    - Demonstrates in language, lesson plans, and teaching practices the belief that all students can learn
    - Considers backgrounds, interests, and attitudes of all students
    - Provides equitable learning opportunities for all students
- Professional Dispositions as a student encompasses one’s ability to demonstrate a respectful attitude for all, including colleagues, college supervisors, faculty, and site personnel, and to do one’s best to avoid personal prejudice and bias. It also reflects a teacher candidate’s ability to address differences in personalities, backgrounds, and behaviors. Further, Professional Dispositions as a student encompasses one’s willingness to fully participate in the learning process, and to demonstrate personal suitability for the profession. In other words, a teacher candidate must demonstrate a desire to know and the willingness to act as a professional. Behaviors consistent with this standard include but are not limited to:

  - **Commitment to professionalism**
    - Is punctual with deadlines
    - Regularly attends classes
    - Takes responsibility for personal learning
    - Contributes to the learning atmosphere in the college classroom
    - Uses electronics in class only for directly related activities

  - **Commitment to reflection, assessment, and learning as an ongoing process**
    - Is open and receptive to constructive feedback from peers, instructors, college supervisors, and mentor teachers
    - Is willing to experiment with new ideas and techniques
    - Reflects on one’s learning and teaching; makes changes where necessary
    - Recognizes personal limitations and seeks to address them

  - **Development of appropriate professional relationships**
    - Is tolerant of and actively listens to ideas and views of others
    - Is respectful of individual differences
    - Relates well to peers, faculty, staff, and others
    - Encourages interactions in a mutually respectful manner
    - Follows policies outlined in the handbook when addressing concerns
    - Acknowledges the rights of all others in the classroom.

Any student who, during their coursework in the School of Education, demonstrates an inability or unwillingness to develop the knowledge, skills, attitudes and professional dispositions necessary to be an effective educator may be placed on academic probation and/or dismissed from the teacher licensure program. Further, a student may be summarily removed from his/her student teaching placement if his/her actions and behaviors during the program are inconsistent with the professionalism standards outlined in this document.

I have read, I understand, and I agree to abide by the above description of professional dispositions.

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Signature                  Date