CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK
FOR THE
STANFORD TEACHER EDUCATION PROGRAM

I. MISSION AND VISION

Mission of Stanford University and the Graduate School of Education

The mission, vision, and model of the Stanford Teacher Preparation Program (STEP) fits squarely within the aims of Stanford University and the Graduate School of Education (GSE) in which the program resides.

The Stanford University Founding Grant (1885) outlines the founding principles of the University. The Founding Grant describes the "Nature, Object, and Purposes of the Institution" founded by Leland Stanford and Jane Lathrop Stanford in these terms:

Its nature, that of a university with such seminaries of learning as shall make it of the highest grade, including mechanical institutes, museums, galleries of art, laboratories, and conservatories, together with all things necessary for the study of agriculture in all its branches, and for mechanical training, and the studies and exercises directed to the cultivation and enlargement of the mind;

Its object, to qualify its students for personal success, and direct usefulness in life;

And its purposes, to promote the public welfare by exercising an influence in behalf of humanity and civilization, teaching the blessings of liberty regulated by law, and inculcating love and reverence for the great principles of government as derived from the inalienable rights of man to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.

And, the Graduate School of Education describes its mission this way:

Aiming towards the ideal of enabling all people to achieve maximum benefit from their educational experiences, the Stanford Graduate School of Education (GSE) seeks to continue as a world leader in ground-breaking, cross-disciplinary inquiries that shape educational practices, their conceptual underpinnings, and

1 The current model of the Stanford Teacher Education Program (STEP) is based largely on a vision and conceptual framework that originated in 1998 as part of an effort to redesign STEP, an endeavor initiated by Professors Linda Darling-Hammond and Rachel Lotan, when they assumed the roles of faculty adviser to the program and STEP Director, respectively. Professors Darling-Hammond and Lotan collaborated with other faculty to develop a conceptual framework and program model that drew upon current scholarship about teaching, learning, and teacher education. The current version of the conceptual framework and program model are strongly aligned with those earlier efforts, though they are updated to reflect the evolution of the program and relevant scholarship in the field.
The professions that serve the enterprise. The School also seeks to develop the knowledge, wisdom, and imagination of its students to enable them to take leadership positions in efforts to improve the quality of education around the globe.

The Stanford GSE is a leader in pioneering new and better ways to achieve high-quality education for all. Faculty and students engage in groundbreaking and creative interdisciplinary scholarship that informs how people learn and shapes the practice and understanding of education. Through state-of-the-art research and innovative partnerships with educators worldwide, the school develops knowledge, wisdom and imagination in its diverse and talented students so they can lead efforts to improve education around the globe.

Teacher Preparation at the Stanford Graduate School of Education
An integral part of the GSE’s commitment to fostering productive educational outcomes for all students is advancing both the knowledge base relevant for productive teaching and learning and to supporting the profession of teachers. The GSE pursues these aims through the scholarship of its faculty, the education of future scholars, and the professional preparation of teachers.

We believe that this mission is increasingly important to the sustenance of a democratic society. In the 21st century, it is increasingly clear that schools must become dramatically more successful with a wide range of learners if our citizens are to acquire the sophisticated skills they need to participate in a knowledge and information-based society. It is also increasingly clear that teachers’ expertise and effectiveness are critical to the success of education. Growing evidence indicates that teacher quality is one of the most powerful influences on student achievement - more powerful than almost any other school resource and as influential as student background factors like poverty, language background, or family status (For reviews, see NCTAF, 1996; Darling-Hammond, 2000). A significant number of studies have found that students achieve at higher levels when they are taught by teachers who are well-prepared in their teaching field - those who have deep knowledge of subject matter and strong preparation for teaching, who understand how students learn, how to support students who learn in different ways, and how to enable students to apply what they know to new problems (Hill, Rowan & Ball, 2005; Clotfelter, Ladd & Vidgor, 2007; Nye, Konstantopoulos & Hedges, 2004).

The kind of teaching needed to help students learn to think critically, create, and solve complex problems as well as master ambitious subject matter is much more demanding than that needed to impart routine skills. And, in an era when the student population is more diverse than ever before, teachers are being asked to achieve these goals for all children, not just the 20% who have traditionally been selected into "gifted and talented" or "honors" programs. Only educators who are can assess student understanding and be skillful in using a wide range of teaching methods can respond appropriately to diverse students' needs and enable them to meet challenging learning goals.

GSE faculty and students seek to apply rigorous methods of research and scholarship to address the challenges that arise in a variety of learning contexts and educational endeavors. The elevation of the teaching profession is among the institution’s goals. Consistent with these commitments, the
Stanford Teacher Education Program (STEP) has the primary goal of preparing and supporting teachers who can create equitable classrooms and schools in which all learners meet high intellectual, academic, and social standards.

STEP is a 12-month post-baccalaureate course of study for prospective elementary and secondary teachers. The program combines a full year of student teaching with 45 credits of graduate coursework leading to a Master of Arts in Education and a California Preliminary Multiple Subject or Single Subject Teaching Credential. STEP’s small cohort size, access to accomplished K-12 and university faculty, and coherent design offer focused coursework interwoven with hands-on teaching experience, sustained mentoring, and personalized advising. The program advocates teaching that is content-based and context-responsive, with a strong emphasis on both the development of content-specific pedagogy and preparation to teach culturally and linguistically diverse learners. The program supports the preparation of effective and reflective classroom practitioners who work collaboratively with other educators to inquire into learning, refine their teaching, and solve common problems of practice. STEP graduates are committed to providing equitable schools and learning opportunities for all students, and share an orientation to teaching as a leadership profession.

**Mission Statement - The Stanford Teacher Education Program**

*The Stanford Teacher Education Program (STEP) of the Stanford Graduate School of Education (GSE) aims to cultivate teacher leaders who share a set of core values that includes a commitment to social justice, an understanding of the strengths and needs of a diverse student population, and a dedication to equity and excellence for all students. The program takes an approach to teaching and learning that is sensitive to the family, community, and political contexts of education; focused on the needs and development of diverse learners; and grounded in the study of subject matter that enables inquiry, critical thinking, problem solving, and high academic achievement.*

*STEP seeks to prepare and support teacher leaders working with diverse learners to achieve high intellectual, academic, and social standards by creating equitable and successful schools and classrooms. Desired outcomes for graduates include an understanding of teaching as intellectual work and as a caring profession; a depth of content knowledge and a repertoire of powerful pedagogical practices; and a view of teaching and of the role of education in society informed by appreciation of the socio-cultural contexts of education. The content and design of the program are organized to foster an understanding of and commitment to research, reflection and inquiry in the classroom; collaboration across individuals, institutions and communities; a blending of theory and practice; and the effective use of technology as a teaching and learning tool.*
Our goal is to prepare program graduates to meet both the practical and intellectual challenges of the teaching profession, to serve the needs of the diverse population of today’s students, and to revitalize the profession and the field by preparing educational leaders for tomorrow’s schools.

STEP uses criteria for candidates’ performance that are aligned with national, state, and institutional standards. The California Standards for the Teaching Profession (CSTPs) and the Teaching Performance Expectations (TPEs) provides a vision of teacher education and guide expectations for candidate performance, in which candidates have opportunities to learn, practice, and demonstrate mastery of the skills and dispositions needed to effectively support all learners. To inform the focus on developing pedagogical content knowledge in the disciplines, STEP draws upon California’s adopted curriculum standards and curriculum frameworks, as well as national content standards. Taken together, these standards articulate what it means to be a professional educator and what effective teachers must know and be able to do (see California Standards for the Teaching Profession (2009); California Content Standards (2016); and California Curriculum Frameworks and Instructional Materials (2016).
II. KEY ELEMENTS OF THE CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

The conceptual framework for STEP draws upon an understanding of the evolving foundation of scholarship, theory and practice that undergirds the professions of teaching and teacher education. As noted above, the STEP conceptual framework is informed by the mission of the University, the Graduate School of Education, the program’s own mission statement and relevant national and state standards. The following represent the key areas of scholarship, theory and practice that undergird STEP’s conceptual framework:

- The socio-cultural and social-historical contexts of education
- A robust vision of teaching and recognition of teaching as a profession
- A depth of understanding of the knowledge base for effective teaching
- The integration of scholarship and clinical practice
- A robust and multi-faceted system of assessment and renewal
- A commitment to equity and excellence
- Programmatic coherence

The socio-cultural, historical contexts of education

Sociocultural theory guides our conceptualization of the nature of human understanding, development, and learning in STEP (Cole, 1996). Sociocultural theory stems from Vygotsky’s (1978) idea that learning occurs through participation in social interactions and activity. Vygotsky also theorized that learning is mediated by mental and physical tools, many of which are bound up in the cultures and traditions of societies. These concepts shape STEP’s approach to the teaching and learning of practice.

Conceptualizing practice

Our use of the term “practice” has two distinct but related meanings. In one sense, a practice is a set of socially defined ways of doing things, and can be described by listing the common activities of people who share different kinds of work. In this sense, teaching practice parallels terms like medical practice or law practice. Practices are defined over time as people develop professional roles and functions; social constructs such as tradition influence the evolution of these practices. The tools of practice, both mental and material, have historical roots in that they are passed on and adapted over time (Cole, 1996; Engestrom, 2001). Given this definition, a novice teacher’s practice can be understood as developing through the influence of school traditions, social norms, and instructional materials.

The term practice is also used to suggest the actions and performances through which people work to perfect skills. In this sense, practice implies a tentative progress toward a goal, as a water skier might practice dropping one ski. The word practice focuses attention on how people learn deliberately from experts and models, as well as through trial-and-error. In STEP, teacher candidates practice alongside cooperating teachers for a full academic year, gradually assuming full responsibility for the classroom.
Taken together, these definitions provide a lens for considering how STEP candidates shape and are shaped by practice. Learning to teach is a process that involves trying new practices in a variety of settings, many of them evolving as the practitioner develops. These definitions also highlight other important qualities of practice, such as change over time, which indicates that it can be learned. Shulman’s (1987) assertion that “teaching is, essentially, a learned profession” (p. 9) relies on the notion that the practice of teaching can be developed and that teachers can learn from their practice and the practice of others. Our work at STEP is built upon this belief.

**Learning practice through participation**

Sociocultural theory considers learning as evident in how people participate in social activities rather than focusing on the knowledge of individuals (Anderson, Greeno, Reder, & Simon, 2000; Boaler, 2000; Greeno, 1997). Lave and Wenger’s (1991) theory of *legitimate peripheral participation* provides a framework through which we conceptualize how candidates learn to teach. Lave and Wenger observe that learning begins as people participate at the periphery of practice. Through *apprenticeships* where learners participate in social activities with more experienced practitioners, novices gradually develop the ability to use the tools they will need to participate with increasing sophistication. From this perspective, learning can be seen as changes in participation over time. In teacher education, this principle might be institutionalized in fieldwork where novices follow a trajectory of “graduated induction” so that they are not immediately overwhelmed with everything that full teaching practice requires (Dewey, 1904/1965). Experts such as cooperating teachers play an important role in this context given that teacher candidates can observe strategies before trying them on their own. For example, an experienced teacher leading a discussion can serve as a model for a novice learning to facilitate.

STEP employs a strong cohort model that is sustained by a rich clinical support system because research indicates that learning to teaching involves knowing how to participate in the activities and discourses of *communities of practice* - people who share disciplinary interests or practices (James Paul Gee, 1989a; Lave & Wenger, 1991; Rogoff, 2003; Wenger, 1998). Gee (1992) conceptualizes community membership as being able to participate in a “discourse,” or specific ways of talking, acting, believing, and using tools in particular settings. These theories are useful for considering how people learn across the contexts of teacher education, where novices participate in multiple communities of practice (Putnam & Borko, 2000).

**Practical and conceptual tools**

A sociocultural perspective also focuses on the role of tools in learning. As novices learn to teach, they adopt *conceptual* and *practical tools* that can assist their teaching and help them engage students in instructional activities (Grossman, Smagorinsky, & Valencia, 1999). *Conceptual tools* provide principles they can use as they interpret student responses, design questions, encourage student thinking, and reflect upon their practice; *practical tools* give teachers strategies, organizing

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2 Gee (1989b; 1992) differentiates between a “discourse” that embodies turns of talk or conversation, and a “Discourse” that represents membership in a social structure such as a community of practice. Like Lave and Wenger’s (1991) conception, which asserts that “the social structure of this practice, its power relations, and its conditions for legitimacy define possibilities for learning” (p. 98), Gee argues that a person’s ability to demonstrate “membership” in a Discourse creates and constrains opportunities for participation.
techniques, and materials that are useful in structuring learning opportunities with and for students. For example, conceptual tools might include theories that relate learning to content-based classroom discourse such as Tharp and Gallimore’s (1988) Vygotskian theory of assisting reading performance through instructional conversations. Practical tools might include guidelines for organizing students into collaborative groups. Tools for teaching can be at once practical and conceptual; we consider these tools as being along a continuum. For example, in STEP candidates learn a range of practical and conceptual tools for managing classrooms. These tools are practical in that they can help teachers organize student activity and structure learning opportunities, and they are conceptual in that they can help teachers consider how authority is distributed and how student status is more or less equitable in their classrooms.

The work of Vygotsky (1978) and the concept of appropriation (Grossman et al., 1999; Leont’ev, 1959/1981; Wertsch, 1991) links social learning with individual learning and practice. Vygotsky (1978) theorized that learning “appears twice: first on the social level, and later, on the individual level; first, between people (intersubjective), and then inside (intrapsychological)” (p. 56). According to Vygotsky, “all the higher functions originate as actual relations between human individuals” (p. 57). From this perspective, social interactions serve as processes through which individuals learn to think and participate; social interaction and thinking are mutually constituted through tools such as language and concepts. STEP teacher candidates appropriate tools as they participate in social practice in schools and in their coursework.

**A vision of good teaching**

Research indicates that a critical component of powerful teacher education programs is a clear, shared vision of good teaching (Hammerness & Klette, 2015). This vision must help candidates understand not only what good teaching looks like in the schools where they will teach, but also understand what good teaching can look like in the schools we seek to create. Feiman-Nemser has argued that new teachers can learn to envision what is possible in schools, which aligns with STEP’s belief that visions of teaching can be taught:

Teacher candidates must form visions of what is possible and desirable in teaching to inspire and guide their professional learning and practice. Such visions connect important values and goals to concrete classroom practices. They help teachers construct a normative basis for developing and assessing their teaching and their students’ learning (2001, p. 1017).

Hollins (2012) warns that without a clear vision of teaching, new teachers risk learning to “swim with the tide” in low performing urban schools that have adopted the low expectations, the stale practices, and the dysfunctional ideologies of those communities. Alternatively, teachers who “swim upstream” (Hollins, 2012) have learned a vision of teaching where teachers can engage students in relationships and enact practices that enhance student learning. A vision of teaching can help new teachers learn dispositions and practices that will allow them to disrupt rather than accept the norms that reproduce inequity.
Hammerness and Klette (2015) outline indicators that can be used to determine the degree to which a program has a clear, shared vision of good teaching. These include that the vision is explicit, that it is elaborated and specific, that both faculty and candidates know and understand the vision, and that it includes the articulation of specific strategies for teaching in ways that embody the vision. Their research finds that STEP has a strong, clear vision of good teaching that is evident in all of the indicators that they measured (Hammerness & Klette, 2015).

Knowledge base for teaching
To help candidates develop a knowledge base for teaching, STEP aims to provide opportunities for them to connect knowledge of learning, teaching, and the social contexts of education to the core tasks of teaching – planning, instruction, diagnosis of student needs and assessment of learning, and management of school cultures, subject matter and students. The goal is for teachers to be able to use their knowledge and their growing judgment to wrestle with the inevitably non-routine dilemmas of teaching, to prepare teachers who can continually learn from practice as they negotiate the idiosyncratic problems encountered within school and classroom contexts.

Lee Shulman’s (1987) conception of pedagogical content knowledge is central to STEP’s view that expert teaching involves being able to draw upon rich, flexible knowledge in three domains. First, teachers must have deep content knowledge of the subjects they will teach. Second, teachers must understand who they are teaching and how their particular needs and experiences are shaping their opportunities to learn. Third, teachers must have expert pedagogical knowledge of the practical and conceptual tools they can use in order to create instructional experiences for students.

If educators are to ensure success for pupils who learn in different ways, have different intellectual and academic strengths, and encounter a variety of learning challenges, then those educators must know a great deal about the learning process and have a wide repertoire of teaching tools at their disposal. They must be responsive to the diverse needs of individual pupils and aware of the social, economic, and political contexts that inform classroom teaching. STEP seeks to connect knowledge of learning, teaching, and the social contexts of education to the core tasks of teaching: diagnosis of student strengths, interests, and needs, planning, instruction, and assessment of learning.

Further, teachers also need to know about curriculum resources and technologies in order to connect their students with sources of information and knowledge that extend beyond textbooks and that allow for the exploration of ideas, the acquisition and synthesis of information, and the development of models, writings, designs, and other work products. In a knowledge-based economy, students must now be able to produce ideas rather than just consume them. A particular challenge is the pace of change itself- the abundance of new knowledge and the lightening speed of how new technologies are shaping the world in which we live. As Darling-Hammond argues in The Flat World and Education, “the new mission of schools is to prepare students for products and problems that have not yet been identified, using technologies that have not yet been invented” (2010). In this rapidly evolving world, the role of the teacher is to help students learn to find and use a wide array of resources for framing and solving problems, rather than to remember only the information contained in one source. This requires a command of practical and conceptual tools that address a variety of ways to learn and a
A variety of purposefully selected goals for learning. Strategies that regularly use multiple pathways to content are a major part of a teacher's repertoire.

STEP candidates demonstrate an understanding of how pupils learn and grow, how they acquire language, how they develop literacy in all content areas, and how they grow physically, socially, emotionally and intellectually as individuals. Candidates show that they possess strong content knowledge in the discipline(s) they plan to teach, as well as a repertoire of ways to teach that content to diverse learners. STEP’s emphasis on content-specific pedagogy includes the capacity to identify and use appropriate technological resources and tools to support learning in the disciplines. Additionally, candidates demonstrate their ability to use a variety of formal and informal assessments to analyze what pupils have learned and to use this information to shape subsequent planning and instruction.

To shape and measure how candidates develop pedagogical content knowledge for teaching, STEP draws upon California's adopted curriculum and professional standards, including the Common Core State Standards, the California Standards for the Teaching Profession, and the Teaching Performance Expectations. Taken together, these standards articulate what it means to be a professional educator and what effective teachers must know and be able to do.

The integration of scholarship and clinical practice
STEP recognizes that the work of preparing the next generation of excellent teachers is the joint work of the university and its key partners. Thus STEP works in conjunction with partnering teachers, schools, districts, and employers in the design, implementation, evaluation, and refinement of its programs. In addition, as collaboration is a central component of STEP’s guiding vision, teacher candidates are prepared in ways that foster and facilitate their own orientation to collegiality and collaboration--with school-based colleagues, other teacher candidates, K-12 students, and their students’ families and communities.

Educators learn by studying, doing, and reflecting; by collaborating with other professionals; by looking closely at pupils and their work; and by sharing what they see. The development of theoretically sound professional practice cannot occur either in college classrooms divorced from engagement in practice or in school classrooms divorced from knowledge and theories that result from rigorous scholarship. Professional learning in both schools of education and P-12 schools should provide opportunities for research and inquiry, for trying and testing, for talking about and evaluating the results of learning and teaching. The intersection of theory and practice occurs most productively when questions arise in the context of real work-in-progress, in schools and with pupils, informed by research and disciplined inquiry (Zeichner, 2012; Britzman, 2003; Ball and Cohen, 1999; Ball, Sleep, et al., 2009).

These principles underlie the programmatic design of STEP, which brings together university- and school-based curricula. This design integrates the many areas of knowledge that inform effective teaching and provides opportunities for observing, planning, and practicing pedagogical approaches in multiple clinical contexts. The capacity to look at classroom events empirically and analytically and to merge theory and practice is critical to the process of effective teaching and leadership. To be
constructive, this reflection is informed by knowledge about learning and teaching and based upon the effects of one's actions on learners.

Because of the situated nature of educational decision-making, STEP’s design reflects the idea that learning to teach involves learning about practice in practice. Theories and methods encountered in coursework resonate with practices encountered in the field and vice versa, a consistency supported by strong relationships with partner schools in which candidates complete their field placements. This integration of coursework and fieldwork provides opportunities to connect theory and practice, particularly when course assignments draw on and inform the candidate’s work in the clinical setting. Learning from practice is most effective when supported by the guidance of experienced practitioners who model effective teaching practices and provide targeted feedback to candidates. Cooperating teachers and supervisors serve as expert veterans who lead candidates through a process of graduated responsibility in the clinical placement over the course of an entire academic year.

STEP’s approach to education assumes that learning takes place within professional communities of practice. Researchers and practitioners alike need to know how to strengthen their practice through sustained collaboration, an important feature of learning experiences throughout the School of Education. To support their own ongoing learning, educators collaborate with colleagues to plan, assess, reflect upon, and improve practice.

**A robust and multi-faceted system of assessment and renewal**

Evaluating an endeavor as complex as teaching requires a multi-faceted and comprehensive system of assessment (Darling-Hammond, 2006; Darling-Hammond, 2013; Cochran-Smith, 2003).

STEP systematically and continually collects, analyzes, and utilizes data for both program improvement and for the ongoing evaluation of candidate competencies and needs. Because STEP is a small, year-round program, the collection and review of data—on both program effectiveness and candidate qualifications and proficiencies—occur on an ongoing basis. In addition to formal periods of data review, faculty and staff engage in many informal conversations about program improvement, which allows for responsiveness to identified needs and the efficient implementation of formal programmatic changes.

STEP uses an assessment system that provides comprehensive and systematic data on individual candidate qualifications and performance, as well as data about curriculum and program outcomes. STEP considers admissions criteria for the assessment of candidates’ subject matter preparation and their potential to become effective beginning teachers. Throughout the year STEP uses a variety of formative assessments, including course assignments and quarterly assessments of clinical work, to document candidates’ professional growth.

STEP’s assessment system is aligned with adopted program standards and content standards, and these state standards are woven throughout both formative assessments and summative assessments in the program (e.g., quarterly assessments; PACT). Candidate experiences in STEP classes and in clinical work support their learning and pedagogical practices and follow from the TPEs
and CSTPs. Thus, state professional standards and adopted curriculum standards are directly incorporated into candidates’ experiences and assessments throughout the STEP year.

The summative assessment for all candidates is the Performance Assessment for California Teachers (PACT), which requires candidates to assemble documentation of their teaching practice in specific content areas. Single Subject candidates present evidence of their teaching in the content area for which they are being credentialed, and Multiple Subject candidates document their teaching of four key content areas—Literacy, Mathematics, History/Social Science, and Science. Candidates must also meet Stanford University’s requirements for the Master of Arts degree, as well as state-approved requirements for the Preliminary Credential. After candidates have completed the program, STEP administers a variety of survey instruments to collect data from graduates and employers, and uses this information to inform program improvement.

The program collects evidence about candidates’ knowledge, skills and professional growth in multiple ways and from a variety of sources. Data about candidates’ readiness to start the program as well as verification of their mastery of the subject matter comes to us from their undergraduate records, various examinations, and other application materials. During the 12 months of the program, STEP routinely and steadily collect assessments of candidates’ performances in their university coursework and in their clinical placements.

In addition to various formative assignments such as weekly logs, reading responses, and reports of classroom observations, STEP courses culminate in a variety of signature assessments. These projects include, for example, child and adolescent case studies, a comprehensive classroom management and leadership plan, a curricular unit in the candidates’ subject area, lesson study in mathematics for elementary candidates, an assessment and grading policy plan, and a lesson designed, implemented, and assessed focusing on strategies for academically and linguistically heterogeneous classroom. Ways of working with students who are English Language learners are discussed and developed throughout the curriculum, with an intensive focus on the subject in a course entitled Language Policies and Practices. All of STEP’s embedded signature assessments are grounded in classroom practice and rely on the fact that candidates spend nearly 20 hours per week in clinical placements for the entire 12 months of the program. The program takes stock of candidates’ academic achievement and professional growth by monitoring the completion of these assignments and by reviewing grades from university coursework.

STEP also follows the development and growth of candidates’ teaching performance through routine observations in the classroom, and as described and evaluated by cooperating teachers and university supervisors. All candidates complete nine formal observation cycles from fall to spring, including three observations that require analyses of video recordings of classroom instruction. An observation cycle includes pre-observation meetings with the university supervisor, submitting and reviewing the lesson plan, observation during instruction, analysis of the observation, and an individual debrief meeting. After the debrief meeting, the candidate submits a written reflection in response to the supervisor’s feedback. Thus, the observation cycle foreshadows the tasks as detailed in the Teaching Event: planning, instructing, assessing, and reflecting (PIAR), ideally with an enduring focus on the academic language demands and other needs that surface, given the diverse student
populations in our schools and classrooms. Cooperating teachers and university supervisors complete formal quarterly assessments of document the candidate’s level of performance in light of the California Standards for the Teaching Profession.

Personalization and close advisement of candidates is a hallmark of STEP. An open-door policy contributes greatly to increased communication and problem-solving and assures us that instructors and staff are able to develop robust professional relationships with the candidates. Building upon these relationships, the use of a system that includes multiple assessments points and multiple ways of evaluating performance contributes greatly to our level of confidence in the program’s efforts toward the successful professional preparation of teachers.

Over the past decade, STEP has worked to integrate the PACT Teaching Event into this comprehensive assessment system in STE in service of the state requirement for teacher licensure.

**STEP’s Assessment System**

As the following table demonstrates, STEP engages in a year-round assessment process through which the program gathers data from and about key stakeholders in the three credentialing programs. These assessment tools include applicant/admitted student qualifications (GPAs, GREs, degrees earned, prior experience through resumes); candidate Entry Surveys; measures of candidate competencies throughout the program (course completion, grades, and key assignments) and clinical work progress (via observation cycles and Quarterly Assessments, Independent Student Teaching sign offs); subject matter and other state requirements; summative assessments (PACT, graduation portfolios, STEP Conference presentations, and teaching exhibitions for STEP Secondary candidates); as well as placement surveys and exit surveys. In addition, alumni and employers provide additional feedback through their respective surveys, and clinical partners provide feedback on candidates and the programs.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Transition Point in Program</th>
<th>Key Assessments</th>
<th>Individual Candidate Level Assessments</th>
<th>Program and Unit Level Assessments</th>
<th>Analysis of Assessment Data</th>
<th>Action Steps</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Admissions</td>
<td>✓ GREs</td>
<td>✓ Academic preparation and promise</td>
<td>✓ Yield from recruitment initiatives</td>
<td>✓ Are high academic standards for cohort maintained?</td>
<td>✓ Plan, execute, and extend recruitment efforts, especially for underrepresented groups and subject areas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>✓ GPAs/transcripts</td>
<td>✓ Subject matter competence (CSETs or other approved)</td>
<td>✓ Data about applicant/admitted/ enrolled cohort</td>
<td>✓ Is STEP attracting candidates committed to teaching?</td>
<td>✓ Update brochures and websites</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>✓ Admissions essays</td>
<td>✓ Subject matter competence</td>
<td>✓ Analysis of cohort’s overall subject matter preparation</td>
<td>✓ Is STEP attracting and enrolling candidates in high-demand</td>
<td>✓ Publicize fellowships and loan forgiveness programs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>✓ Subject matter competence</td>
<td>✓ Experience with and dispositions toward children/adolescents and the teaching profession</td>
<td>✓ Additional experiences</td>
<td>✓ Contributions to diversity and cohort as a whole</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>✓ CV/Biosketch</td>
<td>✓ Additional experiences</td>
<td>✓ Additional experiences</td>
<td>✓ Academic preparation and promise</td>
<td>✓</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>✓ Recommendation letters</td>
<td>✓ Contributions to diversity and cohort as a whole</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
| **Upon Admission** | ✓ Entry Survey  
✓ CBEST | | ✓ Are candidates submitting information for the certificate of clearance in a timely fashion?  
✓ Are clinical placement opportunities aligned with candidates need and interests?  
✓ Communicate requirements for certificate of clearance in acceptance packet |
| **Entry to Clinical Practice (Summer and Fall)** | ✓ Certificate of clearance (fingerprinting, background check, TB test)  
✓ Clinical placement survey | ✓ Examination of candidate’s profile to determine summer school placement  
✓ Assessment of summer school performance and review of placement survey (for Fall placement) | ✓ Inventory of cohort progress toward certificates of completion |
| **Summer School Experience** | ✓ Summer school surveys (candidates and cooperating teachers) | ✓ Evaluation of summer school programs | ✓ How successful are summer school experiences for P-12 students, cooperating teachers, and teacher candidates?  
✓ Debrief summer school programs and identify improvements for next year |
| **Ongoing Coursework** | ✓ Key assignments in each course  
✓ Course completion  
✓ Course grades  
✓ Course evaluations  
✓ Weekly student check-ins | ✓ Review of individual academic progress, course completion, course grades  
✓ Evidence of professional growth via key course assignments  
✓ Review of individual student check-ins | ✓ Review of aggregated course grades and course completion  
✓ Review of aggregated student check ins  
✓ Review of course evaluations  
✓ To what extent are candidates demonstrating progress toward proficiency in the standards and competencies?  
✓ In what ways are  
✓ Assess support structures for all candidates  
✓ Refer candidates to subject matter resources as needed  
✓ Determine appropriate supports for candidates who are struggling |
<table>
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<tr>
<th>Ongoing Clinical Practice</th>
<th>Discussions among instructors, supervisors, program staff about individual progress</th>
<th>course experiences and assignments supporting student progress? Are there areas of growth for the program to pursue?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>✓ Formal observations (three per quarter)</td>
<td>✓ Progress on integration plan ✓ Feedback from cooperating teachers and university supervisors ✓ Weekly student check-ins ✓ Discussions among instructors, supervisors, program staff about individual progress</td>
<td>✓ Evaluation of quality and appropriateness of field placements ✓ Patterns identified in quarterly assessments ✓ Review of graduated responsibility and cohort’s progress toward independent student teaching ✓ Feedback on cooperating teachers and supervisors ✓ Review of aggregated student check ins</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✓ Quarterly assessments</td>
<td>✓ To what extent are candidates demonstrating progress toward proficiency in the standards and competencies? ✓ What are the relationships between STEP and its placement schools? ✓ How well are placements meeting the needs of candidates and cooperating teachers?</td>
<td>✓ Assess support structures for all candidates ✓ Determine appropriate supports for candidates who are struggling ✓ Expand pool of cooperating teachers and supervisors; provide professional development for these groups ✓ Deepen relationships with partnering schools</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Independent Student Teaching</th>
<th>✓ Completion of subject matter requirements (CSET or approved subject matter program) ✓ Recommendations of cooperating teacher and supervisor ✓ Completion of first aid/CPR</th>
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<td>✓ Intensify monitoring of candidates’ performance in clinical placements ✓ Devise interventions for candidates with inadequate progress</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exit from Clinical Practice</td>
<td>Program Completion</td>
<td>Program Completers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------------------</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>✓ Final quarterly assessment</td>
<td>✓ Meet all program and state requirements and expectations</td>
<td>✓ Stepping’ Out Exit Survey</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✓ PACT</td>
<td>✓ Completion rates for cohort</td>
<td>✓ Tracking professional pathways and professional growth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✓ Successful completion of Independent Student Teaching</td>
<td>✓ Rate of eligibility for credential</td>
<td>✓ Surveys of graduates and employers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✓ Aggregate PACT scores</td>
<td>✓ Pass rates for RICA (elementary) and BCLAD exams</td>
<td>✓ Research on graduates’ practice and career paths</td>
</tr>
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<td>✓ Review of final quarterly assessments and recommendations for credential</td>
<td>✓ What is the overall quality of the teaching event presentations and graduation portfolios? What does this suggest about the program’s design and curriculum?</td>
<td>✓ What do survey data and research reveal about the strengths of the program? Areas for improvement?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✓ What candidate strengths and areas for growth do the PACT data reveal?</td>
<td>✓ What do candidates say about their experience in STEP?</td>
<td>✓ Report data to administration and members of STEP community</td>
</tr>
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<td>✓ Propose appropriate changes to STEP courses and/or curriculum</td>
<td>✓ What do data about completion rates reveal?</td>
<td>✓ Identify areas for program improvements</td>
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<td>✓ Program Completion</td>
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<td>✓ Graduation Portfolio</td>
<td>✓ CSET Ethno-history exam (MS/bilingual)</td>
<td>✓ Surveys of graduates and employers</td>
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<tr>
<td>✓ Teaching Exhibition (Secondary)</td>
<td>✓ CSET Spanish Language Proficiency exam (MS/bilingual)</td>
<td>✓ Research on graduates’ practice and career paths</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✓ Successful completion of all courses</td>
<td>✓ U.S. Constitution requirement</td>
<td>✓ What do survey data and research reveal about the strengths of the program? Areas for improvement?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✓ Fulfillment of Masters degree requirements</td>
<td>✓ RICA (MS and MS/bilingual)</td>
<td>✓ Identify areas for program improvements</td>
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STEP is responsive and accountable to a range of key stakeholders: relevant California policies and practices via the CTC; Stanford University, the GSE and its faculty; the teaching profession, as articulated through the CSTPs and relevant scholarship and practice in the field; our school partners; our students; and our alumni.

As the above demonstrates, STEP utilizes a comprehensive and well-rounded assessment and evaluation for ongoing program and unit evaluation and improvement.

**A commitment to equity and excellence**

Faculty, staff, clinical partners, and teacher candidates in STEP share a set of core values, including a commitment to social justice, a recognition of the virtues and values of a diverse student population, and a dedication to equity and excellence for all students.

Consistent with the commitments described above, Stanford’s research activities and professional programs of preparation seek to prepare and support teachers to teach diverse learners to high intellectual, academic and social standards by creating equitable classrooms, and to prepare school leaders who can foster and sustain schools where teachers can accomplish these goals.

STEP further requires that candidates provide evidence that they can create classroom communities that support all learners and value their contributions. Candidates also demonstrate an understanding of diverse cultures and the ability to enact culturally responsive pedagogy (Delpit, 1988; Ladson-Billings, 2009; Lareau, 2003). They demonstrate the use of collaborative classroom structures that cultivate productive interactions among pupils and support shared learning. Candidates build equitable classrooms that sponsor rich discourse among academically and linguistically diverse learners and press for disciplined reasoning on the part of all students. Educators who work toward creating equitable classrooms – classrooms in which all students have access to intellectually challenging curriculum, to the teacher and to interactions among peers – are not only responsive to the diversity of their students’ abilities and needs, they also shape the school structure and classroom environment to construct intellectual opportunities focused simultaneously on equity and excellence (Boaler, 2008; Cohen and Lotan, 2014). Candidates know how to communicate with families about students’ progress and how to tap the funds of knowledge that students bring to the classroom. They understand how to work with parents and families to learn more about their students and to shape supportive experiences at school and home (Moll, 1992; Allen, 2007).

STEP strives to simultaneously prepare teacher candidates to be successful in supporting students, families and communities in schools as they are currently organized and structured; while also orienting their work toward the creation of schools necessary to build a more just and equitable society (Berliner, 2013). The orientation of STEP toward equitable and just systems of education in support of a thriving, pluralistic, democratic society are embedded substantively and coherently throughout the design of the program.

**Programmatic coherence**
An underlying tenet of STEP is that the outcomes of a teacher education program are related to the extent to which the teacher candidate finds the program coherent. As note by Hammerness and Klette (2015), “Simply having a vision of good teaching is not enough. Vision needs to inform program design, curriculum and pedagogy, and shape what and how new teachers learn.” STEP seeks to achieve these aims in its conception and implementation.

A coherent program provides the teacher candidate with coursework, assignments, and experiences that build on one another and relate to one another (Darling-Hammond, 2000, 2006). Further, academic course work and clinical practice are tightly inter-woven (Darling-Hammond, 2000, 2006; see also Ronfeldt and Grossman, 2008; Grossman et. al, 2008). The value and importance of cohesion and continuity is reinforced by studies of learning indicating that student progress is enhanced when ideas and experiences are encountered across contexts and in mutually reinforcing ways (NRC, 2010).

To these ends, STEP strives for a program model where coursework and clinical work are fully integrated, each providing opportunities for teacher candidates to draw on theories from and experiences within the other. The Conceptual Framework also articulates the importance of a depth of subject matter knowledge and pedagogical content in the preparation of effective teachers, as well as the importance of foundational knowledge of human development, learning, assessment, and knowledge of families, communities and related contexts, all of which serve to guide the program coursework, candidate experiences, and candidate proficiencies.

**Conclusion**

The conceptual framework for the Stanford Teacher Education Program reflects a shared vision, one that resonates with the mission of the University, the Graduate School of Education, and our school and community partners. The framework draws deeply from the scholarship, theory and practice on the professions of teaching and teacher preparation. The framework helps to shape and define the work of our program to prepare effective teachers for our national diverse public schools and their surrounding communities; professional educators committed to providing equitable schools and learning opportunities for all students; and graduates with an orientation to teaching as a leadership profession.
REFERENCES


