

Standards of Essential Skills and Dispositions for School of Education Students
Updated: April 02, 2024 (Approved by School of Education's Faculty & Staff)

The standards below are grounded in the mission, values, and conceptual framework of the School of Education (SOE) at UW Tacoma. They describe professional, intellectual, emotional and character attributes of aspiring or current educators, school psychologists, and leaders across all SOE programs (enrolled students- hereinafter referred to as candidates). Upon entry into any SOE academic program, candidates are asked to uphold and commit to pursuing growth in these standards as an integral part of all activities. *Note: a specific program may have additional requirements or more specific standards beyond this unit-wide statement, such as:*

1. *EdD Superintendent track; Educational Administration and PK-12 Program Leadership: National Educational Leadership Preparation: NELP.*
2. *EdS in School Psychology: National Association of School Psychologists: NASP.*

Candidates must demonstrate the interpersonal skills needed to relate effectively with peers, PK-12 students/learners, faculty, staff, parents/caregivers, community members, and other professionals they interact with. These skills include, but are not limited to demonstrating compassion, respect, integrity, cultural humility, criticality, and concern for the welfare of others.

Faculty, staff, and other enrolled candidates support each candidate in attaining and modeling these standards. Candidates will participate in ongoing reflection and discourse around these standards: *What does each standard mean in relation to my values? How is each standard showing up in various professional settings? What is my role in bringing them to life in my educational praxis? What do I need to grow and thrive in these areas? What opportunities for learning might support my growth? How do I support others to grow and thrive in their education and professional journeys?*

Subset 1: Build and Sustain Respect and Trust

Professional Actions

Candidates must demonstrate a basic level of professional practice within the scope of their work characteristics, ethics, and habits, such as maintaining privacy and confidentiality; professional integrity; respecting others; being reliable and dependable (and demonstrating responsibility when situations may arise that occasionally lead to lapses); checking and responding to field/site and program/university correspondence in a timely and professional manner, such as e-mails (within 2-3 business days); prioritizing responsibilities, including time-management, managing several demands, class participation, and professional communication; and completing course assignments on time.

Candidates must demonstrate respect and courtesy toward University employees and other key collaborators, such as external partners who host clinical/practicum experiences. Examples include: providing a reasonable amount of time for responses to e-mails and voice messages (2-3 business days) and scheduling calls or meetings; being receptive to constructive feedback; addressing concerns/questions at the most direct level; and refraining from using accusatory or defamatory language, and/or engaging in defamatory discourse, including gossip or rumors.

Communication

Candidates must:

- Possess sufficient skills in spoken and written English—understanding that many come from multilingual contexts—to understand the content presented in the program and in the field/clinical placements in various formats, including in-person, phone, remotely, etc.
- Communicate effectively, sensitively, and (as needed) confidentially, as they interact in university and PK-12/site settings with peers, learners/students, families/guardians, community members, teachers, administrators, faculty, staff, school psychologists, and other professionals.
- Clearly, proactively, and professionally express ideas and feelings, including concerns and disagreements.
- Demonstrate a willingness and ability to actively and patiently listen to others with an intent to learn and understand.
- Maintain consistent and professional communication with other candidates, University personnel, placement/site, and community partners. This includes addressing others as they wish to be addressed and respecting boundaries.
- Work toward collective and individual conflict resolution or restoration when harm is done, demonstrating a willingness to take ownership.

Subset 2: Build Cultural Humility

Self-Awareness

Candidates must:

- Examine and understand their own positionality, biases, strengths, and growth areas.
- Understand what they need to effectively cope with strong emotions and stress.
- Engage in ongoing, critical self-reflection.
- Know how values, attitudes, beliefs, emotions, and past experiences affect thinking, actions, and relationships.
- Examine and change actions when it interferes with working effectively with peers, P-12 students/other learners, parents/caregivers, faculty, staff, and other professionals in and out of the university context.
- Understand and respect power dynamics and relationships, as well as equity impacts, while effectively working with others in various settings in and out of campus.

Diversity

Candidates must:

- Appreciate the value of human diversity in multiple forms.
- Demonstrate a commitment to ongoing learning about different ways of living, communication, expression, beliefs and values.
- Interact in an appropriate and respectful manner with all persons in light of the person's age, class, race, ethnicity, cultural and language backgrounds, religious affiliation (or lack of), nationality, neurodiversity, gender identity, disAbility, sexual orientation, and/or values system.
- Endeavor to understand another person's way of life and values.
- Take broad and differentiated perspectives.
- Communicate empathy and compassionate support to others as a basis for a productive professional relationship.
- Critically reflect on the impact of their actions and inactions on others, especially in relation to their own growth areas and sociocultural identities.

Subset 3: Pursue Professional Balance & Responsibility

Teaching and Learning Efficacy

Candidates must ground professional activities in current and relevant theories and research. This includes knowledge and skills in relationship-building with students, families/caregivers, and communities; data gathering; culturally responsive and inclusive pedagogies; social emotional learning; and critical self-evaluations of practice.

Reasoning

Candidates must demonstrate the ability to systematically integrate, apply and critically evaluate educational/societal issues, situations and interpersonal professional relationships in an informed way that represents current knowledge in the field.

Professional Commitment

Candidates must:

- Meet the ethical standards and responsibilities of their program and the profession.
- Commit to the essential values of the UW Tacoma School of Education, which support the dignity and worth of every person, especially those from minoritized and racialized backgrounds.

Candidates may be formally or informally warned; placed into a probationary status; or removed from an academic program for reasons including, but not limited to:

1. Failure to meet or maintain academic grade-point requirements as established by the program and/or University.
2. Repeated failure to follow up on vital tasks or respond to requests for information by program collaborators, including site partners and university employees.
3. Repeated patterns of behaviors in or out of the classroom that negatively impact the learning environment and others' well-being.
4. Engaging in academically dishonest, unethical, or unprofessional behavior, including but not limited to altering documents, bullying/harassing others, cheating, lying, misrepresenting/omitting information, plagiarism, promoting violence, etc.
5. Behavior determined to be in violation of relevant codes of conduct or ethics, set forth by UW, state/accrediting agencies, and professional organizations:
 - a. Office of Superintendent for Public Instruction (for all candidates enrolled in a certification program).
 - b. UW Student Code of Conduct.
6. Documented evidence of conviction of a criminal act occurring during the course of study, or which occurred prior to admission to the program and became known after admission.
7. Failure to meet Standards for Essential Skills and Dispositions for Admission and Continuance.
8. When due to concerns about a candidate's behavior or conduct, a school district, institution of higher education, government agency, Tribal and Native partners, community partner, or the UW Tacoma School of Education asks the candidate to be removed from a clinical/field placement.