

CoE Teacher Education Cross-Cutting Themes and Creed

The teacher preparation program at The University of Texas at Austin is committed to creating a society that is more just, caring, inclusive, and democratic through transformation of educational practices. Too often, universities and schools have engaged in racist and other oppressive practices that replicate and perpetuate the status quo in our society, rather than working against inequities. We believe there is a more powerful path. Following The University of Texas motto, “What starts here changes the world,” we teach to change the world.

Schools, districts and universities are located within oppressive social, economic and political systems. Teachers must recognize the oppressive conditions that many families and communities experience related to their identities—racial, ethnic, linguistic, social class, religious, gender, sexual orientation, immigrant status, abilities, and other positions in society. At the same time, teachers must recognize the cultural and linguistic wealth that exists in these communities, along with their histories of resilience and resistance in the pursuit of justice. Understanding these critical perspectives on society, culture and schooling is critical for teachers’ development and enactment of curricular and pedagogical knowledge across school subjects, such as reading, language arts, social studies, science and mathematics.

We practice vision, courage, and determination because these stances and practices require a lifelong commitment and ongoing, critical inquiries in our personal and professional lives. As teachers, we serve our students well by cultivating in them these same commitments and capacities.

As educators we are committed to educational change that allows us to enact our vision for teacher preparation. Identities, Values, and Practices serve as our guide, as we are always in process. While listed separately the themes are deeply connected, so to work on one is to work on many.

| | Theme Statement | Creed Statement |
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| Who are we? Identities | We are continuously examining how our identities ¹ sometimes afford us privileges and other times, result in oppression. We recognize that our personal identities are deeply connected to our professional identities, and contribute to how we work with our students, communities and colleagues. | I am self-aware. I recognize who I am and who I am becoming in terms of my multiple identities. |
| | We research and inquire to better understand our students, curriculum and teaching across school subjects ² , and our own dispositions and practices as teachers. We continue to grow our professional identities to support our work of building inclusive and anti-oppressive classrooms, schools, and local and global communities. | I am a learner. I will grow my teaching into more powerful practices and share them with others. |
| What do we value? Values | We value educational justice, inclusiveness and continuous learning, and we are committed to being teachers who take on the challenges and risks associated with teaching in service of these values. | I value courage and determination. I will view all challenges that confront me as opportunities to grow and change. |
| | We value the multiple cultures, languages, knowledges, and experiences of our students and the communities we work alongside, and we see these as essential to a healthy and productive society. | I value learners’ differences as strengths. I will respect and engage with differences and will craft my teaching to build upon and sustain the abilities, cultures and languages my students bring to school. |
| | We value shared responsibility over individual accountability within educational systems. As teachers, we are committed to working collaboratively with our students, teacher colleagues, families, and communities in the pursuit of our collective growth and well-being. | I value shared responsibility. I will hold myself responsible for all my teaching and will share in this responsibility with others to build a community that contributes to the growth and well-being of students. |
| What do we practice? Practice | We continuously reflect on how our diverse perspectives and identities ¹ matter when working with others, including students, families and colleagues. This continual reflection allows us to build trusting relationships and engage in humanizing practices. | I practice reflection on action. I will build humanizing practices and trusting relationships through my ongoing critical reflection. |
| | We recognize students’ identities ¹ and strengths and honor the resources they bring. We question the materials, curriculum, and instructional methods that are in place. We continually adapt and redesign our teaching practices in response to changing opportunities and demands in our transnational society. We dream of possibilities for students’ educational futures. | I practice imaginative change. I will imagine the possibilities of a student-centered curriculum that is transformative for students and our collective communities. |

We will be the teachers who, working with families, communities and our colleagues, teach to change the world.

¹racial, ethnic, linguistic, religious, gender, sexual orientation, social class, immigrant status, abilities, and other positions in society.

²reading, language arts, social studies, science and mathematics anchored in critical perspectives on society, culture and schooling