

Teacher Dispositions in the Philosophical Framework

The program's philosophical framework is the community of inquiry, which encompasses the ideas of community and inquiry in relationship. At the heart of that relationship are the means by which human beings convey and create meaning together. Common to all means of expression is the necessity of careful thinking, vision, and personal integrity. The goal of education (at every level) is to help people become reasonable, just, compassionate, and creative human beings who will seek to determine what is of constant value in the world and to live accordingly. The education program at Berea College seeks to prepare individuals who will manifest the values and commitments, the understandings and knowledge, and the skills and abilities necessary to cultivate the dispositions of judicious inquiry in themselves and in their students. We seek evidence in all prospective teachers of the following foundational dispositions, and we seek to nurture and extend these dispositions through every facet of preparation:

- a disposition to ask questions and to seek understanding with reason and wonder;
- a disposition to search for truth through ongoing inquiry into our common and differing experiences as human beings;
- a disposition to think for ourselves, while knowing that it is through engaging in the pursuit of truth with others that we find hope and the strength to work toward good for all.

These dispositions may further be defined and described by dispositional behaviors:

- **a disposition to ask questions and to seek understanding with reason and wonder;**
 - Student exhibits behaviors that indicate a commitment to introspection and reflection.
 - Student exhibits behaviors that indicate a commitment to life-long learning for self and others.
- **a disposition to search for truth through ongoing inquiry into our common and differing experiences as human beings;**
 - Student exhibits behaviors that indicate a commitment to the value of relationships with others, to diverse perspectives, and with nature.
 - Student exhibits behaviors that indicate a commitment to the growth and development of all learners.
- **a disposition to think for ourselves, while knowing that it is through engaging in the pursuit of truth with others that we find hope and the strength to work toward good for all.**
 - Student exhibits behaviors that indicate a commitment to engage in critical, creative, and ethical thinking.
 - Student exhibits behaviors that indicate a commitment to the role of inquiry and to reasoned discourse.
 - Student exhibits behaviors that indicate a commitment to the value of agency for oneself, others and in the community.

In addition, dispositional behaviors related to work habits and professional demeanor are also cultivated and nurtured:

- **Work habits and professional demeanor.**
 - Student exhibits behaviors that indicate a willingness to take initiative and assume responsibility.
 - Student exhibits behaviors that indicate understanding of professional work environments and expectations.
 - Student exhibits behaviors that indicate a commitment to an ethic of service that extends beyond the classroom.

To guide student development toward these ends, the following performance goals and related dispositional behaviors have been established:

Performance Goals and Related Dispositional Behaviors

1. As people who have found joy in life, learning, and teaching, and who trust in the power of human relationships to call forth inner strengths, teachers strive to relate to their students in ways that free both teacher and learner to engage in joyful, responsible and disciplined inquiry into the workings and possibilities of our world.
 - **Student exhibits behaviors that indicate a commitment to introspection and reflection.**

2. As people who value difference in human interactions, ideas and nature; who understand that identity is shaped by diversity, experiences, and environment; and who recognize that we must all work together to build a more just society, teachers create learning environments based on democratic principles which ensure that multiple perspectives are valued and considered, and which encourage students to speak from their own diverse experiences, to give value to those expressions, to explore their own diversity, and to bring those experiences to the broader community.
 - **Student exhibits behaviors that indicate a commitment to the value of relationships with others, to diverse perspectives, and with nature.**

3. As people who appreciate the interconnectedness and interdependence of our world, teachers seek to add depth and breadth to their general knowledge as well as in-depth understandings of the content they teach. These teachers provide experiences that allow learners to recognize and value the interconnections that emerge as they explore their unfolding world.
 - **Student exhibits behaviors that indicate a commitment to life-long learning for self and others.**

4. As people who have experienced the power and beauty of creating their own knowledge and constructing their own understandings, and who are committed to enabling their students to share this experience, teachers create dynamic learning environments providing both direct and vicarious experiences oriented around student interest and characterized by active inquiry, liberal use of time, self-correction, and engagement with others.
 - **Student exhibits behaviors that indicate a commitment to the growth and development of all learners.**

5. As people who see the promise in every person and believe that individuals have the ability and duty to create a more just society, teachers attend to each and every student by planning, implementing, and assessing meaningful learning experiences and systematically engage in critical reflection and self correction.
 - **Student exhibits behaviors that indicate a commitment to the value of agency for oneself, others and in the community.**

6. As people who understand and appreciate the capacity of tools—informational, technological, physical and intellectual—to extend the reach and enhance the quality of work to be done, teachers incorporate appropriate tools into their own work-lives and integrate their use into the instructional environments they create with learners.
 - **Student exhibits behaviors that indicate a commitment to engage in critical, creative, and ethical thinking.**

7. As people who are committed to thinking together with others in the search for truth, wisdom and beauty, teachers create learning communities grounded in inquiry where students come to understand the critical role of communication in inquiry and where they feel the confidence that grows with the development of their ability to participate in a community of inquiry.
 - **Student exhibits behaviors that indicate a commitment to the role of inquiry and to reasoned discourse.**

Dispositional Behaviors and Work Habits With Indicators

1. **Student exhibits behaviors that indicate a commitment to introspection and reflection.**
 - a. Understands reflecting as exploring an idea or feeling to achieve new insights and understandings.
 - b. Is aware of strengths as well as areas for improvement; demonstrates willingness to deepen understanding of self.
 - c. Growing confidence with complexity and ambiguity; seizes opportunities for growth.

2. **Student exhibits behaviors that indicate a commitment to the value of relationships with others and to diverse perspectives, and with nature.**
 - a. Works cooperatively and collaboratively with others; is able to follow as well as lead.
 - b. Communicates in ways that demonstrate respect for nature and for the feelings, ideas and contributions of others; helps others to express their ideas.
 - c. Is aware of own biases; strives to broaden own understandings by engaging in varied experiences with nature and culturally diverse individuals and groups.

3. **Student exhibits behaviors that indicate a commitment to life-long learning for self and others.**
 - a. Is a self-directed learner who seeks and accepts feedback.
 - b. Shares enthusiasm and passion for learning and teaching with others.
 - c. Displays a willingness to learn from others and from past experiences; and encourages and supports this in others.

4. **Student exhibits behaviors that indicate a commitment to the growth and development of all learners.**
 - a. Displays understanding that in an appropriate and enriched environment all students can learn.
 - b. Recognizes and accepts own responsibility to engage all learners; demonstrates ability to learn from students.
 - c. Is able to appreciate, understands the significance of, and values the interconnectedness and interdependence of our world.

5. **Student exhibits behaviors that indicate a commitment to the value of agency for oneself, others and in the community.**
 - a. Actively pursues opportunities to promote own professional and personal lives.
 - b. Works to promote student voice and decision making in interactions with children/students.
 - c. Seeks opportunities to promote social justice and ways to work towards positive changes in schools and communities; willing to voice unpopular but just opinions.

6. **Student exhibits behaviors that indicate a commitment to engage in critical, creative and ethical thinking.**
 - a. Displays interest and willingness to experiment with new ideas and techniques that seem promising; holds onto the ideal.
 - b. Demonstrates the ability to review, analyze and evaluate ideas, information and the work of others in an effort to improve, adapt, or work with integrity in the given situation.
 - c. Plans instructional environments that integrate knowledge and skills within and across subjects and that encourage and challenge students to engage in critical and creative thinking.

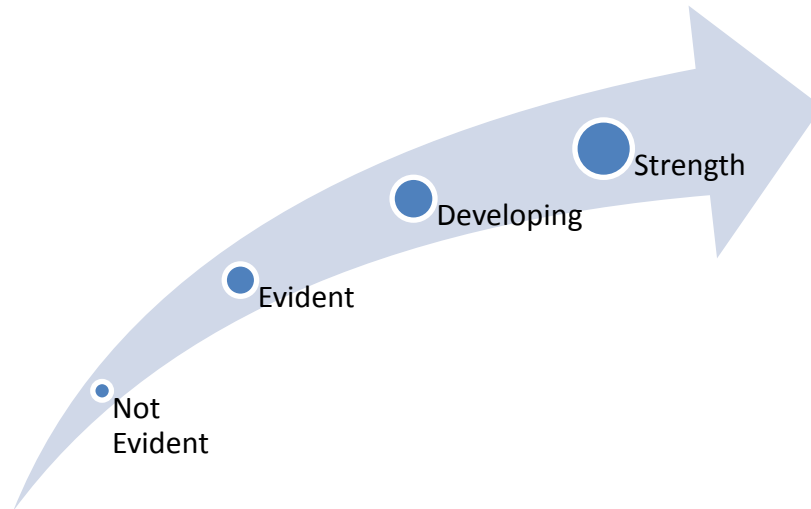
7. **Student exhibits behaviors that indicate a commitment to the role of inquiry and to reasoned discourse.**
 - a. Encourages questioning in students, colleagues, and others.
 - b. Designs instruction in which student arguments are pivotal; student-created questions are honored.
 - c. Demonstrates his/her own ability to participate in a community of inquiry, including listening with care, asking open-ended questions, helping others to express their own ideas, clarifying and probing for understanding.

8. **Student exhibits behaviors that indicate a willingness to take initiative and assume responsibility.**
 - a. Goes above and beyond stated expectations; uses time and resources wisely.
 - b. Demonstrates resourcefulness in problem-solving; willing to take risks, not afraid to make mistakes.
 - c. Is mindfully present and prepared for learning.

9. **Student exhibits behaviors that indicate understanding of professional work environments and expectations.**
 - a. Honors commitments; displays integrity and honesty.
 - b. Is punctual, reliable and appears appropriately professional.
 - c. Maintains a positive outlook; able to adapt easily to changing circumstances.

10. **Student exhibits behaviors that indicate a commitment to an ethic of service that extends beyond the classroom.**
- Works diligently in service to others.
 - Seeks ways to engage colleagues, parents, and community in support of student learning; views teaching as a collaborative effort.
 - Cultivates and maintains formal and informal networks to promote student learning and well being.

In examining the dispositional characteristics of future educators, it is necessary to consider a pattern of responses across time; a single event or piece of evidence may not indicate a tendency or inclination. Indicators will be assessed on a scale ranging from 1-4, with 1 indicating an area of concern and 4 indicating an area of strength.



Level 1 Concern/Not Evident	Level 2 Evident	Level 3 Developing	Level 4 Strength
Candidate does not display a pattern of behaviors that indicates he/she possess this characteristic; and/or candidate is unable to accept feedback that this area needs improvement.	Candidate displays behaviors that indicate he/she possess this characteristic; however there is an inconsistent pattern of behaviors related to this indicator. Candidate is able to accept feedback and seeks continuous improvement in this area.	Candidate exhibits a pattern of behavior that indicates that he/she possesses this characteristic. Candidate has achieved growth in this area and is able to identify ways to continue to deepen this attribute. Candidate is able to connect the development of this characteristic to teaching effectiveness.	Candidate exhibits a pattern of behavior that indicates that he/she possess this characteristic to an exceptional degree and it is integrated into his/her work in the world.

At the conclusion of each semester, instructors will submit the Dispositional Behaviors and Work Habits Assessment Form to the Education Studies Program. Education advisors will monitor the development and assessment of student's dispositions and fit for teacher education. Students and advisors are expected to meet each semester to plan professional and personal development opportunities to strengthen the characteristics that define exceptional teaching.