

INSTRUCTOR: April Stevenson, Ed. D.

COURSE MEETS: Via the online platform Canvas

OFFICE HOURS: By appointment

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EDEC 1010: LEARNING WITH AND FROM YOUNG CHILDREN

COURSE OVERVIEW- An introduction to early childhood education and care as a field of study that centers on young children's play, experiences, and identities. This course focuses on observation to account for children's knowledge-production within their everyday social practices. The course will engage students in material and intellectual inquiry that explores the relationships between children's experiences and their human and more-than-human (e.g., technology, the natural world, material objects, etc.) worlds.

SUPPLEMENTAL REQUIRED READINGS- Supplemental readings provided by the instructor using online links, electronic copies, and/or handouts.

COURSE STRUCTURE- The content of this course is divided into 15 weeks. Each module contains a sequenced collection of readings, information, discussion, and assignments designed to teach a specific aspect related to learning with and from young children. **Activities, readings, and tasks are meant to be completed in the order they appear.**

Modules typically contain some combination of the types of components and tasks listed below:

- Initiating activities that include a reading, video, or question designed to get you thinking about the specific topic and/or ideas that we will discuss during that week. These tasks are meant to only take a few minutes to complete and will set you up for the work ahead. You will find initiating activities of several of course modules but not all of them.
- A short overview of the unit.
- Several readings/texts that you must complete in order to engage in the week's discussion.
- Discussion board prompts that require you to post and respond to at least two of your peers' posts.
- An activity or task that needs to be completed and turned in through Canvas. Weekly assignments will assist you in completing your final project.

Discussion prompts and assignments are heavily dependent on course readings, videos, and other shared resources; therefore, it is crucial that you complete the readings, watch the assigned videos, and read any additional information before you post a response or complete an assignment.

ONLINE COURSE NETIQUETTE- Online courses provide few opportunities for face-to-face interaction between you, your professor, and your classmates. Since most of the interactivity that takes place in an online course involves text-only discussion, you cannot always accurately "read" body language, facial expressions, vocal inflections, or the changing pace of what's being said. This presents a few challenges and opens up opportunities for classmates to misunderstand what one another is saying.

Course discussions are meant to be personal and will likely contain dialogue involving your belief systems regarding race, gender, sexuality, religion, and politics. Respond in a respectful non-critical tone regardless of

whether you agree or disagree with another person's posting or comments. In some cases, discussion threads may make you feel awkward, uncomfortable, or frustrated. When this happens, remain open-minded and remind yourself that others are entitled to have their own perspectives on the issues.

When posting, avoid using language that is angry, sarcastic, or meant as a joke. Without seeing your facial expression or hearing your tone of voice, your classmates might not realize you are joking. When in doubt, ask questions and clarify what the other person is trying to say. Think carefully about the content of your message before posting. If you are uncertain about posting something, it may be best to set it aside, spend some additional time thinking about it, and return to it later. Feel free to contact me privately if you are concerned about "inappropriate" content that's been added to a discussion or if you want to talk over your posting before adding it to the thread.

Be sure to read the entire discussion thread before responding. Make sure your question was not asked, discussed, or resolved previously. Keep your posts to the conversation relevant, brief, and straightforward. If you refer to something a classmate posted earlier, then quote a few lines from the initial text you are mentioning so that it will be clear what you are referring to when your response.

COURSE OBJECTIVES- This course was designed to denaturalize typical ways of seeing and understanding young children, so rather than thinking of yourself as a "teacher," consider yourself someone who has much to learn with and from young children.

As we proceed through this course together, I expect you will be able to:

- Disrupt Western colonial discourses and categorizations of "appropriate/inappropriate" or "good/bad" in viewing children's learning and experiences
- Hone a pedagogy of listening to become keen observers of children being and learning in the world
- Record children's experiences through simple acts of documentation that take up the language of learning with children
- Engage in active inquiry with more-than-human worlds to gain perspective into learning as embodied, experiential, dialogical, and co-constructed
- Develop a curriculum map that features provocations that allow children to inquire and build on previous knowledges

COURSE EVALUATION

Point Value	Task and/or Assignment
400	Activity Participation & Discussion Response Activities
200	Artifact Analysis
200	Spaces for Children's Analysis
200	Curriculum Mapping
1000 points	Total Number of Points Possible

COURSE GRADING SCALE

A = 895-1000 points (90%-100%)
 B = 795-894 points (80%-89%)
 C = 745-794 points (70%-79%)
 D = 695-744 points (60%-69%)
 F = <695 points (<59%)

In this course, it is essential to focus on formulating critical ideas and pushing your thinking around children and schooling. To be successful in this course, you need to:

- Complete and turn in assignments on time
- Unlearn previously held ideas related to learning as solely lecture-oriented or teacher-directed. Instead, think about learning as happening within our experiences in the world
- Rethink your role of being a teacher as a facilitator of environments and learning alongside children.

COURSE CALENDAR

Due dates and times are clearly specified in each assignment's module directions. All posts and assignment deadlines are 11:59 p.m. Central Time on the date listed. For example, if something is due by 01/14, it is due 01/14 on or before 11:59 p.m. Central Time. Discussion responses to peers are usually due 1-2 days after the initial post.

This syllabus is intended to be a guide and will be amended as we proceed through the course.

START HERE

MODULE TASKS (in recommended order) Monday, 8/29 to Sunday, 9/4 (START HERE AND MODULE 1 are both due by 9/4)

Read and/or view the following texts:

- Course overview, meet your instructor, required materials, online netiquette, course structure, objectives and overview of assignments, course policies
- Course syllabus
- Connect with classmates (optional)

DATE	INQUIRY QUESTION	READINGS	ASSIGNMENT
PART 1: ORIENTING TOWARD CHILDREN			
ORIENTING TOWARD CHILDREN WEEK 1 (8/29-9/4)	What is there to know about young children?	• Week 1 slides • The Culture of Childhood: We've Almost Destroyed It • Viewpoint - A Culture of Their Own	Video Discussion Response (due 9/4 by 11:59 pm)

RECOGNIZING THE CHILD AS CONSTRUCTED BY ADULTS WEEK 2 (9/5-9/11)	What is your conception of the child?	• Week 2 slides • Kohn (2015a) • Christakis (2016a)	Video Discussion Response (due 9/11 by 11:59 pm) Activity: What lenses do you bring to “seeing” young children (due 9/11 by 11:59 pm)
CHILDREN’S PLAY AS A FUNDAMENTAL RIGHT WEEK 3 (9/12-9/18)	What is the role of play in the lives and learning of children?	• Week 3 slides • Gaunt (2020) • Peter Gray’s Decline of play [TEDxTalk]	Video Discussion Response (due 9/18 by 11:59 pm)
FURTHER EXAMINING PLAY AS A MODE OF INQUIRY WEEK 4 (9/19-9/25)	What is the role of play in the lives and learning of children? How is play a higher order skill?	• Week 4 slides • Jones (2003) • Science of Happiness Podcast: What Happens When We Play	Video Discussion Response (due 9/25 by 11:59 pm)
CHILDREN’S INQUIRIES WITHIN THEIR HUMAN AND MORE-THAN-HUMAN WORLDS WEEK 5 (9/26-10/2)	How do children inquire and make sense of their social worlds?	• Week 5 slides • Kohn (2015b)	Video Discussion Response (due 10/2 by 11:59 pm) Week 5 Activity: What is something you know that you did not learn in a traditional school setting? (due 10/2 by 11:59 pm)
PART 2: DECONSTRUCTING & RECONSTRUCTING SCHOOL			
EXAMINING WHAT CLASSROOMS AIM TO TEACH AND WHAT CHILDREN ACTUALLY LEARN WEEK 6 (10/3-10/9)	What is the purpose of school?	• Week 6 slides • Kohn (2006)	Assignment #1: Analysis of a School Practice or Policy (due 10/9) Please note: This assignment is worth 200 points of your final grade

CONTINUING TO THINK ABOUT THE GAPS BETWEEN WHAT WE ARE TO LEARN AND WHAT WE ACTUALLY LEARN WEEK 7 (10/10-10/16)	Why might schools need to be deconstructed and reconstructed?	• Week 7 slides • Christakis (2016) • 10-minute podcast: Say Goodbye to Calendar Time	Video Discussion Response (due 10/16 by 11:59 pm)
RECONSTRUCTING SPACES FOR CHILDREN IN THE IMAGE OF THE CHILD WEEK 8 (10/17-10/23)	What does the research say about children's environments?	• Week 8 slides • Kuh (2014) Introduction	Video Discussion Response (due 10/23 by 11:59 pm)
EXAMINING PROGRESSIVE APPROACHES TO EC EDUCATION WEEK 9 (10/24-10/30)	What else can school look and feel like for young children?	• Week 9 slides • Kuh & Rivard (2014) Prepared Environment	Video Discussion Response (due 10/30) Week 9 Activity: How do you want your classroom to feel? (due 10/30)
LEARNING THAT FEELS LIKE FREEDOM, AND "CLASSROOMS" THAT ARE OUTSIDE OF CLASSROOMS WEEK 10 (10/31-11/6)	Where and how can learning happen?	• Week 10 slides • Curtis & Carter (2005) • Bentley (2012b) ('Preschool Stroll...')	Assignment #2: Analysis of Two Classroom Environments (due 11/6 by 11:59 pm) Please note: This assignment is worth 200 points of your final grade
PART III: CURRICULUM THAT HONORS YOUNG CHILDREN			
MATERIAL INQUIRY THROUGH EXPLORATION OF OUR COMMON WORLDS WEEK 11 (11/7-11/13)	What are the affordances of loose parts and everyday materials?	• Week 11 slides • Schwall (2015) Grammar of Materials	Video Discussion Response (due 11/13 by 11:59 pm)

MATERIAL INQUIRY THROUGH EXPLORATION OF COMMON WORLDS CONTINUED WEEK 12 (11/14-11/20)	What are provocations, and how do we design them to invite and provoke learning?	• Week 12 slides • Setting Up For Loose Parts Learning • Curtis (2004)	Video Discussion Response (due 11/20 by 11:59 pm)
LOOSE PARTS AND EMERGENT CURRICULUM WEEK 13 (11/21-11/27)	How can loose parts learning actually be curriculum?	• Week 13 slides • Seitz (2006) • Massey (2017)	Video Discussion Response (due 11/27 by 11:59 pm)
THINKING AND DOING SCHOOL WITH CHILDREN'S INTERESTS AND INQUIRIES AT THE CENTER WEEK 14 (11/28-12/4)	How can children's interests be curriculum?	• Week 14 slides • Wien (2001) Ch. 7	Video Discussion Response (due 12/4 by 11:59 pm)
THINKING AND DOING SCHOOL WITH CHILDREN'S INTERESTS AND INQUIRIES AT THE CENTER CONTINUED WEEK 15 (12/5-12/11)	How can children's interests be curriculum?	• Week 15 slides • Halls & Wein (2013) Redacted	Assignment #3: Design Four Provocations for a Theme of Your Choice (due 12/14)
FINALS WEEK: CURRICULAR MAPS DUE DECEMBER 14 AT 11:59 PM			

IMPORTANT DATES

Classes begin – 9/29

Last day to change to pass/no pass status – 10/7

Midpoint of the semester – 10/21

Last day to drop with a W – 11/18

First day to request a grade of incomplete – 11/19

Last day of the semester – 12/16

COURSE POLICIES

COURSE PLATFORM - Canvas is the platform used for this course. It is your responsibility to check Canvas for course announcements, readings, and assignments. All readings outside of the required texts (*Learning to Teach in the Early Years Classroom* and *Piecing Me Together*) will be linked or uploaded to the corresponding module in Canvas.

COURSE PARTICIPATION- Participation in this course requires you to actively engage with your professor and classmates through the completion of module readings and written assignments, shared discussion of what you've learned from them, and demonstrated understanding and application of the concepts presented via audio/video chats, Padlet posts, and book club conversations. Since we do not meet face to face in this course it is imperative that you read and reply to the posts of classmates by the assigned dates. The effectiveness of class discussions depends on your timely and thoughtful contributions. You must post and respond to posts in order to receive full credit for course participation each week.

COURSE ASSIGNMENTS- All discussion responses, tasks, and assignments must be completed and turned in on time. Points will be subtracted for each day an assignment is late past the designated due date. I do not provide extra credit assignments, so it is important that you submit your best work by the posted due date. All assignments must be completed in full before they are submitted. Grades will not be given for incomplete submissions. Written assignments must be completed in APA style and submitted via Canvas.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY- Honesty is the foundation for academic integrity. Showcase your own intellect and abilities when completing assignments and responding to discussion board prompts. Avoid copying ideas, research, and data word for word without quoting it and citing your source. Work you've written and submitted for a previous course should not be resubmitted for this course. The work done for this course should be original work and all sources used should be credited. Please refer to the course syllabus for a complete list of all university policies.

Teacher Education & Administration Departmental Policy Statements

ACADEMIC DISHONESTY

Students caught cheating or plagiarizing will receive a "0" for that particular assignment or exam. Additionally, the incident will be reported to the Dean of Students, who may impose further penalty. According to the UNT catalog, the term "cheating" includes, but is not limited to: a. use of any unauthorized assistance in taking quizzes, tests, or examinations; b. dependence upon the aid of sources beyond those authorized by the instructor in writing papers, preparing reports, solving problems, or carrying out other assignments; c. the acquisition, without permission, of tests or other academic material belonging to a faculty or staff member of the university; d. dual submission of a paper or project, or resubmission of a paper or project to a different class without express permission from the instructor(s); or e. any other act designed to give a student an unfair advantage. The term "plagiarism" includes but is not limited to: a. the knowing or negligent use by paraphrase or direct quotation of the published or unpublished work of another person without full and clear acknowledgment; and b. the knowing or negligent unacknowledged use of materials prepared by another person or agency engaged in the selling of term papers or other academic materials.

ACCEPTABLE STUDENT BEHAVIOR

Student behavior that interferes with an instructor's ability to conduct a class or other students' opportunity to learn is unacceptable and disruptive and will not be tolerated in any instructional forum at UNT. Students engaging in unacceptable behavior will be directed to leave the classroom and the instructor may refer the student to the Dean of Students to consider whether the student's conduct violated the Code of Student Conduct. The university's expectations for student conduct apply to all instructional forums, including university and electronic classrooms, labs, discussion groups, field trips, etc. The Code of Student Conduct can be found at deanofstudents.unt.edu/conduct.

ACCESS TO INFORMATION – EAGLE CONNECT

Your access point for business and academic services at UNT occurs at my.unt.edu. All official communication from the university will be delivered to your Eagle Connect account. For more information, please visit the website that explains Eagle Connect and how to forward your e-mail: eagleconnect.unt.edu/

ADA STATEMENT

The University of North Texas makes reasonable academic accommodation for students with disabilities. Students seeking accommodation must first register with the Office of Disability Accommodation (ODA) to verify their eligibility. If a disability is verified, the ODA will provide you with an accommodation letter to be delivered to faculty to begin a private discussion regarding your specific needs in a course. You may request accommodations at any time, however, ODA notices of accommodation should be provided as early as possible in the semester to avoid any delay in implementation. Note that students must obtain a new letter of accommodation for every semester and must meet with each faculty member prior to implementation in each class. For additional information see the Office of Disability Accommodation website at disability.unt.edu, (940) 565-4323.

E-PORTFOLIO

Foliotek is a free to you software data management system (MMS) used in the assessment of your knowledge, skills, and dispositions relevant to program standards and objectives. You will be required to use your Foliotek account for the duration of your enrollment in the College of Education in order to upload required applications, course assignments, and other electronic evidence/evaluations as required. This course may require assignment(s) to be uploaded and graded in Foliotek. The college of Education will track your progress in your program through this data to verify that you have successfully met the competencies required in your program of study. All students must register in the program portfolio that aligns with their degree plan.

Registration codes and tutorials can be found on this site:

<https://www.coe.unt.edu/office-educator-preparation/foliotek>

ETHICAL BEHAVIOR AND CODE OF ETHICS

The Teacher Education & Administration Department expects that its students will abide by the Code of Ethics and Standard Practices for Texas Educators (Chapter 247 of the Texas Administrative Code www.sbec.state.tx.us) and as outlined in Domain IV: Fulfilling Professional Roles and Responsibilities of the Pedagogy and Professional Responsibilities (PPR) Texas Examination of Educator Standards (TExES); and as also addressed in codes of ethics adopted by professionals in the education field such as the National Education Association (NEA) and the American Federation of Teachers (AFT).

EMERGENCY NOTIFICATION & PROCEDURES

UNT uses a system called Eagle Alert to quickly notify you with critical information in the event of an emergency (i.e., severe weather, campus closing, and health and public safety emergencies like chemical spills, fires, or violence). The system sends voice messages (and text messages upon permission) to the phones of all active faculty staff, and students. Please make certain to update your phone numbers at my.unt.edu. Some helpful emergency preparedness actions include: 1) know the evacuation routes and severe weather shelter areas in the buildings where your classes are held, 2) determine how you will contact family and friends if phones are temporarily unavailable, and 3) identify where you will go if you need to evacuate the Denton area suddenly. In the event of a university closure, please refer to Canvas for contingency plans for covering course materials.

OBSERVANCE OF RELIGIOUS HOLIDAYS

If you plan to observe a religious holy day that coincides with a class day, please notify your instructor as soon as possible.

RETENTION OF STUDENT RECORDS

Student records pertaining to this course are maintained in a secure location by the instructor of record. All records such as exams, answer sheets (with keys), and written papers submitted during the duration of the course are kept for at least one calendar year after course completion. Course work completed via the Canvas online system, including grading information and comments, is also stored in a safe electronic environment for one year. You have a right to view your individual record; however, information about your records will not be divulged to other individuals without the proper written consent. You are encouraged to review the Public Information Policy and the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) laws and the university's policy in accordance with those mandates.

SPOT

The Student Perception of Teaching (SPOT) is expected for all organized classes at UNT. This brief online survey will be made available to you at the end of the semester, providing you an opportunity to provide course feedback.

STUDENT WORK SAMPLES

To monitor students' achievement, improve instructional programs, and publish research findings, the Department of Teacher Education and Administration collects anonymous student work samples, student demographic information, test scores, and GPAs to be analyzed by internal and external reviewers.

SUCCEED AT UNT

UNT endeavors to offer you a high-quality education and to provide a supportive environment to help you learn and grown. As a faculty member, I am committed to helping you be successful as a student. Here's how to succeed at UNT: Show up. Find Support. Get advised. Be prepared. Get involved. Stay focused. To learn more about campus resources and information on how you can achieve success, visit success.unt.edu/.

TECHNOLOGY INTEGRATION POLICY

The Elementary, Secondary, and Curriculum & Instruction program areas support technology integration to assist teacher candidates and practicing teachers to design and implement curricular and instruction activities which infuse technology throughout the K-12 curriculum.

TEXES TEST PREPARATION

To meet state requirements for providing 6 hours of test preparation for teacher certification candidates, the UNT TExES Advising Office (TAO) administers the College of Education TExES Practice Exams. Students who want to take a practice exam should contact the TAO (Matthews Hall 103). Students may take up to two exams per session that relate to their teaching track/field at UNT. Students should also plan accordingly, as they are required to stay for the entire testing period. Current students must meet the following criteria in order to sit for the TExES practice exams: Students must (1) be admitted to Teacher Education, (2) have a certification plan on file with the COE Student Advising Office, and (3) be enrolled in coursework for the current semester. For TExES practice exam information and registration, go to:

<http://www.coe.unt.edu/texas-advising-office/texas-exams>. If you need special testing accommodations, please contact the TAO at 940-369-8601 or e-mail the TAO at coe-tao@unt.edu. The TAO website is www.coe.unt.edu/texas. Additional test preparation materials (i.e. Study Guides for the TExES) are available at www.texas.ets.org.

"Ready to Test" Criteria for Teacher Certification Candidates. Teacher certification candidates should take the TExES exams relating to their respective certification tracks/teaching fields during their early field-experience semester (i.e. the long semester or summer session immediately prior to student teaching).

UNT CAREER CONNECT

All undergraduate students are expected to participate in "UNT Career Connect." Each student needs to set up a UNT e-portfolio for this purpose. As a UNT student engages in real-life, career-related experiences in curricular and/or co-curricular settings, s/he should upload documentation of these experiences into his/her UNT e-portfolio. Course instructors will help students identify appropriate experiences and accompanying documentation/artifacts for inclusion in the e-portfolio. Through their respective e-portfolios, students are able to make connections across their student experiences and reflect upon their learning and skills in order to prepare them with marketable skills for careers and graduate degrees. The e-portfolio also serves as a useful device for future job interviews. Career Connect places emphasis on important job skills such as communication, teamwork, and critical thinking. For students seeking teacher certification, these on-the-job skills will be evaluated during student teaching using the North Texas Appraisal of Classroom Teaching (NTACT) or its successor instrument.

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Follow this link to learn more and to set up your personal e-portfolio: <http://careerconnect.unt.edu/default>.

WRITING POLICY

Teachers are judged on the accuracy of everything they write, whether it is a letter to parents or an email to a principal or a worksheet for students. Your written products – including, but not limited to, papers, lesson plans, and emails – should include appropriate and accurate spelling, grammar, punctuation, syntax, format, and English usage. You should expect that all assignments will be evaluated on these writing skills, in addition to any other expectations of a particular assignment. The UNT Writing Lab (Auditorium Building, 105) offers one-on-one consultation to assist students with their writing assignments. To use this resource, call (940) 565-2563 or visit <https://ltc.unt.edu/labs/unt-writing-labhome>.

NOTICE FOR F-1 STUDENTS AND ONLINE COURSES

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To read INS regulations for F-1 students taking online courses, please go to <http://www.immigration.gov/graphics/services/visas.htm> and select the link to "8 CFR 214.2(f)" in the table next to "F-1." Paragraph (f)(6)(i)(G). A final rule with clarifications on the restriction can be found here: <http://www.immigration.gov/graphics/lawsregs/fr121102.pdf>. Refer to Section IX on page 9 with the subject header "Online and Distance Education Courses." To comply with immigration regulations, an F-1 holder within the U. S. may need to engage in an on-campus experiential component for this course. This component (which must be approved in advance by the instructor) can include activities such as taking an on-campus exam, participating in an on-campus lecture or lab activity, or other oncampus experience integral to the completion of this course.

If such an on-campus activity is required, it is the student's responsibility to do the following: (1) Submit a written request to the instructor for on-campus experiential component within one week of the start of the course. (2) Ensure that the activity on campus takes place and the instructor documents in writing with a notice sent to the International Advising Office. The UNT International Advising Office has a form available that you may use for this purpose.

Because the decision may have serious immigration consequences, if an F-1 student is unsure about his or her need to participate in an on-campus experiential component for this course, s/he should contact the UNT International Advising Office at 940-565-2195 or email international@unt.edu to get clarification before the one week deadline.

The Educator as Agent of Engaged Learning

The educator as agent of engaged learning summarizes the conceptual framework for UNT's basic and advanced programs. This phrase reflects the directed action that arises from simultaneous commitment to academic knowledge bases and to learner centered practice. "Engaged learning" signifies the deep interaction with worthwhile and appropriate content that occurs for each student in the classrooms of caring and competent educators. "Engaged learning" features the on-going interchange between teacher and student about knowledge and between school and community about what is worth knowing. This conceptual framework recognizes the relationship between UNT and the larger community in promoting the commitment of a diverse citizenry to life-long learning. In our work of developing educators as agents of engaged learning, we value the contributions of professional development

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schools and other partners and seek collaborations which advance active, meaningful, and continuous learning.

Seeing the engaged learner at the heart of a community that includes educators in various roles, we have chosen to describe each program of educator preparation at UNT with reference to the following key concepts, which are briefly defined below.

1. Content and curricular knowledge refer to the grounding of the educator in content knowledge and knowledge construction and in making meaningful to learners the content of the PreK-16 curriculum.
2. Knowledge of teaching and assessment refers to the ability of the educator to plan, implement, and assess instruction in ways that consistently engage learners or, in advanced programs, to provide leadership for development of programs that promote engagement of learners.
3. Promotion of equity for all learners refers

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to the skills and attitudes that enable the educator to advocate for all students within the framework of the school program. 4. Encouragement of diversity refers to the ability of the educator to appreciate and affirm formally and informally the various cultural heritages, unique endowments, learning styles, interests, and needs of learners. 5. Professional communication refers to effective interpersonal and professional oral and written communication that includes appropriate applications of information technology. 6. Engaged professional learning refers to the educator's commitment to ethical practice and to continued learning and professional development.

Through the experiences required in each UNT program of study, we expect that basic and advanced students will acquire the knowledge, skills, and dispositions appropriate to the educational role for which they are preparing or in which they are developing expertise.

A broad community stands behind and accepts responsibility for every engaged learner. UNT supports the work of PreK-16 communities through basic and advanced programs for professional educators and by promoting public understanding of issues in education.