

# **Standards for Academic and Professional Instruction in Foundations of Education, Educational Studies, and Educational Policy Studies**

*Third Edition, 2012*

*Presented to the Educational Community by the American Educational Studies Association's Committee on Academic Standards and Accreditation*

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## **Introduction**

This Third Edition of the *Standards for Academic and Professional Instruction in Foundations of Education, Educational Studies, and Educational Policy Studies* is presented to the educational community by the American Educational Studies Association's (AESA) Committee on Academic Standards and Accreditation (CASA). The Standards were first developed and published in 1977-1978 by the American Educational Studies Association, and the Council of Learned Societies in Education (CLSE) assumed proprietorship and responsibility for dissemination and advocacy of the Standards following adoption of the document by each of its member societies in the early 1980s. In 1986, the original Standards were republished with a new introduction by CLSE and was widely circulated at colleges of education, state departments of education, and national accreditation agencies. In response to development in the field of teacher preparation, licensure, and assessment, the standards were revised, resulting in the publication of the Second Edition of the Standards published in 1996 by CLSE.

Beginning with the 1983 publication of *A Nation at Risk*, critiques of educator preparation programs have become a part of the national political landscape with charges that teachers were not adequately prepared in their content areas and consequently schools failed to prepare students for the work place. These challenges subsequently led to campaigns by corporate leaders, philanthropists, and politicians to bring the work of teachers and students under greater control through the use of narrowly defined measures of accountability, thus, reducing education to an economic value or commodity. Such technocratic approaches to teaching and learning strip both educators and their students of the kind of rich, holistic learning experiences that enhance self-development engage individuals in understanding local, national, and global contexts, and develop critical thinking skills needed for life in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

Since the 1996 publication of the Standards, we have witnessed increased corporatization of state power and privatization of public services, including education, on a global scale. At the same time, the advanced technologies that enable immediate access to local and global communities, also contribute to corporate exploitation and unregulated production worldwide. These forces created massive political, social, and ecological devastation triggering global democratic movements struggling to address and redress the consequences of these capitalist excesses. This Third Edition of the Social Foundations Standards aims to revitalize educators' commitment to empower future generations to confront and resolve the ecological, social, economic, and

political challenges the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

### **Purposes of the Standards**

The original Standards were designed to inform evaluation criteria published by national, regional, and state accreditation agencies, state departments of education, local education agencies, teacher centers, and teacher organizations. The standards therefore included treatments of each of the following professional education components: (1) Initial teacher certification; (2) Professional development (in-service education); (3) Non-foundations graduate degrees and programs; (4) Graduate degrees and programs offered jointly by foundations and other faculty; (5) Masters and educational specialist degrees and programs in the foundations; (6) Preparation of faculty in doctoral programs; and (7) Professional development of faculty. The Second Edition continued to address these major components while providing greater emphasis on defining the foundations of education and on foundational studies in preparation of other school professionals such as psychologist, counselors, and administrators. The underlying assumption for the Standards in each of these areas is that important correlations exist among educators' professional and scholarly qualifications, professional judgments, and professional performance, even though the latter cannot appropriately be reduced to a prescribed set of behaviors or standardized performance levels. Good program assessment requires informed judgment, and the Standards are designed to assist qualified professionals in making sound and helpful judgments about program quality. The ultimate purpose of the Standards is to promote quality instruction and learning in foundational studies to guarantee to the extent possible that those individuals in pre-service and in-service educator preparation programs have opportunities to acquire interpretive, normative, and critical perspectives on education through rigorous study and field experiences.

This Third Edition presents a significant change in the format of the standards in an effort present a set of standards more closely aligned with standards of other specialty professional organizations in educator preparation fields while maintaining the centrality of the interpretive, normative, and critical perspectives on education. Following a Statement of Beliefs, this format first addresses the preparation of professional educators, then focuses on four primary concerns of social foundations educators: (1) P-12 students; (2) professional educators; (3) democratic educational practices; and (4) research, policy, and advocacy in education within the current sociopolitical context. The Third Edition challenges all educators to think beyond the existing accreditation standards to envision a more holistic, inclusive, and intellectually challenging approach to preparing educators. This edition is organized into the following sections:

#### Social Foundations of Education Statement of Beliefs

#### Standard I: Defining Social Foundations of Education

#### Standard II: Interpretive, Normative, and Critical Studies for Professional Educators

#### Standard III: Qualifications and Professional Development of Faculty in Foundations of Education, Educational Studies, and Educational Policy Studies

Standard IV: Social Foundations of Education Commitments for P-12 Students, Professional Educators, Democratic Educational Practice, and Research, Policy, and Advocacy

In this edition, the term student is used to refer solely to P-12 students while the term educators is used inclusively to refer to three groups: (1) aspiring educators, pre-service teachers and other school personnel in educator preparation programs; (2) in-service educators and other school personnel; and (3) scholars involved in the preparation of teachers and other school personnel for P-12 schools.

## **Social Foundations of Education Statement of Beliefs**

As social foundations scholars, we believe that education is a public good and essential to the cultivation of a democratic civil society. We believe that the system of schooling should be based on principles of equitable access and that every individual has a right to educational opportunities which are just, fair and democratic. We believe our work should foster the exploration of diverse epistemological frameworks, the interrogation of dominant assumptions, and the critical and systematic analysis of power structures.

As social foundations scholars, we believe we must work against narrow conceptions of education and schooling which marginalize or otherwise minimize the knowledge, culture, and experiences of some populations within our society while privileging others.

As social foundations scholars, we have a responsibility to the field, our students, and society. We have a responsibility to provide our students with the conceptual and practical tools to advocate for their own students and communities, and assist them in understanding how their work is influenced by social and structural forces, school and community contexts, and their own life histories and belief systems.

## **Standard I: Defining Social Foundations of Education**

Social Foundations of Education refers to a field of educational study that derives its character and methods from a number of academic disciplines, combinations of disciplines, and area studies, including: history, philosophy, sociology, anthropology, religion, political science, economics, cultural studies, gender studies, LGBTQ studies, comparative and international education, educational studies, educational policy studies, as well as transdisciplinary and interdisciplinary approaches. Social Foundations of Education faculty have doctoral degrees and/or extensive preparation in the disciplines and methodologies of the social sciences and humanities as applied to the examination of education and schooling. The purpose of Social Foundations of Education study is to bring these disciplinary, interdisciplinary, and transdisciplinary resources to bear in developing interpretive, normative, and critical perspectives on education as explained below, both inside and outside of schools.

Specifically, through the study of Social Foundations of Education educators are prepared to:

1. Understand and apply disciplinary knowledge from the humanities and social sciences to interpreting the meanings of education and schooling in diverse cultural contexts.
2. Understand and apply normative perspectives on education and schooling.
3. Understand and apply critical perspectives on education and schooling.
4. Understand how moral principles related to democratic institutions can inform and direct schooling practice, leadership, and governance.
5. Understands the full significance of diversity in a democratic society and how that bears on instruction, school leadership, and governance.
6. Understand how philosophical and moral commitments affect the process of evaluation at all levels of schooling practice, leadership, and governance.

### **Social Foundations of Education's Interpretive, Normative, and Critical Perspectives**

The **interpretive perspectives** use concepts and theories developed within the humanities and the social sciences to assist students in examining, understanding, and explaining education within different contexts. Social foundations studies promote analysis of the intent, meaning, and effects of educational institutions, including schools. Such studies attend particularly to the diverse contexts within which educational phenomena occur, and how interpretation can vary with different historical, philosophical, and cultural perspectives.

The **normative perspectives** assist students in examining and explaining education in light of value orientations. Social foundations studies promote understanding of normative and ethical behavior in educational development and recognition of the inevitable presence of normative influences in educational thought and practice. Foundations studies probe the nature of assumptions about education and schooling. They examine the relation of policy analysis to values and the extent to which educational policymaking reflects values. Finally, they encourage students to develop their own value positions regarding education on the basis of critical study and their own reflections.

The **critical perspectives** employ normative interpretations to assist students to develop inquiry skills, to question educational assumptions and arrangements, and to identify contradictions and inconsistencies among social and educational values, policies, and practices. In particular, the critical perspectives engage students in employing democratic values to assess educational beliefs, policies, and practices in light of their origins, influences, and consequences.

Particular disciplinary studies, for example the history, philosophy, anthropology, or sociology of education, as well as transdisciplinary as defined above shall be considered as study in the Foundation of Education provided the interpretive, critical, and normative perspectives are addressed and promoted. The objective of such study is to sharpen pre-service and in-service educators' abilities to examine, understand, and explain educational proposals, arrangements, and practices and to develop a disciplined sense of policy-oriented educational responsibility. Such study develops an awareness of education and schooling in light of their complex relations to the environing culture. The general objectives of these foundational studies are to introduce students to interpretive uses of knowledge germane to education and to establish a basis for

lifelong learning through normative and critical reflection on education within its historical, philosophical, cultural, and social contexts.

Studies in Social Foundations of Education shall not be equated with “Introduction to Education” coursework unless such study clearly addresses the three perspectives indicated in this Standard and is taught by individuals specifically educated in the Social Foundations of Education.

## **Standard II: Interpretive, Normative, and Critical Studies for the Preparation of Professional Educators**

This standard seeks to ensure quality preparation at undergraduate, masters, specialist, and doctoral levels in the Social Foundations of Education for teachers, other school personnel, as well as those educators pursuing degrees or joint degrees in the Foundations of Education, Educational Studies, and Educational Policy Studies.

- a. Professional preparation leading to initial teacher certification and/or licensure shall include studies (at least one course, preferably two or more) in the foundation of education as described in Standard I.
- b. Field experiences designed and supervised in collaboration with educational practitioners are appropriate components of foundational studies when those experiences contribute to students’ abilities to interpret and communicate the content and context of educational thought and practice.
- c. Professional preparation leading to certification and/or licensure as a school administrator, school psychologist, or school counselor shall include studies (at least one course, preferably two or more) in foundations of education. Such coursework must utilize the foundations’ interpretive, normative, and critical perspectives to address: (1) societal and cultural influences on schooling; (2) the analysis of policy issues; and (3) the ethical dimension of schooling.
- d. Masters and doctoral degree programs in Education specializations other than Foundations of Education, Educational Studies, and Educational Policy Studies shall include foundational studies which promote the development of interpretive, normative, and critical perspective on education.
- e. Masters and specialists degrees and programs in Foundations of Education, Educational Studies, and Educational Policy Studies shall be devoted to instruction in at least three of the following disciplines or areas of study: history of education, philosophy of education, sociology of education, religion and education, anthropology and education, politics of education, economics of education, comparative and international education, cultural studies in education, gender studies in education, educational studies, and educational policy studies.
- f. Joint masters or doctoral programs involving Foundations of Education, Educational Studies, and Educational Policy Studies shall include instruction in at least three of the following disciplines or areas of study: history of education, philosophy of education, sociology of

education, religion and education, anthropology and education, politics of education, economics of education, comparative and international education, cultural studies in education, gender studies in education, educational studies, and educational policy studies.

- g. Doctoral programs in Foundations of Education, Educational Studies, and Educational Policy Studies shall offer concentrated, advanced preparation in at least one of the following disciplines or areas of study and general preparation in at least two others: history of education, philosophy of education, sociology of education, religion and education, anthropology and education, politics of education, economics of education, comparative and international education, cultural studies in education, gender studies in education, educational studies, and educational policy studies. The minimum number of academic faculty in Foundations of Education, Educational Studies, or Educational Policy Studies in institutions offering doctoral degrees in these specializations should be the full-time equivalency of at least three faculty members who meet the qualifications of this Standard and represent concentrations in at least two of the disciplines or areas of study listed above.

### **Standard III: Qualifications and Professional Development of Faculty in Foundations of Education, Educational Studies, and Educational Policy Studies**

Faculty in Foundations of Education, Educational Studies, or Educational Policy Studies shall be specialists in their fields by virtue of their doctoral degree concentrations and/or by having established active participation in the field of Foundations of Education through their instruction, research, and service. These faculty shall actively promote improvement of college and university teaching and demonstrate best teaching practices. They shall also engage in research and writing, participate regularly in the programs of appropriate professional and learned societies, and collaborate with educational practitioners and interested citizens on project of mutual interest. Such activities serve to promote the regular reassessment and growth of their interpretive, normative, and critical perspectives on education.

### **Standard IV: Social Foundations of Education Commitments for P-12 Students, Professional Educators, Democratic Educational Practice, and Research, Policy, and Advocacy**



### ***P-12 Students***

As social foundation scholars, we recognize the centrality of P-12 students in the educational process. Schools must, first and foremost, address the intellectual, cultural, psychological, physical, and spiritual needs of children. Children are natural learners; schools must nourish and nurture this natural proclivity, and avoid practices that undermine it. In the current context of accountability, the schooling process often disempowers students, in that they are made passive recipients of information rather than active learners engaging with and constructing knowledge.

#### Educators are committed to:

1. *Facilitating P-12 students' holistic development, supporting their pursuit of intellectual freedom, and fostering their civic engagement and individual autonomy by:*
  - a. understanding knowledge in context;
  - b. understanding the highly interdisciplinary nature of knowledge;
  - c. developing and implementing curricula and instructional methods that recognize students' needs and interests and which promotes students' intellectual freedom;
  - d. engaging students in civic actions that benefit local and global communities.
2. *Developing students' reflective, deliberative, and participatory citizenship skills for self-governance and self-empowerment in a democratic society by:*
  - a. ensuring education is meaningful by responsibly addressing students' concerns about 'why' they are being taught particular knowledge;
  - b. involving students in classroom and school policy and decision-making to facilitate their self-empowerment and self-directed learning;
  - c. engaging in active listening to facilitate students' developing deliberative democratic citizenship skills.

3. *Advancing students' innovative and collaborative problem solving by:*
  - a. promoting cooperative and collaborative learning and teaching;
  - b. initiating and sustaining educational actions that foster students' developing critical and creative thinking for innovation.
4. *Cultivating knowledge, and skills for building ecologically sustainable societies at local and global levels by:*
  - a. incorporating awareness of natural and human resource use/abuse into curricula and classroom activities;
  - b. teaching skills for ecological sustainability in multiple contexts.

### ***Professional Educators***

Social Foundations scholars understand education as a human value essential for helping individuals create autonomous and meaningful lives in communities with others. As facilitators of this process, P-16 educators commit themselves to this value, modeling the habits of life-long learning and critical reflection through their individual and collective (with colleagues and students) deliberations and decisions regarding their practice.

Educators are committed to:

1. *Maintaining allegiance to education as a human value and a public good, and resisting its institutional diminishment by:*
  - a. rejecting the myth that institutions are external to and constrain us as educators, as if they possessed powers that render us helpless;
  - b. honoring the emotions generated when we feel the value of education which animates our work despite institutional pressures to ignore and comply;
  - c. realizing that we are partly responsible for creating and sustaining institutional dynamics, and that we also possess the power to alter them.
2. *Knowing that good teaching cannot be reduced to technique, but flows from the identity and integrity of professional educators by:*
  - a. knowing our students and our subject depends heavily on self-knowledge;
  - b. deepening our understanding of and our relationship to the content that we teach, accepting that knowledge is dynamic and ever changing;
  - c. striving to see our students clearly and to see them as whole -- individual persons with unique subjectivities, and also as members of particular groups whose lives are shaped by their race, class, gender, culture, and sexual orientation.
3. *Critically analyzing our own values, beliefs, and subjectivities in relation to those of our students by:*
  - a. investigating and considering our own values, beliefs, and teaching practices;
  - b. examining factors such as race, ethnicity, gender, and social class and how they affect teaching and learning in classrooms.



4. *Critically analyzing social, cultural, and community dynamics in classrooms and schools to create environments for effective teaching and learning by:*
  - a. responding to cultural diversity and learning needs of all students;
  - b. demonstrating knowledge of diverse cultures, particularly of those communities represented in their classrooms and schools;
  - c. encouraging an environment that is inviting, respectful, supportive, inclusive, and flexible.
5. *Collaborating and leading within schools, communities and in the educational profession by:*
  - a. working collaboratively with all school personnel to create a professional learning community;
  - b. striving to improve the profession of teaching, leadership, and related service professionals working in schools;
  - c. participating in decision-making structures within educational settings;
  - d. promoting the professional growth of educators.

### ***Democratic Educational Practice***

Based on an interdisciplinary approach, social foundations of education engages professional educators in examining theories and practices of democratic education at all levels. In recognition of cultural pluralism and common humanity, social foundations of education also aim to re-claim professional educators as ethical agents envisioning and acting on needed educational and social reforms for pursuing and implementing educational equity and excellence in a culturally diverse society.

#### **Educators are committed to:**

1. *Critically and reflectively analyzing professional educators' values, beliefs, and subjectivities in relation to their pedagogical actions by:*
  - a. examining how factors such as race, ethnicity, gender, and social class shape teaching and learning in formal, informal and non-formal educational settings;
  - b. acquiring knowledge of diverse cultures, particularly of the under-represented and underserved communities.
2. *Critically analyzing and interpreting social, cultural, and community dynamics in classrooms and schools to create a learning environment for reflective teaching and learning by:*
  - a. developing, implementing, and sustaining culturally responsive educational practices to meet the needs of all students;
  - b. constructing a learning environment that is inviting, respectful, supportive, and inclusive for all students.
3. *Incorporating students' experiences and cultures into building a mutually supportive learning community that aims to examine, develop, and sustain democratic values by:*
  - a. designing and implementing educational activities relevant to students' families, cultures, and local and global communities;
  - b. developing curricula grounded in the interconnections between subject matter and community issues.

4. Developing and undertaking pedagogical actions for fostering civic engagement, cultivating democratic citizenship, and promoting ecologically sustainable economic development:
  - a. designing and implementing critical curricular and instructional activities that raise students' awareness of and foster their commitment to the pursuit of social equity and ecological sustainability;

### ***Research, Policy, and Advocacy***

Educators and students have historically been inundated with mandates from internal and external forces, many of which have not always been supportive of teaching or learning. Educators are subjected to demands they feel must be followed, even when they conflict with their personal or professional judgment. Whether out of lack of knowledge or an absence of agency, educators in turn subject their students to policies and practices they do not support. As a result, a climate of powerlessness is perpetuated as the two principal actors in educational environments (i.e., educators and students) remain as bystanders in policy and practices that influence them. The possibility of disrupting this trend is enhanced when educators have a deeper understanding of the basis for policies and their potential influence on the educational enterprise.

Educators are committed to:

1. *Understanding, analyzing, examining, and explaining the multiple interconnections between schools and society by:*
  - a. identifying and critically examining how external forces gain their influences on policy, practices, and student learning;
  - b. examining how external influences (e.g. media, special interest groups, stakeholder groups, etc.) work to shape society's perceptions and expectations of schools and the processes of schooling;
  - c. examining the impact of external influences on educational policy, school/classroom practice, and student learning.
2. *Identifying how external forces control the power differential between educators and those who seek to prescribe how to educate by:*
  - a. analyzing the basis for criticisms of educators and the educational process from historical, philosophical, and social/cultural perspectives;
  - b. understanding how the media, popular culture, and other entities are able to craft an image of education/teachers that sways public opinion.
3. *Critically analyzing educational policies within their historical and political contexts and advocate for positive change by:*
  - a. demonstrating an understanding of how policies and practices influence teaching and learning;
  - b. using sound professional judgment in adapting policies and practices within their classrooms and schools.

4. *Explaining the aims, policies and practices of multiple forms of schooling, and other educational environments by:*
  - a. identifying the multiple and sometimes conflicting aims of education;
  - b. identifying and critiquing different educational environments and the perspectives and interest from which they evolve;
  - c. identifying the historically relevant policies that impact contemporary educational practice;
  - d. identifying the social, philosophical and political bases that serve as a foundation for different aims of education.
5. *Understanding, evaluating, and critiquing how research methods inform and improve educational practices by:*
  - a. applying critical and interdisciplinary inquiry into current research methods used in education;
  - b. keeping current on evolving research;
  - c. analyzing proposed educational policies and practices based on existing and evolving research.
6. *Engaging students in learning experiences that develop the critical and analytical capacities needed to advocate for more meaningful educational experiences by:*
  - a. developing curriculum and implement approaches to instruction that facilitate students' capabilities to think critically and analytically about their education and education in general;
  - b. providing learning opportunities that enhance students' development of a sense of agency.