

Diversity Competencies

NCATE (2008) defines diversity as “differences among groups of people and individuals based on ethnicity, race, socioeconomic status, gender, exceptionalities, language, religion, sexual orientation, and geographical area” (p. 86).

Consistent with William Paterson University’s Mission Statement issued on February 21, 1998, the COE recommits itself to developing and sustaining a society in which all individuals have opportunities to achieve. The COE is committed to educating individuals who are effective with *all* students and clients, who believe *all* students can learn and who treat *all* students equitably and fairly. At both the initial and advanced levels, the Unit’s coursework and experiences are designed to insure that all candidates acquire the proficiencies needed to be effective educators in diverse settings.

The COE has identified the following competencies in the area of diversity which we expect candidates to be able to demonstrate:

- the ability to adapt instruction to individual differences, learning styles, and multiple intelligences;
- the demonstration of respect for diversity and cultural differences;
- the ability to work collaboratively with families; and
- the development of a sense of community in the learning environment.

As part of its commitment to diversity, the COE strives to recruit and retain a diverse faculty, to prepare and graduate a diverse pool of candidates, as well as to provide all candidates with clinical experiences in diverse P-12 schools. We believe that it is our collective responsibility as faculty to help candidates “understand the potential impact of discrimination based on race, class, gender, disability, sexual orientations and language on student and their learning” (NCATE, 2008, p. 37).

(From WPU Conceptual Framework, 2009).

At the **initial level**, the diversity outcomes expected of all candidates are part of the 20 Competencies or unit standards. Specifically, initial teacher education candidates are assessed on their ability to:

1. Adapt instruction to individual differences in needs, learning styles, and multiples intelligences.
2. Hold high expectations for all students.
3. Respect diversity and cultural differences by treating all students equitably.
4. Develop a sense of community in the learning environment.
5. Work collaboratively with colleagues and families.

At the **advanced level**, candidates are expected to:

1. have experience in settings that include P-12 participants who are male and female, from different SES groups, are English Language Learners, have disabilities, and are from different ethnic/racial groups
2. display professional behaviors that are consistent with the ideas of fairness and the belief that all students can learn
3. demonstrate a commitment to high level success for all students
4. incorporate and communicate multiple perspectives of subject matter being taught or services provided
5. reflect on their own ability to work with diverse students, colleagues, and families
6. exhibit sensitivity to community and cultural norms
7. demonstrate respect for human diversity and varied perspectives
8. build on developmental levels of students and colleagues with whom they work (e.g., differentiate instruction and assessment)