

## **Simpson University School of Education Philosophical and Research Foundations**

The School of Education shares the larger identity, vision, and mission of Simpson University in providing for all of its educational programs. As stated in the university catalog, "Simpson University, a school of the Christian and Missionary Alliance, is a Christ-centered learning community with an enduring commitment to world service and faith-infused education in professional studies and liberal arts." In the broadest sense possible, institutionally, Simpson University, and specifically, the School of Education is committed to preparing students for a life of service to the world, whether that be in California public schools or abroad, thus our motto, "Gateway to World Service".

The Vision and Mission statements of the university further strengthen this commitment as follows:

"Vision: Simpson University's passion is to be the university of choice for students who aspire to achieve their chosen life goals through a Christ-led, transformational and innovative education.

Mission: Simpson University is a Christ-centered learning community committed to developing each student in mind, faith, and character for a lifetime of meaningful work and service in a constantly changing world".

We believe that teaching is a part of one's vocation or calling and that while one can be taught to be an effective teacher, the best teachers are those who have determined that their life's mission is to impact student's lives for the good. This perspective coupled with a commitment to service is what makes our teacher preparation programs distinctive.

Philosophically this means that in all of our teacher preparation programs we are committed to engaging the world in relevant ways that impact students and their communities for the good. This also means that we prepare all students in our programs to be able to manage change in the world so as to effectively meet the demands of working in public schools and beyond. Throughout every avenue of our program we incorporate researched based practices such as Restorative Justice, Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS) and Cognitive Coaching to prepare our students to meet the needs of the diverse California demographic where all students deserve to learn, irrespective of race, ethnicity, gender, or socio-economic status.

All credential programs at Simpson University's School of Education include a purposeful, interrelated, developmentally-designed sequence of coursework and field experiences, as well as a planned process for comprehensive assessment of candidates that effectively prepare all teacher and administrative candidates to teach and to lead effectively in California public schools and beyond, taking into account the contemporary conditions of schooling, teaching, and learning with a particular focus on California public schools.

The Simpson University professional teacher preparation program is designed on the presupposition that development of a pre-service teacher and administrator is an ongoing and dynamic process where their knowledge and skills are continually being informed, formed, and reformed as they develop over time. Activities are specifically designed within all program courses and fieldwork for candidates to individually experience the process of emergent growth and development. Course instructors deliver

new information, facilitate discussions, promote reflection, and provide ample opportunities for guided practice of new concepts regarding the teaching and learning process.

As stated under General Information in the School of Education section of the Simpson University catalog, the Philosophy of the School of Education begins with a commitment “to the mission of Simpson University and believes that its education programs equip men and women to extend the church’s mission in elementary and secondary education, both in the United States and throughout the world. The School of Education provides graduate programs that build upon and go significantly beyond the educational requirements for the bachelor’s degree. These programs provide both the theoretical and practical basis for education, and they are integrated with a foundation of biblical truth in order to produce effective teachers and administrators.

Each aspect of this philosophy is interwoven into the curriculum for the Master of Arts degrees and the credential programs. Accordingly, the faculty and staff of the School of Education seek to reflect and model these foundational components of life and professional pursuit. There is a personal focus on each student.

Courses and programs for the Master of Arts degree in Education and Master of Arts degree in Teaching embrace a Christian worldview, focus on academic excellence, and develop practical applications in the field of elementary and secondary education.”

Further, the purpose of these programs in the School of Education are as follows: “The graduate degrees and credential programs offered by the Graduate Studies Department of the School of Education are designed to: (1) serve the professional needs of individuals who seek advanced academic preparation; (2) prepare students for subsequent doctoral programs; and (3) provide certification or credentials and improved professional proficiency for teaching and leading in public and Christian schools.”

## References

Knight, R.G. (2006). *Philosophy and Education: an introduction in Christian perspective, 4<sup>th</sup> edition*. England: Andrews University Press.

Noddings, N. (2002). *Educating Moral People: a caring alternative to character education*. New York: Teachers College Press.

Ravitch, D. and Viteritti, J.P. (2001). *Making Good citizens: education and civil society*. New Haven, CT: Yale Press.