



# **A Guidebook for the Secondary Education Professional Development Semester (PDS)**

Prepared by:

*Robin James, Ph.D, Coordinator of Secondary Education,  
Richard Bellesheim, Patricia Michael, Marjorie Salem*

Department of Education and Educational Psychology  
Western Connecticut State University  
**Spring 2013**

## Table of Contents

<b>Conceptual Framework for Education Programs at WCSU</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The Education and Educational Psychology Department's Mission Statement and Objectives</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Frequently Asked Questions</b>	<b>5-10</b>
<i>What Is the Professional Development Semester (PDS)?</i>	
<i>What are the Secondary Education Professional Development Semester (PDS) Schools?</i>	
<i>What are the WCSU Faculty Taught Courses PDS Students Take in Coordination with Two Week Fieldwork Experience?</i>	
<i>Is there a direct connection between PDS coursework and field experience expectations?</i>	
<i>Is there anything else that I have to do to be admitted to the Professional Development Semester?</i>	
<i>Who sets up the interview once my PDS application is approved?</i>	
<i>What will I be asked at the interview?</i>	
<i>What happens after the interview?</i>	
<i>How will I know if I have been accepted to the Professional Development Semester?</i>	
<i>What are the course grade expectations in the PDS coursework to be permitted to go forward into student teaching?</i>	
<i>How are PDS field experience placements with mentor teachers determined?</i>	
<i>What actually happens during the two week field experience?</i>	
<i>What happens if I have to be absent on a scheduled PDS day?</i>	
<i>What do WCSU students actually do during the PDS Fieldwork experience?</i>	
<i>What are the responsibilities of the PDS student in the Bethel classroom during the two week field experience?</i>	
<i>What are the responsibilities of the assigned mentor classroom teachers?</i>	
<i>What are the responsibilities of the PDS Coordinator:</i>	
<i>What are the responsibilities of the WCSU faculty?</i>	
<i>Will I need to be fingerprinted before I can participate in the PDS field experience?</i>	
<i>How will my performance be evaluated during PDS?</i>	
<b>Sample PDS Evaluation Form</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>Faculty/Staff Contact Information</b>	<b>12</b>

# Conceptual Framework for Education Programs at WCSU

## Conceptual Framework

### Shared Vision and Theme of the Education Unit

A conceptual framework captures the shared vision of the Unit, guides the activities of faculty and candidates, and becomes the vehicle through which the Unit's goals are articulated to the broader community. A conceptual framework promotes cohesion within the Unit and becomes a base from which "continuous improvement, renewal and change can occur" (Dottin, 2001, p. 3).

**E**xpertise in content knowledge  
**D**iversity  
**U**nity  
**C**lassroom and school leadership  
**A**ttitudes  
**T**echnology  
**O**rganize knowledge/ facilitate learning  
**R**eflective Practitioner

The vision of the Western Connecticut State University (Western) Education Unit is reflected in the term **EDUCATOR** (**E**xpertise in content knowledge, **D**iversity, **U**nity, **C**lassroom and school leadership, **A**ttitudes, **T**echnology, **O**rganize knowledge and facilitate learning, **R**eflective practitioner) and the theme *Preparing teachers and counselors to facilitate student growth and achievement in the 21st Century*. The components of our Conceptual Framework underscore our belief that teachers and counselors in the new millennium must understand how to use information technologies and how to work effectively with the diversity of students found in public schools in order to prepare all students for success in a technological, multicultural, global society.

Teachers and counselors must know how to work collaboratively with colleagues and communicate with a variety of constituencies in order to be classroom and school leaders capable of effecting change and ensuring quality educational programs for all students. They must be reflective practitioners who continually evaluate and modify their practice, not only to meet the learning and developmental needs of students, but also to keep pace with a rapidly changing society and world.

The term **EDUCATOR** embodies the components of our Conceptual Framework and serves to remind us that we, the faculty, are first and foremost responsible for preparing the educators of the future. (See [www.wcsu.edu](http://www.wcsu.edu))

## **Mission Statement and Objectives for the Department of Education and Educational Psychology (Revised Fall 2003)**

The mission of the Education and Educational Psychology (E&EP) Department is to prepare candidates for careers in teaching and counseling professions. We believe in initiating and maintaining professional relationships with the broader educational community and are committed to the continuous support and development of cooperative projects and services with area schools and community agencies. We embrace the broader mission of Western Connecticut State University to empower students to "...attain the highest standards of academic achievement...personal development, and ethical conduct". Candidates in our teacher and counselor preparation programs must achieve the following objectives:

1. demonstrate academic competence in their selected fields,
2. complete a general program of studies (in Education) in addition to a recommended content area major other than Education,
3. know the historical, social, economic, political, comparative and philosophical foundations of education or school counseling,
4. understand the variety of patterns of human growth and development
5. value and infuse cultural diversity,
6. demonstrate a proficiency in and working knowledge of the Connecticut Common Core of Teaching (with the embedded Connecticut Competency Instrument), Connecticut Common Core of Learning, Curriculum Frameworks K-12, the Connecticut Code of Professional Responsibility, and effective practices in the profession,
7. demonstrate a spirit of inquiry, the use of critical thinking skills, and the habits of the reflective practitioner, and, demonstrate the ability to incorporate appropriately the use of technology in instructional practices.

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

**What Is the Professional Development Semester (PDS)?** For the first 12 weeks of the semester, all PDS students must demonstrate acceptable academic performance in a variety of methodology, pedagogy and differentiated instruction coursework to prepare for the classroom application field experience at the Bethel Middle School and Bethel High School. The objectives of the PDS period include:

1. Participate in a 10-day experience designed to acquaint each candidate with a classroom environment so that he or she can observe and take an active role in daily secondary school life prior to student teaching.
2. Course material learned at the university level will be implemented in the areas of classroom management skills, student needs assessment, teaching skills, school culture, and through the collegiality of working with exceptional teachers.

Integrated into the program during the Professional Semester is Fieldwork in PDS Schools (ED 386) a 10-day clinical experience designed to acquaint students with a classroom environment so that they can observe and participate in daily secondary school life prior to student teaching. This is a time to learn first-hand about classroom management, assess student needs, improve one's repertoire of teaching skills, learn about school culture, and experience the collegiality of working with exceptional teachers.

Candidates for teacher certification who are enrolled in the health, music and secondary education professional programs at Western are placed in public school classrooms for two weeks in conjunction with their educational methods courses in the areas of instruction, assessments, integrating language, and content practices. Student candidates work with students under the direction of public school classroom teachers and are also supervised by university faculty. During the fall semester, **health and music** education candidates spend one week in an elementary/middle school placement and one week in a secondary school placement. (Danbury or area schools) **Secondary** education candidates spend one week in a middle school placement and one week in a high school placement. (Bethel Schools)

### What are the Secondary Education Professional Development Semester (PDS) Schools?

<b>Content subjects candidates:</b>	<b>Health subject candidates:</b>
Bethel High School - Grades 9-12 300 Whittlesey Drive Bethel, CT 06801 (203-794-8600)	Danbury High School - Grades 9-12 Clapboard Ridge Road Danbury, CT 06810 (203-797-4833)
Bethel Middle School - Grades 6-8 600 Whittlesey Drive Bethel, CT 06801 (203-794-8670)	East Ridge Middle School - Grades 6-8 324 Farmington Road Ridgefield, CT 06877 (203-438-3744) Whisconier Middle School - Grades 5-8 17 West Whisconier Road Brookfield, CT 06804 (203-775-7710)

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

### **What are the WCSU Faculty Taught Courses PDS Students Take in Coordination with Two Week Fieldwork Experience?**

*In total you will be expected to complete 13 hours of coursework:*

ED 386 Fieldwork in PDS Schools (1 credit)  
ED 385 Methods of Teaching in the Secondary Schools (3 credits)  
EPY 405 Introduction To Special Education (3 credits)  
ED 440 Integrating Language (3 credits)

*In addition, content majors participate in ONE methodology course for 3 credits relevant to their major:*

ED 441 Teaching History and Social Studies in Secondary Schools  
ED 442 Teaching Science in Secondary Schools  
ED 447 Teaching English in Secondary Schools  
ED 448 Teaching Spanish in Secondary Schools  
ED 449 Teaching Mathematics in Secondary Schools

### **Is there a direct connection between PDS coursework and field experience expectations?**

Assignments in each class are aligned to support the clinical component at the end of the semester.

Some sample tasks include the following:

- Prepare lesson plans that meet selected objectives and demonstrate effective teaching strategies.
- Use technology to create a collaboratively developed presentation to demonstrate knowledge of pedagogy.
- Create and implement a SMARTBoard lesson.
- Develop classroom management strategies that are conducive to an interactive classroom that incorporates Common Core State Standards.
- Maintain a reflective journal of the PDS experience.
- Interview teachers and/or support personnel (i.e., psychologists, social workers, occupational and physical therapists), regarding their roles and functions.
- Assist the mentor teacher in providing appropriate modifications, accommodations, and specialized instruction including students with English Language Learners and with disabilities.

### **Is there anything else that I have to do to be admitted to the Professional Development Semester?**

Yes, you must submit a completed PDS application (available in the Education office in WS 249) which is reviewed by the content area Coordinator or Department Chair and then is forwarded for another review by the interviewing faculty members.

### **Who sets up the interview once my PDS application is approved?**

After you send your PDS application to the content area department coordinator or Chair, it will be carefully reviewed and a decision as to whether you will be granted an interview will be made. If your application is complete and accepted, then the department coordinator or Chairperson will set up the interview. Sometimes it is the content area department secretary who arranges the interview logistics, depending on the department.

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

### **What will I be asked at the interview?**

You will be asked questions about your education courses, your essay, your experience working with children, and your attitudes about teaching, and current educational issues which cover the following categories: Diversity, Unity, Leadership, Content Knowledge, Reflective Practitioner. Sample questions could include:

- How would you maintain or build community with colleagues, students and students' parents?
- Provide one example of your use of critical thinking.
- How did your academic experience in the core curriculum and your major develop the content you will need as a teacher?

### **What happens after the interview?**

Once final grades have been posted, your professional semester file will be reviewed again to determine if requirements have been met. If you are a transfer student, all grades from previous institutions will be aggregated in with your WCSU grades to calculate one grade point average.

### **How will I know if I have been accepted to the Professional Development Semester?**

You will receive an acceptance letter in the mail from the Education & Educational Psychology Department chair. If you do not receive any communication on the status of your final acceptance by June 15th, you should call the Education department secretary at (203) 837-8510. Your acceptance may be pending grades from your Spring semester or PRAXIS test retake scores.

### **How do I register for PDS courses?**

The Education & Educational Psychology Department has its own registration procedure for the professional semester. You will be mailed a permission to register form. You will take that letter to the Registrar's Office to register for all Fall courses. Make certain that your summer mailing address is on file with the Education office. If you are not sure, call the Education department secretary at (203) 837-8510 to confirm.

### **What are the course grade expectations in the PDS coursework to be permitted to go forward into student teaching?**

All secondary education students in the Professional Semester participate in courses listed on page 6 (a minimum grade of B is required in these PDS courses; if students receive a grade below B in any of the PDS courses, they will NOT be permitted to continue on to their Student Teaching experience the following semester):

### **How are PDS field experience placements with mentor teachers determined?**

The coordinator of professional development school experience, Richard Bellesheim, works with the Bethel Public School PDS liaison to pair student candidates with public school teachers during the ten days of this field experience. *(Note: due to availability of teachers, health and music candidates may be at Danbury HS or area schools)*

**Meeting Teachers:** (Bethel Schools) **Friday, (tbd)** student candidates will meet their assigned teachers for both the middle school and high school experience for a brief introduction period and time to ask questions. *(7:30 – 9:00 a.m.) in Bethel, school to be determined)*

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

### **What actually happens during the two week field experience?**

During the final weeks of the Fall semester, the health and secondary candidates' PDS experience will be ten school days, ***dates to be determined***. Music Education Majors will have a different schedule. (Please consult with Dr. Ball, Coordinator of Music Education).

**Seminars are conducted after school on- site for three days each week. (Mon.Tues.Thurs.) which all student candidates are required to attend.**

On the first Monday of the two week field experience, candidates for certification should arrive at the assigned school and report to the **Main Office** according to the following schedule. Then, on the following **Monday, tbd**, candidates should arrive at the second school to which they have been assigned and report to the main office, according to the same schedule.

**Bethel High School:        Candidates arrive at 7:15 AM**

**Bethel Middle School:    Candidates arrive at 8:00 AM**

This will give the school staff time to sign you in, issue your security pass and show you to your assigned room.

NOTE: Music students will follow a different schedule in Bethel and Danbury.)

### **What happens if I have to be absent on a scheduled PDS day?**

Call the PDS site and leave a message for both the principal and the mentor teacher explaining why you are absent.

You should also leave a message with the PDS liaison at WCSU. The make-up day for missing a class should be the following Monday after the absence. **Please contact Mr. Bellesheim, the principal and mentor teacher at your PDS site in order to make certain that this is an acceptable make-up day.** This arrangement is not automatic.

Naturally, if you are not able to make-up your absence on the following Monday, please schedule the make-up day as soon as possible and alert your liaison to the day. Also be aware of the radio station to access in the event of a weather-related school cancellation. The make-up day for this type of closing will be the following Monday.

### **What do WCSU students actually do during the PDS Fieldwork experience?**

It is expected that PDS students will participate at the assigned PDS site for the entire school day and typically for a planning period prior to the beginning of school. Candidates should be involved at all levels of school activities, including those inside and out of the classroom (for example, cafeteria and hall duty). Each student needs to plan possible activities during this experience. Naturally, candidates will want to speak with mentor teachers to find out when and how to best fit their ideas into their teachers' class schedules. There will be many opportunities to learn.

The integration of any activities into the Professional Semester experience will need to be agreed upon between candidates and their mentor teachers. As early in the semester as possible, candidates should discuss these ideas with course professors and mentor teacher. Also be mindful of what you could do to display the behaviors indicated on the evaluation form.



## **FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS**

### **What are the responsibilities of the PDS student in the Bethel classroom during the two week field experience?**

Each student candidate must adhere to the responsibilities as outlined by his/her assigned classroom teacher, the school district and university supervisor. The following list is designed to guide the collaboration between the student candidate and assigned classroom teacher. Items may vary as the needs of the candidate dictate and based on the expectations of the assigned teacher.

- Plan and implement one lesson
- Work with individual students
  - To accommodate for learning differences
  - As an after school tutor or study helper
- Spend one week in a high school setting and one week in a middle school setting for secondary.
  - (Elementary and secondary settings for health and music students.)
- Participate in extra school duties and activities.
- Attend staff meetings.
- Attend staff development days.
- Dress in a professional manner
- Conduct yourself according to the Code of Professional Responsibility for Teachers (Sec. 10-145d-440a) of the CT State Regulations.

### **What are the responsibilities of the assigned mentor classroom teachers?**

- Serve as a role model for the student candidate by continually promoting professionalism (i.e., discussing career responsibilities and professional development opportunities).
- Encourage and guide professional growth for the student candidate.
- Acclimate the student candidate to the school setting, policies and procedures and invite the candidate to attend meetings when appropriate.
- Inform and guide the student candidate with school policies and rules concerning classroom management and discipline.
- Encourage and allow the student candidate to be involved in the classroom setting.

### **What are the responsibilities of the PDS Coordinator:**

The PDS Coordinator serves as the Western liaison to the public schools participating in the PDS, and works with school personnel to ensure the success of the PDS. The coordinator is responsible for providing information to the PDS schools and answering questions from school personnel. He or she, in consultation with school personnel, places student candidates in classrooms and orients candidates, university faculty and public school assigned teachers to the PDS Experience.

### **What are the responsibilities of the WCSU faculty?**

University faculty prepares the candidates for the PDS during the professional semester methods courses. They visit the public school classrooms in which their student candidates have been placed at least twice during the PDS Experience (one visit to middle school, one visit to high school). At the close of the two week experience, they guide the candidates to reflect on what they have learned, identifying topics in need of further study or elaboration.

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

### **Will I need to be fingerprinted before I can participate in the PDS field experience?**

Yes, you will need to go to Education Connection and complete the official CT State Department of Education approved fingerprinting process. You must have your fingerprints on record in the Education Department (you may have already had this completed when you observed classrooms in your ED 206 or EPY 204 courses). *Education Connection* is the Regional Education Service Center which supports school districts in Western Connecticut. Fingerprints are done at the Danbury Office location and the Litchfield office location. Right now they fingerprint one day a week; every other week in Litchfield and visa versus in Danbury. Appointments are made by the *Education Connection* receptionists:

Fingerprinting appointments for the Education Connection office are made by the *Education Connection* receptionists:

Barbara Westner at the Litchfield office  
355 Goshen Road  
Litchfield, CT 06759  
(860)567-0863

Connie Phillippi at the Danbury office  
345 Main Street  
Danbury, CT 06810  
(203)791-1904

On the day of your scheduled appointment, all applicants are asked to arrive five minutes early and check in with the receptionist. Late arrivals are subject to rescheduling. The fee for fingerprinting is \$43.25 payable to *Education Connection* via bank check or money order only. No personal checks are accepted. All candidates will need to have a photo ID( like driver's license,) know their Social Security number, and the city and state they were born. After being fingerprinted candidates will leave with a confirmation letter signed and dated by the fingerprint technician confirming they were fingerprinted. Candidates should also bring to their appointment a contact name and fax number of the school and district in which you are planning to serve your clinical experience, so *Education Connection* will know whom to send the fingerprint results to The *Education Connection* Fingerprinting Services will process and forward your fingerprints and check/money order to the proper state and federal authorities for a criminal history check, and notify the district in which you were hired that you have been fingerprinted. Once received, *Education Connection* will inform the district of the results of your criminal history check.

### **How will my performance be evaluated during PDS?**

Candidates will be evaluated by the classroom teachers using the evaluation form that follows. The form must be signed by both the classroom teacher(s) and candidate, acknowledging that the items on the form have been reviewed and discussed between the teacher and student candidate. *A final grade for the experience will be determined by the PDS Coordinator. The signed form should be **returned immediately** upon completion of the Professional Development Experience to the respective school principal.* (Note: a passing grade is required before a student teacher assignment can be finalized). Your mentor teacher must complete the evaluation form by the end of your PDS experience.

**WCSU Secondary, Health and Music Education PDS Experience**  
**SAMPLE Candidate Evaluation Form** (condensed version for this document only)

WCSU Teacher Candidate: \_\_\_\_\_ School \_\_\_\_\_

Teacher \_\_\_\_\_ Grade Level \_\_\_\_\_

Please use the following scale to evaluate the pre-service student teacher candidate in items 1-11 below as based on the five days they spent in your classroom.

**Rating Scale**

- 3 Target** An extensive knowledge and understanding of the area is provided. **(Skill is at a level that would serve as an example for other pre-service candidates)**
- 2 Acceptable** A solid knowledge and understanding of the area is given. **(Skill level is sound and appropriate)**
- 1 Unacceptable** Candidate lacks knowledge base. **(Skill level is deficient or not effective)**
- 0 No Evidence (N/E)** No evidence candidate had an opportunity to demonstrate this skill. **(Non-observable)**

**I. Teacher candidate's demonstrated applied knowledge (planning, instructing and assessing)**

- \_\_\_ **1.** Demonstrated knowledge and understanding appropriate to the subject area.
- \_\_\_ **2.** Demonstrated knowledge of content standards as they relate to class lessons.
- \_\_\_ **3.** Demonstrated understanding of individual differences.
- \_\_\_ **4.** Communicated clearly, using acceptable written and oral expressions with students.
- \_\_\_ **5.** Fostered a learning community by establishing a positive rapport, engaging students and encouraging students to respect differences.
- \_\_\_ **6.** Communicated and reinforced developmentally appropriate standards of behavior.  
(i.e., knowledge of management techniques).
- \_\_\_ **7.** Adapted to classroom organization and routines.
- \_\_\_ **8.** Demonstrated knowledge and application of instructional technology skills.

**II. Teacher candidate's demonstrated professional responsibilities:**

- \_\_\_ **9.** Appropriate interaction observed with individuals and groups of students.
- \_\_\_ **10.** Demonstrated appropriate professional behavior with regards to PDS responsibilities.  
(i.e. followed school policies and procedures; reported on time, dressed appropriately and demonstrated appropriate ethical behavior)

**III. Teacher candidate's demonstrated field experience performance: (entry level to student teaching)**

- \_\_\_ **11. Predictability of success as a classroom student teacher.**

*Areas needing attention prior to student teaching.*

**IV. Teacher candidate's participation in other activities:**

Worked with special needs students? Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_ N/E \_\_\_

Completed and /or shared any extra-duty assignments? Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_ N/E \_\_\_

Attended staff meeting(s), activities and seminars? Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_ N/E \_\_\_

## **Administrative & Faculty Contact Information**

### **Education Department Administrative Contacts**

**Dr. Robin James**, Coordinator, Undergraduate Secondary Education Program

TEL#: 203-837-8676 (office); 914-539-5602 (cell)

Offices: West Side-WS 129C and Midtown- Higgins Annex 111

E-mail: [jamesr@wcsu.edu](mailto:jamesr@wcsu.edu)

**Mr. Richard Bellesheim**, Coordinator of Professional Development Experience (ED386)

TEL#: 203- 746-5862 Office: WS 239

E-mail: [bellesheimr@wcsu.edu](mailto:bellesheimr@wcsu.edu)

**Ana Cangialosi**, Secretary, Department of Education and Educational Psychology

Main Office: (203) 837-8510 Office: WS 249

E-mail: [cangialosia@wcsu.edu](mailto:cangialosia@wcsu.edu)

**Dr. Adeline Merrill**, Chairperson, Department of Education and Educational Psychology

TEL #: (203) 837-3267 Office Location: WS 249

E-mail: [merrilla@wcsu.edu](mailto:merrilla@wcsu.edu)

### **Content Area Administrative and Faculty Contacts**

**Dr. Wesley Ball**, Coordinator of Music Education Programs

E-mail address: [ballw@wcsu.edu](mailto:ballw@wcsu.edu)

**Dr. Luis Bonilla**, Secondary Education Spanish Liaison (ED448)

E-mail: [bonillal@wcsu.edu](mailto:bonillal@wcsu.edu)

**Dr. David Burns**, Math Department Chair

E-mail: [burnsd@wcsu.edu](mailto:burnsd@wcsu.edu)

**Dr. Michael Chappell**, English Department Chair

E-mail: [chappellm@wcsu.edu](mailto:chappellm@wcsu.edu)

**Dr. Jennifer Duffy**, Secondary Education History/Social Studies Liaison (ED441)

E-mail: [duffy@wcsu.edu](mailto:duffy@wcsu.edu)

**Dr. Pauline Goolkasian**, Secondary Education Special Education Liaison (ED405)

E-mail: [Goolkasianp@wcsu.edu](mailto:Goolkasianp@wcsu.edu)

**Dr. Becky Hall**, Secondary Education Mathematics Liaison (ED449)

E-mail: [hallb@wcsu.edu](mailto:hallb@wcsu.edu)

**Dr. Patricia Michael**, Secondary Education Liaison (ED385)

E-mail [pmichael@ridgefield.org](mailto:pmichael@ridgefield.org)

**Dr. Theodora Pinou**, Secondary Education Science Liaison (ED442)

E-mail: [pinout@wcsu.edu](mailto:pinout@wcsu.edu)

**Ms. Danielle Troetti**, Secondary Education English Liaison (ED447)

E-mail: [troettid@bethel.k12.us.ct](mailto:troettid@bethel.k12.us.ct) or [troettid@wcsu.edu](mailto:troettid@wcsu.edu)

**Ms. Marjorie Salem**, Secondary Education Liaison (ED 385)

E-mail: [salemm@wcsu.edu](mailto:salemm@wcsu.edu)

**Dr. Darla Shaw**, (ED 440)

E-mail: [dshaw@wcsu.edu](mailto:dshaw@wcsu.edu)

