

## The Evolution of the Conceptual Framework

The Conceptual Framework of the College of Education and Affiliated Programs have their origin in the strategic planning process initiated by former CED Dean John Sikula. In 1994-95, Dean Sikula appointed the College's first Strategic Planning Committee. Among its other charges, the committee conducted an accounting of the College's strengths, areas of need, and core values. From this accounting emerged 7 Strategic Priorities, which then became the basis for the College's first formal mission statement. The Strategic Priorities and the Mission Statement were finalized in the 1996-97 academic year.

The Strategic Priorities and Mission Statement served their purposes well and provided a framework for program development, College operations, and program evaluation (the first "Indicators' Survey" in 1997) during the final critical years of the 1990s, when class size reduction and a resurgent interest in public education put our professional preparation programs in the local and state spotlight. In 1999, in anticipation of seeking NCATE accreditation, the College SPC set out to update the conceptual underpinnings of our programs unit-wide. We initiated a process that culminated in coordinated and integrated conceptual frameworks and knowledge bases at the Unit (College of Education and affiliated programs) and program levels.

Highlights of the process include:

- November, 1999: Strategic Planning requests all faculty and staff to review current strategic priorities and mission statement and solicits input regarding suggested Unit-wide themes, key ideas, and beliefs for conceptual framework and knowledge base.
- January, 2000: At Unit-wide retreat the idea of the conceptual framework is discussed in detail; sample conceptual frameworks are presented; faculty and staff work in small groups to generate ideas for Unit-wide theme, key ideas and beliefs. Results of input provided in November reported and discussed. Basic structure of CF tentatively decided.
- February-March, 2000: Following content-analysis of ideas generated at January retreat, SPC identifies recurring key ideas and fashions plausible themes. At Unit-wide meetings, themes are discussed, edited, discarded; new possible themes are fashioned. Discussion of key ideas continues. Listserv (cedreview@listserver.educ.csulb.edu) established to facilitate discussion of theme and key ideas. Successive drafts of Unit knowledge base produced and distributed, discussed.
- March-April, 2000: Members of SPC present possible Unit themes and drafts of evolving knowledge base to their classes; elicit student feedback and suggestions. Discussion of themes and key ideas at Department meetings. Redrafting and discussion of CED Mission statement begins, based on content analysis of suggested key ideas and suggestions made by individual faculty members.
- April, 2000: Chair of SPC presents draft of possible themes and Unit knowledge base to human resource directors for 10 school districts where our student teachers are placed and many of our graduates employed. Human resource directors provide

feedback, give preferences for possible themes; discuss role they see for CED in preparation of education professionals.

- May, 2000: Unit-wide discussion and poll to select final theme. SPC selects “Teaching for Life-Long Learning, Professional Growth, and Social Responsibility” to be Unit theme.
- May-June, 2000: Continued discussion of Unit mission; SPC decides the mission will provide the outline for Unit key ideas. Revised Unit Mission finalized. Framework for program conceptual frameworks finalized, presented to program coordinators in June. Unit CF will comprise Unit-wide theme, mission, and knowledge base. Each program CF will comprise program philosophy, values, beliefs; program goals; program knowledge base; student outcomes; delivery system; program evaluation and student assessment.
- Summer, 2000: Ongoing feedback, suggestions from faculty regarding knowledge base; successive drafts of knowledge base produced. Student in one of our programs designs theme logo (nautilus shell), which is an instant success and adopted as the Unit logo. Program coordinators begin drafting program conceptual frameworks, in consultation with program faculty.
- August, 2000: At fall retreat, logo, theme, and mission officially presented; discussion turns to how we can help our students understand them and see their connection to courses and programs. Program faculty work on program conceptual frameworks.
- August-October, 2000: Continued discussion, refinement of unit knowledge base and production, discussion of program CFs continue.
- October-November, 2000: Unit Conceptual Frameworks completed and finalized-- Unit theme, mission, and knowledge base and individual program conceptual frameworks according to common outline.