

# ADULT AND COMMUNITY EDUCATION

## CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

The College of Education's Conceptual Framework reads:

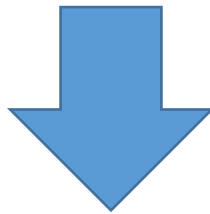
Informed reflective decision-makers have mastered the subject matter needed for the profession and understand the need for lifelong learning to remain a viable professional.

Ethical reflective decision-makers understand why they are given discretion in their roles and use that ability only for the student's or client's benefit. Capable reflective decision-makers have the means to teach students or service clients effectively and understand the responsibilities involved in the role. Graduates of programs in the College of Education at Florida Atlantic University are informed, ethical, and capable reflective decision-makers.

For graduates of programs in the Department of Educational Leadership in the College of Education at Florida Atlantic University to be informed, ethical, and capable reflective decision-makers, the Department of Educational Leadership believes that:

- Foundational knowledge of leadership will develop Informed Practitioners
- Professional knowledge of leadership will develop Ethical Decision-Makers
- Experiential knowledge in leadership will lead to Reflective, Capable Professionals

*Foundational Knowledge in Educational Leadership*  
*Professional Knowledge in Educational Leadership*  
*Experiential Knowledge in Educational Leadership*



*Informed, Capable, Ethical Reflective Decision-Makers*  
*Who Are Committed to Lifelong Learning to Maintain Their Effectiveness*

**Informed reflective decision-makers** have mastered the subject matter needed for the profession and understand the need for lifelong learning to remain a viable professional. For the Department of Educational Leadership, informed reflective decision-makers require foundational knowledge, which is provided through the core courses offered by The department.

*The Foundational Knowledge Base* includes the basic tenets and principles upon which a field of study is based. In the Department of Educational Leadership, leadership forms the foundation for all programs. The Department focuses its foundational knowledge base on the following leadership knowledge domains.

**Leadership** - Leadership is a relationship between leaders and followers who work together toward common goals to effect change in an ethical way. Leaders continually organize to ensure that goals are accomplished. They (a) set and seek to achieve goals, (b) find resources, (c) adapt to their environment, (d) maintain cohesiveness within the system, and (e) preserve a unique system of values and work flow. Leaders must develop their own minds in systems terms and see their organizations holistically, so they may transfer knowledge from one setting to another. They must develop skills and a capacity to envision the future and be able to find opportunities within and without their organizations.

**Ethical reflective decision-makers** understand why they are given discretion in their roles and use that ability only for the student's or client's benefit. For the Department of Educational Leadership, ethical reflective decision-makers require **professional knowledge**, which is provided through the professional knowledge courses specific to each program area.

*The Professional Knowledge Base* is the technical knowledge, specialized skills, and ethical standards used to function in the professional workplace. The knowledge base for the Adult/Community Education Program is organized around four domains: Professional Attitudes; Historical, Social, and Philosophical Context; Adult Learning and Development; and, Organization and Administration of Adult Programs.

**Professional Attitudes** - The academic preparation of individuals for careers in adult education is based on three professional attitudes that will be reflected in practice: (a) commitment to lifelong, reflective, self-directed learning as a vehicle for continuous personal and professional enhancement; (b) respect for all learners, regardless of gender, ethnicity, race, or differing ability; and, (c) commitment to high ethical and moral standards of professional practice.

**Historical, Social, and Philosophical Context** - An understanding of adult education as a field of study, a discipline, and a social movement is based in its historical, philosophical, and social foundations. Learners develop an understanding of the history of adult, community, and continuing education. They examine the social context of adult education: the past, present, and predicted future factors impacting practice. Finally, an

examination of philosophical approaches to adult education and their roots in learning theory prepares learners to develop a philosophical base for their own research and practice.

**Adult Learning and Development** - Learners will become grounded in the psychological, social, cultural, and physiological aspects of adult learning and development. They will explore (a) characteristics of adult learners (including age-related changes), (b) theories of adult development, (c) participation studies and theories, (d) learning styles research, and (e) pivotal concepts such as self-direction and critical reflection. Learners will examine theory-building and social, political, and ethical issues in adult education, arriving at implications for research and practice.

**Organization and Administration of Adult Programs** - Adults and community educators must be prepared to organize and administer the diversity of programs within our society, which serve adult learners. By reflecting on approaches to administrative theory, practice and the contexts in which they have been found to be effective, learners develop a foundation for their own administrative practice. They examine a variety of critical skills and processes concurrently with site visits to operating programs in order to gain both a theoretical and a practical perspective. Topics include selection and development of faculty and staff, processes in the determination of program content and the evaluation of programs, legal and ethical considerations, budgeting and finance, and marketing and public relations.

**Capable reflective decision-makers** have the means to teach students or service clients effectively and understand the responsibilities involved in the role. For the Department of Educational Leadership, capable reflective decision-makers require experiential knowledge, which is provided through the experiential courses specific to each program area.

***Experiential Learning*** implies the concept that elements of a professional's education will be gained from a practical approach in a real-world situation. It is based on the belief that insights gained through a job, internship, volunteer work, or course fieldwork will enhance academic studies and the professional's critical reflection skills in thinking and acting upon his/her talents, aspirations, and the needs of the work setting. Experiential learning also helps the professional in setting academic, career and personal goals.