

About Montclair State University

Since its founding in 1908, Montclair State University has had a rich history of innovation, distinction, and growth. Montclair State, a vital educational force, is ranked as one of the top universities in the region. Graduates from Montclair State University are well equipped with the skills needed to respond to today's dynamic environment, as well as future challenges and opportunities.

About the College of Education and Human Services

With a 100-year tradition of excellence and educational leadership, the College of Education and Human Services offers several advantages for those pursuing a graduate education:

- Outstanding and innovative graduate programs in the education and human services fields with nationally-recognized faculty and accreditation;
- Program faculty and staff dedicated to meeting the unique needs of our graduate population;
- Flexible study for both full-time students and working professionals, including weekend, accelerated, and Web-enhanced course options;
- Facilities that are on the cutting edge of learning and technology, including University Hall, the College's home, and the largest and most sophisticated building in the University's history.

About the Center of Pedagogy

The Center of Pedagogy is charged with initiating and coordinating all aspects of teacher education. The Center's work is informed by the belief that public education is critical to creating and sustaining a political and social democracy.

Agenda for Education in a Democracy

Center of Pedagogy



Fostering social justice,
inquiry, and democratic
practice in education

The Agenda for Education in a Democracy (AED) is the four-part mission that guides the University's work in teacher education.

The first two parts of the mission statement embody the goals of public education:

1. To facilitate the critical enculturation of the young into a social and political democracy.
2. To provide to all children and adolescents access to knowledge, which entails disciplined encounters with all the subject matters of the human conversation.

The third and fourth parts stipulate essential teaching practices for attaining these two goals:

3. To engage in pedagogical practices that forge a caring and effective connection between teacher and student.
4. To exercise responsible stewardship of our schools.

The Office of the Agenda for Education in a Democracy is responsible for maintaining the focus and vitality of this shared vision that bonds faculty members in education, the arts and sciences, and the public schools as they undertake their common work of ethical, effective, and research-based teacher education. It does so through a variety of programs, described below.

The Office sponsors an **Annual Advance**—a professional development workshop for arts and sciences and education faculty and staff, and school partners, focusing on a pressing issue in the educational community.

Topics for the Annual Advance have included:

- Urban Education: Identifying Issues, Imagining Possibilities
- Stories of Power, Language, and Culture: Impact on Universities, Schools, and Communities
- Democracy, Diversity, and Development: Enhancing Our Pedagogy Through Critical Construction
- Difficult Discussions: Talking Openly with Our Students and Colleagues About Race and Privilege
- Turning on Learning in the 21st Century
- Beyond Multiculturalism: Confronting Prejudice, Privilege, and Power in Ourselves and Our Students

The Office of the Agenda coordinates Montclair State University's **Leadership Associates Program**. Every year, approximately 25 education professionals representing faculty and administrators from the public schools, arts and sciences, and education are selected to participate. Members of each cohort attend, participate in, and co-construct an intensive summer seminar that focuses on our four-part mission, social justice, diversity, and democratic practice.

The embodiment of the vision and mission of the Agenda is the **Portrait of a Teacher**, a statement of teacher's knowledge, skills, and dispositions that guide admissions, curriculum, and the assessment of the program. The Portrait evolved through the collaborative efforts of the faculty from education, the arts and sciences, and the public schools and is constantly open for review and revision. In its most recent iteration, the Portrait is as follows:

The Montclair State University community is committed to the continuing development of teachers who exemplify the dispositions, knowledge, and skills reflected in this portrait. They:

1. Have expert knowledge of the disciplines they will teach and can use various strategies, including media and technology, for creating learning experiences that make the subject matter accessible and meaningful to all students.
2. Understand how children and adolescents learn and develop in a variety of school, family, and community contexts, and can provide learning opportunities that support their students' intellectual, social, and personal development.
3. Understand the practice of culturally responsive teaching. They understand that children bring varied talents, strengths, and perspectives to learning; have skills for learning about the diverse students they teach; and use knowledge of students and their lives to design and carry out instruction that builds on students' individual and cultural strengths.
4. Plan instruction based upon knowledge of subject matter, students, families, communities, and curriculum goals and standards; and taking into account issues of class, gender, race, ethnicity, language, sexual orientation, age, and special needs in designing instruction.

5. Understand critical thinking and problem solving, and create learning experiences that promote the development of students' critical thinking, and problem solving skills and dispositions.
6. Understand principles of democracy and plan and carry out instruction that promotes democratic values and communication in the classroom.
7. Understand and use multiple forms of assessment to promote the intellectual, social, and physical development of learners, and to inform instruction.
8. Create a community in the classroom that is nurturing, caring, safe, and conducive to learning.
9. Are reflective practitioners who continually inquire into the nature of teaching and learning, reflect on their own learning and professional practice, evaluate the effects of their choices and actions on others, and seek out opportunities to grow professionally.
10. Build relationships with school colleagues, families, and agencies in the community to support students' learning and well-being, and work to foster an appreciation of diversity among students and colleagues.
11. Possess the literacy skills associated with an educated person; can speak and write English fluently, and communicate clearly.
12. Develop dispositions expected of professional educators. These include belief in the potential of schools to promote social justice, passion for teaching, and commitment to ensuring equal learning opportunities for every student, critical reflection, inquiry, critical thinking, life-long learning, the ethical and enculturating responsibilities of educators, and serving as agents of change and stewards of best practice.

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