

A Framework for Professional Practice

Any framework developed for professional practice must provide guidelines on what a teacher does when teaching. Thus, to better understand the responsibilities of teachers, this course will incorporate the following framework for professional practice. Charlotte Danielson developed this framework.

Danielson's Framework for Teaching

Danielson's framework for teaching identifies aspects of a teacher's responsibilities that empirical studies have demonstrated as promoting improved student learning.¹ Because teaching is an extremely complex activity, this framework is useful in laying out the various areas of competence in which professional teachers need to develop expertise. Danielson divides the complex activity of teaching into twenty-two components clustered into four domains of teaching responsibility: (1) *planning and preparation*, (2) *the classroom environment*, (3) *instruction*, and (4) *professional responsibilities*. These domains and their components are outlined in a following table. A brief review of each of these domains will provide a road map of the skills and competencies new teachers need to develop.

Domain 1: Planning and Preparation. The components in Domain 1 outline how a teacher organizes the content of what students are expected to learn---in other words, how the teacher designs instruction. These include *demonstrate knowledge of content and pedagogy, demonstrating knowledge of the students, selecting instructional goals, demonstrating knowledge of resources, designing coherent instruction, and assessing student learning*

Domain 2: The classroom Environment. The components in Domain 2 consist of the interactions that occur in a classroom that are non instructional. These consist of *creating an environment of respect and rapport among the students and with the teacher, establishing a culture for learning, managing classroom procedures, managing student behavior, and organizing the physical space.*

¹ From Charlotte Danielson, "Enhancing Professional Practice: A Framework for Teaching," Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, 1996, pp.3-4. Reprinted by permission of the author.

Domain 3: Instruction. The components in Domain 3 are what constitute the core of teaching - the engagement of students in learning context. These include *communicating clearly and accurately, using questioning and discussion techniques, engaging students in learning, providing feedback to students, and demonstrating flexibility and responsiveness.*

Domain 4: Professional Responsibilities. The components in Domain 4 represent the wide range of a teacher's responsibilities outside the classroom. These include *reflecting on teaching, maintaining accurate records, communicating with families, contributing to the school and district, growing and developing professionally, and showing professionalism.* Teachers who demonstrate these competencies are highly valued by their colleagues and administrators, as well as being seen as true professionals.

The benefits of having a framework for professional practice, as Danielson notes, are several. First, a framework offers the profession of teaching a shared vocabulary as a way to communicate about excellence. For novice teachers, a framework provides a pathway to excellence by laying out the twenty-two important components that constitute professional practice. A framework for teaching provides a structure for discussions among teachers and also serves to sharpen the focus for professional development. A framework also serves to communicate to the larger community the array of competencies needed to be an effective teacher.

Figure 1.1. A framework for teaching

Components of Professional Practice

Domain 1: Planning and Preparation

Component 1a: Demonstrating Knowledge of Content and Pedagogy

- Knowledge of content
- Knowledge of prerequisite relationships
- Knowledge of content-related pedagogy

Component 1b: Demonstrating Knowledge of Students

- Knowledge of characteristics of age group
- Knowledge of students' varied approaches of learning
- Knowledge of students' skills and knowledge
- Knowledge of students' interests and cultural heritage

Component 1c: Selecting Instructional Goals

- Values
- Clarity
- Suitability for diverse students
- Balance

Component 1d: Demonstrating Knowledge of Resources

- Resources for teaching
- Resources for students

Component 1e: Designing Coherent Instruction

- Learning activities
- Instructional materials and resources
- Instructional groups
- Lesson and unit structure

Component 1f: Assessing Student Learning

- Congruence with instructional goals
- Criteria and standards
- Use for planning

Components of Professional Practice (continued)

Domain 2: The Classroom Environment

Component 2a: Creating and Environment of Respect and Rapport

Teacher interaction with students

Student interaction

Component 2b: Establishing a Culture for Learning

Importance of the content

Student pride in work

Expectations for learning and achievement

Component 2c: Managing Classroom Procedures

Management of instructional groups

Management of transitions

Management of materials and supplies

Performance of non instructional duties

Supervision of volunteers and paraprofessionals

Component 2d: Managing Student Behavior

Expectations

Monitoring of student behavior

Response of student misbehavior

Component 2e: Organizing Physical Space

Safety and arrangement of furniture

Accessibility to learning and use of physical resources

Domain 3: Instruction

Component 3a: Communicating Clearly and Accurately

Directions and procedures

Oral and written language

Component 3b: Using Questioning and Discussion Techniques

Quality of questions

Discussion techniques

Student participation

Component 3c: Engaging Students in Learning

Representation of content

Activities and assignments

Grouping of students

Instructional materials and resources

Structure and pacing

Component 3d: Providing Feedback to Students

Quality: accurate, substantive, constructive, and specific

Timeliness

Component 3e: Demonstrating Flexibility and Responsiveness

Lesson adjustment

Response to students

Persistence

Domain 4: Professional Responsibilities

Component 4a: Reflecting on Teaching

Accuracy

Use in future teaching

Component 4b: Maintaining Accurate Records

Student completion of assignments

Student progress in learning

Non instructional records

Component 4c: Communicating with families

Information about the instructional program

Information about individual students

Engagement of families in the instructional program

Component 4d: Contributing to the School and District

Relationships with colleagues

Service to the school

Participation in school and district projects

Component 4e: Growing and Developing Professionally

Enhancement of content knowledge and pedagogical skill

Service to the profession

Component 4f: Showing Professionalism

Service to students

Advocacy

Decision making