

Florida State University
School of Teacher Education
Doctorate of Philosophy (Ph.D.) in Curriculum & Instruction
Major in Mathematics Education

Writing Prompts for Applicants

The submitted writing sample must have been written within the two years prior to application for admission to the PhD. In lieu of a sample from a graduate education course, **one** of the following prompts may be addressed in a paper (which should be 12 to 15 pages in length, 12-point font, double-spaced with one-inch margins).

Prompt #1. Choose a scenario in which you worked with a student in a classroom setting, tutoring situation, or interview. Contextualize the interaction by describing relevant information about the student and the student's thinking in general. Describe a particular interaction with the student in detail (e.g., describe a problem that you posed to the student, and describe how the student approached the problem). Then analyze the student's thinking: Why do you suppose the student responded in that way? What did you learn about the student's thinking from this interaction? Given what you learned, what next move could you make to help encourage progress in the student's understanding of the mathematics?

Prompt #2. Describe a recent mathematics professional development experience in which you participated. In your description include the goals of the experience/program, the reasons you elected to participate, and the range of activities included in the experience/program. Then, explain (in detail) how you have or how you plan to incorporate what you learned/experienced into your mathematics teaching *to improve students' mathematics learning*. Finally, describe what was absent from your recent professional development experience; that is, what do you now realize you needed to be included in the experience? What could the facilitators have done or included to improve the professional development experience with regard to implementation and use with mathematics learners?

Prompt #3. As teachers we must be able to develop or adapt curriculum to meet the needs of our students. Moreover, we are challenged to develop authentic, reliable and valid methods of assessment as well as integrate and meet the goals of state mandated standards. Curriculum development is a formidable task as teachers must take into consideration several elements when planning meaningful and purposeful learning. How is content planned and implemented in your classroom? What is/should be considered in order to develop curriculum? How are instructional goals balanced with individual student needs in your classroom? How are national documents such as NCTM's *Principles and Standards for School Mathematics* and the Common Core State Standards for Mathematics reflected in your curriculum? How are student centered instruction and other pedagogical strategies put into practice with regard to mathematics? Give specific examples to support your response.