Dispelling two pernicious myths

• Myth 1: Education is easy.
• Myth 2: Teaching methods never change.
The first myth of teaching

• Education is easy.
  – Set clear goals, a high standard, and a rigorous, content-driven test.
  – Tell students what they need to know to pass the test.
  – If students do not pass the test, repeat the instruction, eliminate the teacher, or assume the students can’t learn.
Complexity of learning

• A simplified view—an individual acquires new understanding or skill (receiving knowledge)
• More complex—an individual thinks in new ways... and creates new ways of thinking (acting on and creating knowledge)
• More complex—navigating stress, trauma, deprivation, and addiction to grow
• Even more complex—communication of knowledge (interpreting and creating texts)
Other complexities—educational professionals

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<td>• What are characteristics of effective professionals in education—teachers and professors, school psychologists, counselors, instructional planners, education leaders?</td>
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<td>• What are effective ways to prepare professionals who can foster education, mental health, and human development?</td>
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Other complexities—educational institutions

- What are characteristics of effective education institutions—families, schools, churches, counseling centers, addiction recovery centers, colleges and universities?
- What social policies and norms—that can expand or contract the intellectual opportunities and mental health of citizens--best support the full and healthy development of human capability?
- How do educational solutions change over time?
The complexity of education

• How do culture, social norms and institutions, immediate context, personal experience, physiology, access to resources, peer interactions, interactions with educational professionals, communicative ability, motivation, and capacity for self-regulation interact to enhance human capability and psychological well-being?
The second myth of teaching

- Teaching should never change.
- The way I was taught was just fine.
- Rote memorization, strict classroom discipline, teacher-centered instruction
Education in the Information Age

- Socially held knowledge is rapidly changing and increasing in quantity
  - No knowledge is “current”!
  - There is too much to know!
- Immediacy of access to information through electronic media increases information overload.
- Accessible knowledge varies in clarity, truthfulness, and usefulness.
Implications for curriculum

• Increasingly unable to “cover” whole subject matter areas
  – Identify “seminal concepts” or “knowledge anchors” around which to build larger body of knowledge
  – Foster strategies to search, evaluate, and integrate knowledge from multiple sources
Implications for classroom processes

• “Telling” is ineffective and knowledge is too vast and dynamic to “tell.”
  – Allow learners to develop knowledge in guided, creative collaborations with peers
  – Engage learners in authentic and complex tasks to foster interdependence, inquiry, and interaction.
Implications for learning environments

• Digital media require new forms of literacy.
  – Create technology-rich environments that allow practice of search, selection, interpretation, evaluation, and integration processes
  – Support for student autonomy
Implications for accountability

• Should Information Age educators be held accountable for the uniform transmission of knowledge?
  – Knowledge is dynamic and socially determined.
  – Shouldn’t accountabilities look at systems rather than individuals?
  – Shouldn’t accountabilities be formative rather than summative?
The School of Education

- Supports disciplined inquiry into the complexity of education
- Rooted in the values of the academy
- Collaborates with disciplines across the university to address educational problems
- Prepares professionals for varieties of careers in education