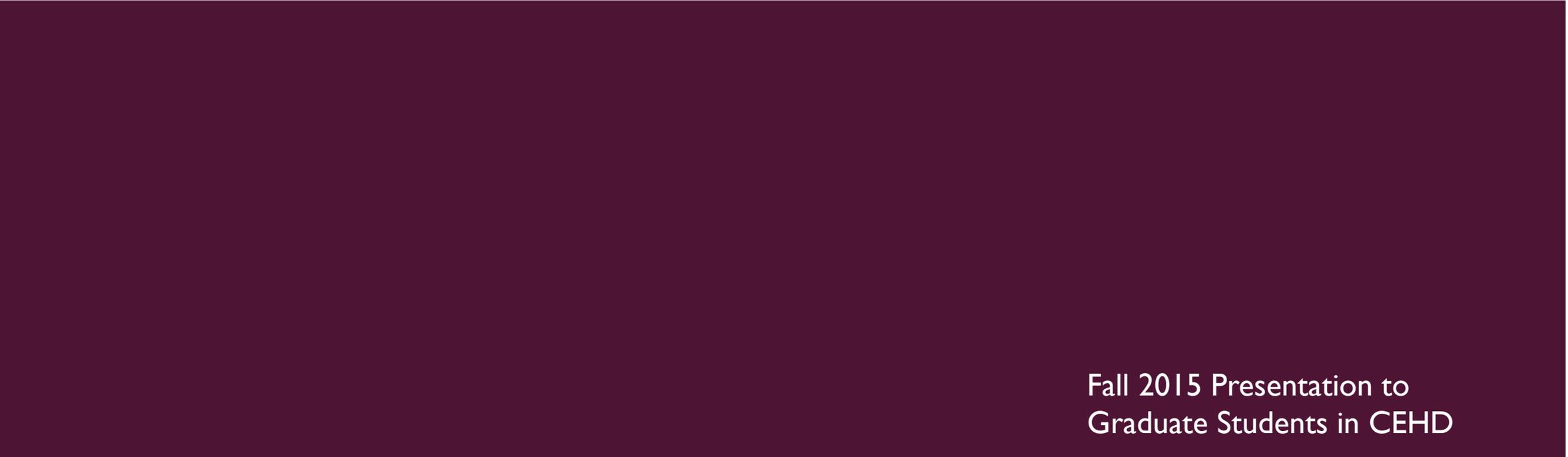




# THE ROLE OF TEACHER EDUCATION IN A RESEARCH UNIVERSITY

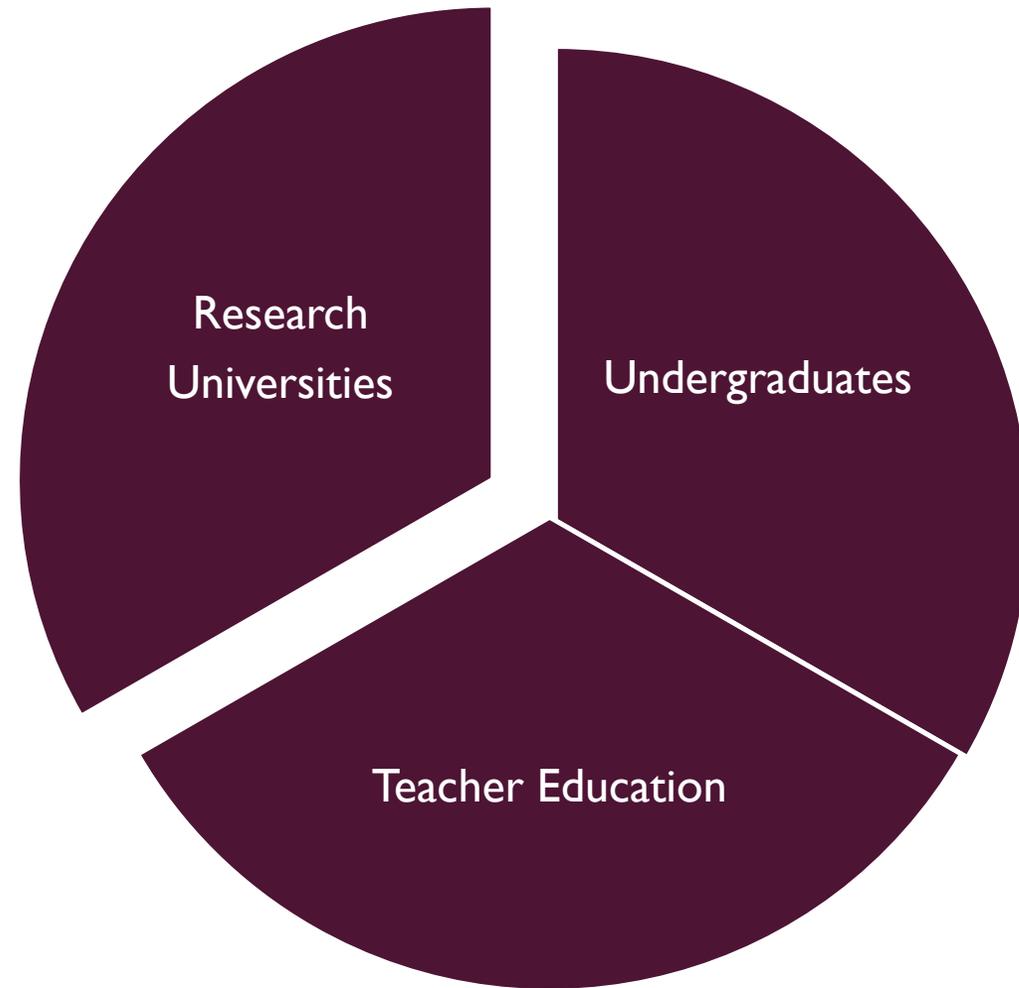
JOYCE MALEXANDER

DEAN, COLLEGE OF EDUCATION AND HUMAN DEVELOPMENT



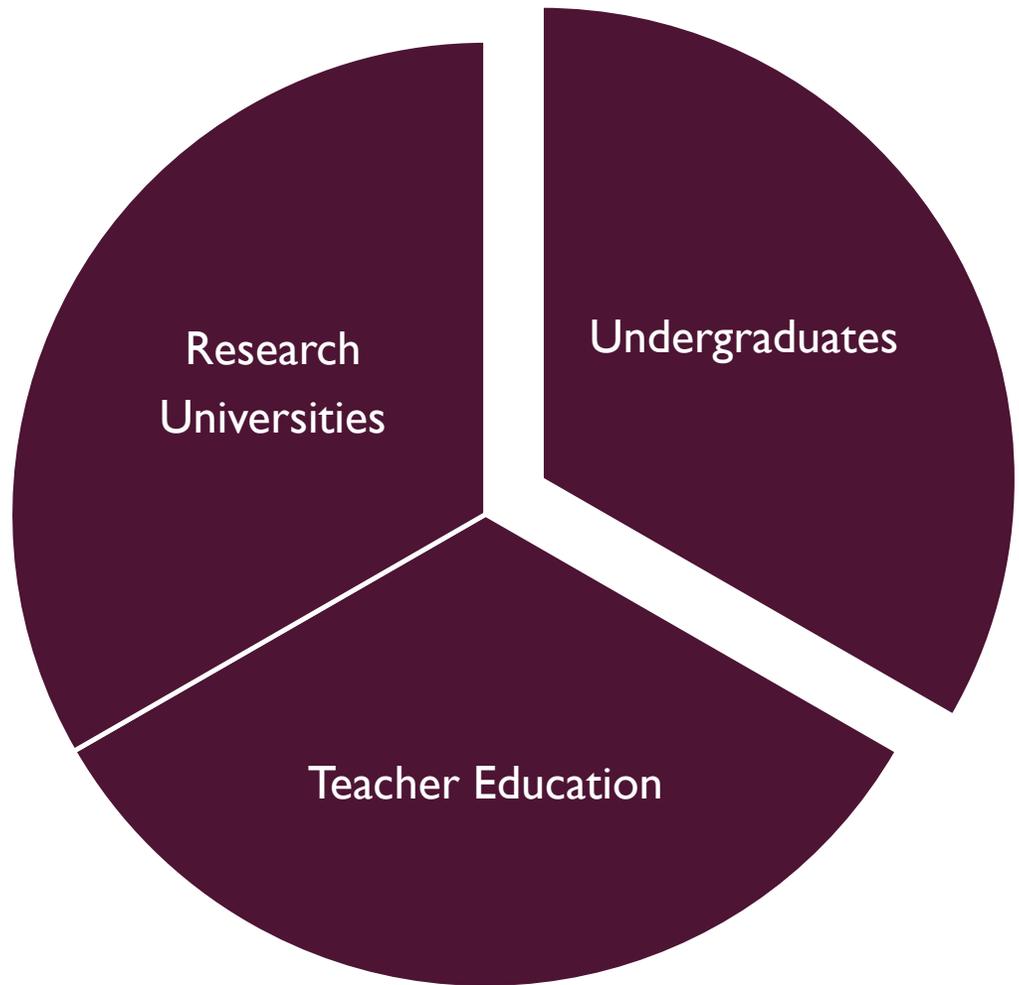
Fall 2015 Presentation to  
Graduate Students in CEHD





# RESEARCH UNIVERSITIES

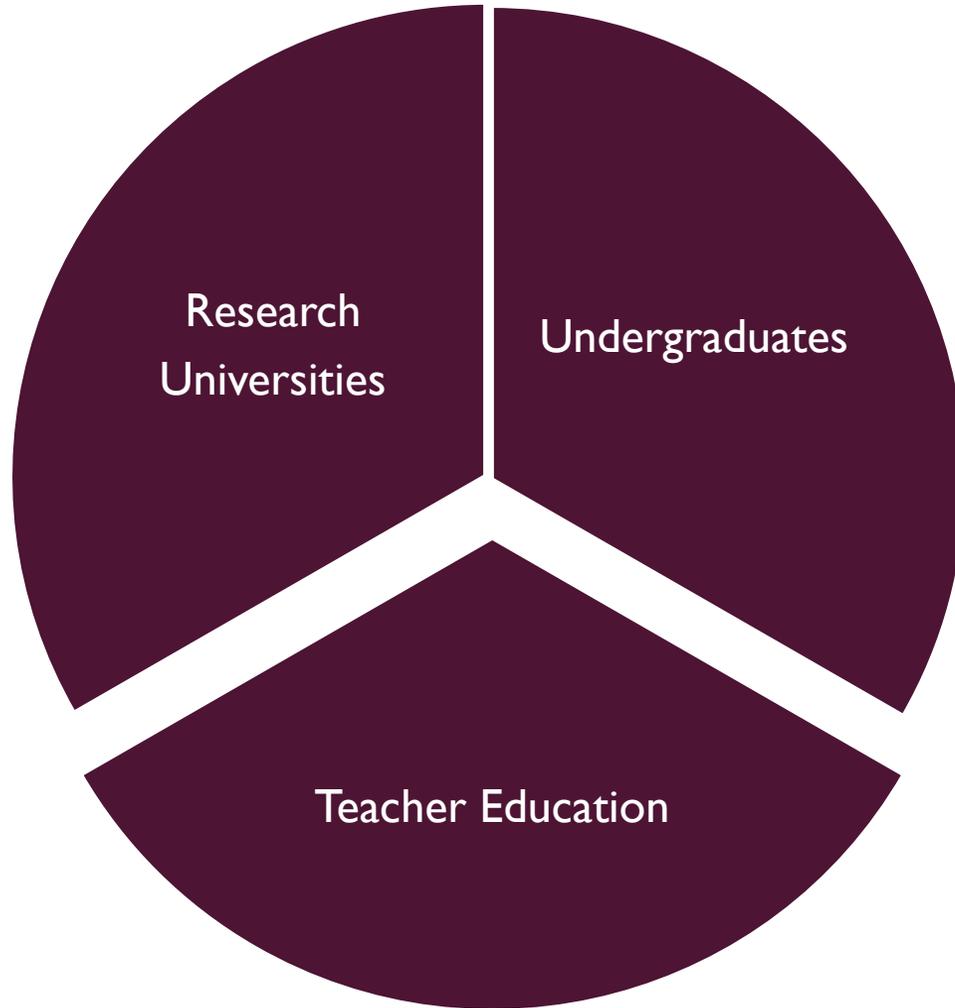
- Two main charges
  - Generate new knowledge
    - Funded or Unfunded research
    - Peer review indicative of high quality work
  - Educate students
    - How to learn from sources in the classroom including textbook, peers, and instructor
    - How to create new knowledge through inquiry either in their own teaching or in a laboratory



# UNDERGRADUATE EDUCATION

MODIFIED FROM ANDERSON, BANERJEE, ET AL, 2011

- Learn content knowledge
- Develop critical thinking skills
- Develop curiosity
- Develop relations with professors and interesting thinkers
- Become a life-long learner
  - Understand and critique the research process
  - Consume information critically and analytically
  - Learn something new every day



# TEACHER EDUCATION

- Teachers are among the most, if not the most, significant factors in children's learning and the linchpins in educational reforms of all kinds. Cochran-Smith & Zeichner (2005)
- *“There are not likely to be good answers to the most important questions ... unless they are driven by sophisticated theoretical frameworks about the nature of good teaching and the nature of teachers' learning, unless they are built on rich empirical work from both qualitative and quantitative perspectives..., and unless they are designed to take into account varying social, organizational, and intellectual contexts and conditions of schools and communities.”* Cochran-Smith & Zeichner (2005)

## MY PROPOSAL

Excellence in research and teaching need not be mutually exclusive

and

Excellence in research in teacher education is particularly intertwined with what's needed to be an effective teacher educator.

# POTENTIAL REASONS WHY TEACHER EDUCATION SHOULD BE AT TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY

- Land-grant mission
- Justification for state funding levels
- Great students should be with great faculty

# LAND GRANT MISSION

- Texas A&M is a land-grant university
  - Initial funding came with expectations for service to the people of the state
  - An emphasis not only on research but teaching and outreach as well
- Why should teacher education be at Texas A&M?
  - Preparing teachers for Texas classrooms serves the people of Texas
    - Children of today
    - Taxpayers of tomorrow

# JUSTIFICATION FOR STATE FUNDING LEVELS

- The state provides a significant amount of funding for Texas A&M
  - Significant funds for buildings and infrastructure improvement
  - Significant operating funds (48%) are appropriated and this keeps our tuition relatively low
- Texas A&M, in turn, provides:
  - A well-educated populace directly
  - Funding from federal agencies to help support research
  - A world class education for both graduate and undergraduate students
- Why should teacher education be at Texas A&M
  - The funding the state provides to the university is a significant investment in our students and their future contributions to the state
  - We support a well-educated populace indirectly and for the future through the students our Aggie Teachers support
  - The research funding we bring in helps examine important translational questions

# STUDENT CONNECTIONS WITH WORLD CLASS FACULTY

- Great faculty influence students in many ways
  - Are models of great thinking
  - Bring new ideas into discussions
  - Serve as role models for life-long learning and curiosity
  - Pique student curiosity and set this stage for them to ask interesting questions
- Great students influence faculty in many ways
  - Student insights are valuable for faculty to hear
  - Their questions keep faculty fresh and invigorated
  - Their passion is contagious
- Why should teacher education be at Texas A&M?
  - If we bring together world class faculty and students, they can transform lives.

# THE BIG PICTURE: THE FIELD NEEDS

- Great teachers
- Research about teaching and learning
- Places and spaces for those to come together
- To influence the conversation about what it means to be a professional

# THE BIG PICTURE: THE FIELD NEEDS

- Great teachers
- Passionate and Qualified Students
- Research about teaching and learning
- Places and spaces for those to come together
- To influence the conversation about what it means to be a professional



RESEARCH  
UNIVERSITIES

# RESEARCH UNIVERSITIES

- Our goal is to train the best teachers
  - We can accomplish that by
    - integrating quality research about effective teacher training into our program
    - Integrating quality research about learning and teaching into each of our classes
    - Facilitating quality clinical experiences and researching ways to integrate clinical experiences effectively.
    - Making available opportunities for our high quality students to get involved in research during their time at A&M
  - The best teachers continue to learn far after they have left A&M
    - We pique their curiosity to learn more when we talk about research, scholarship, and idea generation
    - They leave knowing that A&M is a resource should they need to learn more

BUT...

How do we influence the conversation about what  
it means to be a professional

# THE REAL REASON TEACHER EDUCATION SHOULD BE AT A RESEARCH INSTITUTION

- To influence the conversation about what it means to be a professional



When we embed teacher education in a research intensive university,  
we re-emphasize the idea that teaching is a professional field  
and that decisions are best made through inquiry and scholarship,  
not blindly accepting ideas put forth by others.

---

---

Who better to do that research than those we hire at Texas A&M, a land-grant institution committed to  
serve the people of Texas through teaching, outreach, and research?



## CONCLUSION

Excellence in research and teaching are not mutually exclusive

and

Excellence in research in teacher education is particularly intertwined with what's needed to be an effective teacher educator and to change the conversation about what it means to be a teacher.