

EDUC 311
Principles of Teaching: An Inquiry Seminar

INSTRUCTIONAL TEAM

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COURSE PURPOSE AND RATIONALE

Inquiry is central to judgments about what is desirable in the name of education. It is assumed that educational phenomena (e.g., teaching, curriculum, classroom events, school textbooks, educational standards, educational systems) are socially constructed, complex and uncertain enterprises, and that inquiry is necessary if educators are to understand whether current educational practices serve identified human needs and satisfy important human purposes.

Teaching requires teachers to think for themselves and to make judgments about how to act in the best interests of children and youth. As a result, teachers should be in the habit of asking critical questions about curriculum choices, pedagogical decisions, and other aspects of practice. The aim of this course is to cultivate in teacher-candidates, in addition to other pedagogical abilities and knowledge of the curriculum, this habit of inquiry.

The course serves as an introduction to teacher inquiry as both a form of: 1) investigation into problems and issues arising in practice ; and, 2) study of a topic of intellectual interest (e.g., ecological education, challenges for recently immigrated students, curriculum or textbooks as cultural, political and historical objects.) Teacher candidates will learn to engage in inquiry in a systematic and critical manner, beginning first by interacting with scholarly examples of educational inquiry and leading eventually to their own independent inquiry. By so engaging, teacher candidates will demonstrate understandings and skills acquired during course work, generate fresh understandings of an area of educational study, and demonstrate their capacity to move beyond course content to develop a deeper understanding of a particular issue or topic. It is anticipated that student inquiry will also contribute to ongoing efforts towards teaching and learning on practicum.

TOPIC OUTLINE

Week	Guiding Questions	Readings (course package)
Sept. 6	<p><i>Conceptions of Teaching</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •What are some present day understandings of teaching and teachers? •What are some historically significant understandings of teaching and teachers? •What understandings do you hold about teaching and teachers? 	<p>Freire, P. (1998). <i>Teachers as cultural workers: Letters to those who dare teach</i> (pp. 208-213). Boulder, CA: Westview Press.</p>

Sept. 13	<p>Understanding Teaching as Inquiry</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •What is inquiry? •What is teacher inquiry? •What has inquiry got to do with teaching, learning and curriculum? 	<p>Henderson, J. (1992). <i>Reflective teaching: Becoming an inquiring educator</i> (Chapters 1 & 4). Toronto, CA: Maxwell Macmillan Publishers.</p>
Sept. 20	<p>Exploring Teacher Inquiry</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •What are some of the key qualities of teacher inquiry? •What is the purpose and impact of teacher inquiry? 	<p>Shamsher, M., Decker, E., & Leggo, C. (2003). Teacher research in the backyard: Kitimat-Terrace teacher research. British Columbia Teachers' Federation. [Select article of interest] www.bcatml.org/POT/TeacherResearchInTheBackyard.pdf</p> <p>Brandes, G., & Kelly, D. (Eds.). (2004). Special issue: Notes from the field: Teaching for social justice. Educational Insights, 8(3). [Select article of interest] http://ccfi.educ.ubc.ca/publication/insights/v14n01/toc.html</p>
Sept. 27	<p>Linking Inquiry and Practice</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •What kinds of questions do teachers ask? •Where do teachers' questions come from? •What constitutes a good question? 	<p>Sims, M. (1993). How my question keeps evolving. In Cochran-Smith, M. & Lytle, S. (Eds.) <i>Inside-out: Teacher research and knowledge</i> (pp. 283-289). NY: Teachers College Press.</p> <p>Web Resources for Teacher Inquiries (Nipissing U.) www.nipissingu.ca/oar/archive.htm</p> <p>Networks: An online journal of teacher research journals.library.wisc.edu/index.php/networks/</p> <p>Carnegie Foundation: Inside Teaching gallery.carnegiefoundation.org/insideteaching/quest/collections.html</p>
Oct. 4	<p>Enlarging Perspectives</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Why and how might teachers, individually and collectively, enlarge their perspectives on a classroom issue or problem? •What are some of the key perspectives they use to frame educational research? •How do teachers identify and assess arguments in the research literature? 	<p>Aoki, T. (2005). Layered voices of teaching: The uncannily correct and the elusively true. In Irwin, R. & Pinar, W. (Eds.). <i>Curriculum in a New Key: The Collected Works of Ted T. Aoki</i> (pp. 17-27). Mahwah, N.J.: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.</p> <p>Teacher candidate inquiry samples (shared with permission):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Including low-functioning autistic students www.mmecarr.ca/POT/EXAMPLES/autism.pdf • It's time for a test... but can't we play instead? www.mmecarr.ca/POT/EXAMPLES/play.pdf • The tattooed high school teacher at work www.mmecarr.ca/POT/EXAMPLES/tattoo.pdf • Empowering students through democracy and dialogue www.mmecarr.ca/POT/EXAMPLES/democracy.pdf
Oct. 11	<p>Preparing for Inquiry/Practicum</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •How will I keep a record of questions and concerns emerging from the practicum? •How will I link those questions and concerns with ideas encountered thus far? 	<p>Cole A. & Knowles, J. G. (2000). <i>Researching teaching: Exploring teacher development through reflexive inquiry. Part III</i> (Ch. 6 & 7). Toronto, ON: Allyn & Bacon.</p>
Oct. 18-29	FALL PRACTICUM	

Nov. 1	<p><i>Formalizing Inquiries</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •What do I currently believe about my chosen inquiry question? •How might my inquiry be situated in the context of the particular writers who study similar questions/ concerns? 	<p>Sample template: http://www.mmecarr.ca/POT/inquiry-links.html (→Enlarging Perspectives)</p>
Nov. 8	<i>Engaging in Inquiries</i>	
Nov. 15	<i>Engaging in Inquiries</i>	
Nov. 22	<i>Engaging in Inquiries/ Presenting Inquiry Projects</i>	
Nov. 29	<i>Presenting Inquiry Projects</i>	
WINTER BREAK		

TASKS and GRADING

Students must provide evidence that they have engaged thoroughly and thoughtfully with the subject matter of the course. To that end, there are two assignments (one with multiple parts), all of which will be assessed as Pass/Fail/Resubmit. The course is graded on a PASS/FAIL basis.

Assignments

1. Class Participation/Entrance and Exit Slips (Due dates to be determined by cohort instructor)

Participation is essential to success. If you are not in class, you cannot participate. Your active participation is integral both as a contribution to your own learning and also to the learning of others. During the course, we will deal with a range of ideas, some familiar and others unfamiliar concepts. My hope is that we will enable one another to engage with the ideas and encourage each other to think about our thinking. In light of the above, some questions to consider are: *Do I come to class prepared? Do I read carefully and respond thoughtfully to the readings and the questions posed? Do I show signs of listening carefully? Do I respond to others' questions thoughtfully? Do I ask questions that help others towards meaningful readings of the texts? Do I take the risk of engaging in open dialogue, to formulate and reformulate ideas?*

In preparation for class, you will be required to read and to write in response to assigned reading. The written responses or **Entrance Slips** are intended to help you to prepare for class discussion by focusing your attention on ideas, questions, and issues provoked by the text (the weekly reading/s).

Some of the responses may take the form of notes and jottings (a **paragraph** or so) that may provide a starting point to class discussion. The following questions may guide you as you prepare each week.

- What does this text say that struck you? Why?

- What questions does the text provoke? Why?
- What ideas, events, or images does the text illuminate or challenge?
- What dilemmas, tensions, or contradictions are evident?
- How does the text intersect with (inform, challenge) your own understanding (of teaching, learning, knowing)?

At the end of each class we will devote 5 to 10 minutes for writing **Exit Slips**. These slips will allow you to return to your initial questions (in the Entrance Slip) and to reflect on them in light of class discussion. (Of course, something new may emerge in the context of class discussion and you may wish to focus your exit slip on it.)

2. Inquiry Project: Proposal, Project and Presentation (Due dates to be determined by cohort instructor)

The inquiry project will be driven by the teacher candidate's own questions, developing areas of interest and/or identified areas of need. Examples of inquiry projects include inquiry around a theme (e.g., the cohort theme such as "sustainability" or "community"), a disciplinary topic (e.g., 'historical consciousness' or chemical bonding), a particular curriculum emphasis (e.g., textbooks as cultural and historical objects) or an educational issue (e.g., the politics of French immersion programs).

The inquiry consists of three parts: a) **Preparing** the Inquiry Proposal, b) **Conducting** the Inquiry Project, and c) **Presenting** the Final Project. Cohort instructors will determine the due dates for each part of the assignment. Inquiry projects may be conducted individually or by a small group (two or three persons maximum).

a) Inquiry Proposal

Teacher candidates must discuss the specifics of their inquiries with the cohort instructor via the inquiry proposal.

Sample template: <http://www.mmecarr.ca/POT/inquiry-links.html> (→Enlarging Perspectives).

Typically, the proposal will consist of a brief context (how the question arises and why it is significant), a statement of the research problem or question, several links to the related literature (class readings and other bibliographic references), an outline of the approach taken, including possible sources such as researcher journal, observation sheet, publically-available documents, etc., and expected conclusions. These elements may vary depending on the nature of the particular inquiry. The following template may guide proposal writing:

1. What is your **question** and how did it arise for you?
2. Why is your question **significant** (to you and/or to others)?
3. What (publically available) (re)**sources** will you draw on to explore your question?
 - a. Journal (field)
 - b. Readings (books and journal articles)
 - c. Curriculum documents
 - d. Policy documents
4. What do you **expect** to find out?

The instructor must approve the proposal before the teacher candidate can pursue the inquiry. Proposals will be evaluated according to the integration of theory and practice, educational significance, and benefit to the teacher candidate.

b) Inquiry Project

During the weeks devoted to teacher candidate independent inquiries, classes will take the form of group consultation sessions with the cohort instructor with the latter taking the role of project advisor. Teacher candidates embark on their inquiries, meeting with the instructor regularly to report on progress and to receive feedback.

c) Inquiry Presentation

The inquiry presentation has ORAL and WRITTEN components:

The *oral component* includes individual or group (in the case of a collaborative inquiry) preparation and delivery of a 10-15 minute class presentation of your inquiry outlining its purpose, central question(s), approach and newfound understandings.

The *written component* includes an *individual* (whether a collaborative or individual inquiry) reflection on the inquiry project's purpose, central question(s), approach and newfound understandings. The written piece should be approximately 2000-3000 words in length (6-8 pages, double-spaced).

The Inquiry Project should reflect an emerging ability to:

- Engage substantively with a topic as reflected in careful reading of the literature and an understanding of significant issues, perspectives and assumptions
- Position one's self in relation to ideas discussed
- Consider educational issues critically
- Relate one's insights to curriculum and pedagogy

TEXTS

A course package, *EDUC 310/311 – Course Readings*, is available through the bookstore:

SCHEDULE

www.mmecarr.ca/POT/schedule-elem2011.pdf
www.mmecarr.ca/POT/schedule-sec2011.pdf

ATTAINMENT of STANDARDS

This course will explicitly address several of the “Standards for the Education, Competence and Professional Conduct of Educators in British Columbia,” as developed by the British Columbia College of Teachers. Some will be explicitly addressed, but others are touched upon in the readings, discussions and inquiry topics:

7. Educators engage in professional career-long learning.
8. Educators contribute to the profession.

Further information on the BCCT Standards and UBC’s *Attainment of Standards Report* can be accessed at the following sites:

<http://www.bcct.ca>

<http://teach.educ.ubc.ca> → Resources

UNIVERSITY POLICIES on ATTENDANCE and ASSIGNMENTS

Students are encouraged to review university policies on attendance and assignments, as detailed in Section V, “Academic Regulations,” of the 2009/10 UBC Calendar. In particular, please be aware of the definition of *plagiarism* presented in the Calendar: “a form of academic misconduct in which an individual submits or presents the work of another person as his or her own.” Evidence of this form of academic dishonesty in an assignment will result in a failure without opportunity for revision. Regarding Academic Honesty and Standards, Academic Freedom, please refer to: *UBC Calendar 2009/10 Policies and Regulations (Selected)*:

<http://www.students.ubc.ca/calendar>

All work submitted by students (including, without limitation, essays, dissertations, theses, examinations, tests, reports, presentations, problem sets, and tutorial assignments) may be reviewed by the University for authenticity and originality. Without limiting the generality of the foregoing, such review may include the use of software tools and third party services including Internet-based services such as TurnItIn.com. By submitting work, students consent to their work undergoing such review and being retained in a database for comparison with other work submitted by students. The results of such review may be used in any University investigation or disciplinary proceedings (see Student Discipline, p. 59).

ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATION for STUDENTS with DISABILITIES

The University of British Columbia recognizes its moral and legal duty to provide academic accommodation. The University must remove barriers and provide opportunities to students with a disability, enabling them to access university services, programs, and facilities and to be welcomed as participating members of the University community. The University’s goal is to ensure fair and consistent treatment of all students, including students with a disability, in accordance with their distinct needs and in a manner consistent with academic principles. The University will provide academic accommodation to students with disabilities in accordance with the British Columbia Human Rights Code, R.S.B.C. 1996, c. 210 and the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, Part I of the Constitution Act, 1982, being Schedule B to the Canada Act 1982 (U.K.), 1982, c. 11. Provision of academic accommodation shall not lower the academic standards of the University. Academic accommodation shall not remove the need for evaluation and the need to meet essential learning outcomes. Students with a disability who wish to have an academic accommodation should contact the Disability Resource Centre without delay (see UBC Policy 73 (www.universitycounsel.ubc.ca/policies/policy73.pdf)).

WEB ADDRESS for POSTINGS

Various postings will be accessible at: <http://www.mmecarr.ca/POT>