

GRANDE PRAIRIE REGIONAL COLLEGE
DEPARTMENT OF HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES

EDUCATION 2010 G3: EDUCATIONAL FOUNDATIONS
WINTER, 1994.

INSTRUCTOR: Keith Roscoe **OFFICE:** E310
PHONE: 539-2861 (office) 539-6842 (home)
OFFICE HOURS: *MW F* 11:00 - 12:00; *W* 4:00 - 6:00, or by appointment.
CLASS MEETS: W, 18:30-21:20, A212

TEXT:

Titley, B. E. (1990). Canadian education: Historical themes and contemporary issues.
Calgary, AB: Detselig Enterprises.

OPTIONAL RESOURCE:

Hacker, D. (1989). A Canadian Writer's Reference. Scarborough, ON: Nelson.

N.B. If you do not already have a good style manual, this text is strongly recommended as a resource for mechanics, diction, APA manuscript style, and so on.

ABOUT THE COURSE:

The education program at GPRC emphasizes the development of reflective practitioners. Reflective practitioners are teachers who persistently and actively question their teaching and its educational, social and political contexts in light of educational and ethical principles (as opposed to unreflective teachers, whose decisions would tend to be directed by impulse, authority, or tradition).

Along with educational psychology courses, curriculum courses, and practicum seminars, educational foundations courses are intended to be part of the intellectual grounding needed for the successful reflective teacher. Being a teacher in the complex and changing society of the near future will require "a critical awareness and understanding of the process in which one is engaged and of the institution in which it takes place" (Titley, 1990, p.3).

Education 2010 is an interdisciplinary introduction to Canadian educational issues which aims at initiating this critical awareness and understanding. Selected concepts, themes and principles from the educational foundations—philosophy, sociology, and history of education—are the knowledge base for an exploration of issues at the centre of the current debate about education. In keeping with the development of the reflective teacher, emphasis is placed on critical thinking: a disposition towards questioning and the improvement of thinking. A further emphasis is made upon developing the cooperative group skills increasingly needed for the modern workplace, and essential for the collaborative aspects of teachers' work.

OBJECTIVES

1. To demonstrate an understanding of aspects of philosophy, sociology and history of education in the context of current Canadian educational issues.
2. To demonstrate an understanding of education as a social phenomenon.
3. To develop critical thinking in the context of current Canadian educational issues.
4. To develop cooperative group skills.

CONTEMPORARY ISSUES IN CANADIAN EDUCATION

This list, gathered from a study of educational literature, the media, and government documents, is representative of the range of significant issues in Canadian education today. The particular issues to be dealt with in class and in assignments will be determined by the class in consultation with the instructor.

Teacher Issues

- Nature of teaching; alternative teaching methods
- Control of the classroom; school & classroom decision-making; teacher empowerment and deskilling

Student Issues

- Student diversity: ethnic & racial, shifting demographics, rising social problems (single parent families, mobility, poverty, abuse), mainstreaming
- Nature of learning
- Retention and dropouts
- Discipline and freedom
- Violence in schools

Curriculum Issues

- What is societal role of public schooling: academic? economic renewal? social justice & improvement? individual growth & development?
- *• The curriculum: what counts as knowledge in the 1990's?: what is a basic education?
- Academic rigor and standards: more facts? more thinking? more skills? process or content?
 - Whole Language approach
- *• Assessment and testing, student achievement: purposes, what to evaluate/measure; who's the best judge; best form of testing (eg. standardized vs performance based/authentic evaluation); reporting information about achievement to parents and public
- The role of technology in education: computers, distance education, and so forth.

Social and Political Issues

- Contradictory demands, values, expectations of the public regarding education
- Power and control over schooling; interest groups
- Trust and respect for the public school system
- Communication about education: parent-school-teacher-employers; use of jargon by educational establishment; lack of communication between public and experts
- The role of public education in society: national and social cohesiveness, solving societal problems, the economy
- *• Demands of the modern global economy and workplace: technological literacy, increased demand for highly skilled workers
- *• Rising cost of schooling, funding reductions, efficiency: Is schooling an investment or an expense? Who should pay?
- *• Accountability & responsibility: Who is accountable, and for what?

Restructuring Issues

- Are schools responsive to change or obsolete?
- Reform: should we modify, add-on, or totally restructure schools?
- *• Management and governance: bureaucracy versus decentralization & school-based management
- *• Delivery of education: parental choice, new types of schools, open boundaries, voucher systems, year-round schooling, home schooling, school-business partnerships and so on.

*Identified as an issue in the Alberta Education Education Roundtable Workbook, 1993

EDUCATIONAL FOUNDATIONS THEMES

The following list indicates typical themes or major topics in each foundational area. Depending on the issues chosen, some or all of the following will be touched upon.

Philosophy of Education

- The nature of education; the educated person
- What counts as knowledge
- The purposes of education
- The philosophies behind different views of education
- Ethics: what is the right thing for students in a particular situation?

Sociology of Education

- Canadian educational structure and organization
- Power and control in education; interest groups
- Diversity, multiculturalism, and equity in education
- Education and social class, social mobility, employment opportunity
- Conditions of schooling for students and teachers

History of Education

- The dynamics of change in the past:
 - The changing role of school as Canadian society changes and the effects of schooling on societal change
 - The changing role of government and other stakeholders in education
 - School organization, structure, and curriculum and national/regional history

TEACHING AND LEARNING ACTIVITIES

The fourteen 3-hour classes will involve some or all of the following:

Lectures/Presentations

Class Discussions

Small Group Activities/Discussions

Individual in-class learning activities

Simulations or Role-plays

Debates

Small Group Presentations/Panels/Creative presentations

Discussion of video selections

Guest Speakers

Other

COURSE ORGANIZATION

The organization of the course will be finalized once the class has met, and there is clear input regarding students' interests, needs, and purposes. My belief is that motivation, learning and critical thinking are enhanced when students are involved in choice and decision-making about content and delivery.

EVALUATION

- All grades will be assigned on the nine-point stanine scale:

stanine	description	% equivalent
9	markedly superior	90-100
8	excellent	80-89
7	very good	72-79
6	good	65-71
5		55-64
4	pass	50-54
3	failure	45-49
2	.	26-44
1	.	0-25

<u>Evaluation Scheme*</u>	
Attendance, quality of preparation, participation, and work in groups	10%
Group Presentations (two 15-20 min)	20%
Reaction Papers (3)	30%
Quizzes (3)	20%
Final (Open-book/take home)	20%
*Subject to negotiation and change	

Details and due dates of the above to follow.