Society and Culture: Methodologies and Practices in Education 700:
Theory Applied in School and Community Contexts (3 credits)
Semester 4, Online

Instructor

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Course Description

The focus on this 9-week course is **synthesis**, and **identity**. It is designed for students to bring together everything they have learned from theory and field experience and to integrate these understandings with their philosophy to develop a tangible model of practice. Students should leave Ambrose with a strong concept of who they are as teachers, a comprehensive understanding of the profession in which they are entering, and a vision for the future of education. Students should also be able to articulate how they intend to practice in this profession. In this online course, the third in the Society and Culture: Methodologies and Practices component, students will continue their examination of educational practices in Canadian schools and in diverse cultural settings, particularly trends that are shaping Alberta Education, inclusion and FNMI success, assessment and reporting, societal factors affecting classrooms, and the vocation of teaching.

Prerequisite

SCMP 500 and SCMP 600

Class Times

This is a 9-week online class. Students will be guided through the content and assignments with Moodle, some face-to-face tutorials, and the possibility of some synchronous webinars (as necessary). Check Moodle for dates and times.

Learning Outcomes

At the end of this course, students will be able to:
1. Identify the gaps that exist between theory and practice.
2. Strategize how to deal with issues in a school setting.
3. Articulate their philosophy of education.
4. Synthesize their knowledge of teaching and learning into a model of practice.
5. Defend their model of practice with theory.
6. Integrate their model of practice within the current landscape of Alberta Education

Students are expected to:

- Contribute to the discussion forum in a timely manner. Follow instructions for each topical post. Read responses carefully, take note of detail, clarify and paraphrase perspectives, and build on each other's points.
- Complete the assignments by the due date.
- Examine and critically reflect on personal philosophy and position on issues without defensiveness.
- Reference experiences from recent practicum
- Initiate new ideas
- Communicate with instructor via email or phone with questions and concerns.
- Attend face-to-face tutorials and synchronous webinars.

Recommended Reading

There are no required texts for this course but students are encouraged to begin building their own library of inspiring teaching books, good resources for practice, and education blogs.

Here are some of my favourites:

Draper, S. (1999). *Teaching from the Heart: Reflections, Encouragement and Inspiration.*Toronto: Pearson Education Canada.

Farr, D. (2010*). Teaching as Leadership: The Highly Effective Teacher's Guide to Closing the Achievement Gap.* Francisco, California: Jossey-Bass

Louv, R. (2008). Last *Child in the Woods: Saving our Children from Nature-Deficit Disorder*. New York: Algonguin Books.

Palmer, P. (2007). *The Courage to Teach*. San Francisco, California: Jossey-Bass

Philip, D. (2005). *32 Third Graders and a Class Bunny: Life Lessons from Teaching*. New York: Touchstone.

Robinson, K. (2009). *The Element: How Finding your Passion Changes Everything*. New York: Viking Penguin Group.

Sahlbery, P. (2011). *Finnish Lessons: What Can the World Learn from Educational Change in Finland?* New York, USA: Teachers College Press.

Scott, D. (2008). *Critical Essays on Major Curriuclum Theorists*. Florence, Kentucky: Routledge Falmer

Turkle, S. (2011). *Alone Together*. New York: Basic Books.

Willis, J. (2006). *Research-Based Strategies to Ignite Student Learning.* Virginia: ASCD

Winter, R. (2006*). Still Bored in a Culture of Entertainment: Rediscover Passion and Wonder*. Illinois: Intervarsity Press.

Course Themes

SCMP 700 will address the nine core themes of all SCMP courses in the following ways:

A. Ecological Systems Theory	Students will address many systems acting on the child: the classroom, their peers, family, culture, provincial standards, other teachers, school systems...etc
B. Cultural Underpinnings of Education	Topic 4 and parts of Topic 2 will address diversity and FNMI issues.
C. Societal/Cultural Issues Impacting Classrooms	For this course, there will be a focus on anxiety in the classroom.
D. Legal Issues	Assignment 2 addresses dilemma of practice which may include legal issues.
E. Alberta Context	Topic 2 looks extensively at the Alberta context
F. Assessment Practices	Topic 6 looks at large scale assessment in Alberta
G. On-going Professional Learning	Topic 1 gives students the chance to reflect on their field experience and identify areas for future growth.
H. Factors Affecting School/Community/Parent Relationships	Assignment 3 will give students a chance to articulate their philosophy around school-based relationships.
I. Exemplary Examples	The final topic is place to share stories of exemplary practice and ideas.

10 Ambrose Bachelor of Education Competencies

SCMP 700 will help students continue to develop the 10 competencies in the following ways:

Build affirmative relationships with children.	Assignment 3 - Promise to students
Apply theories of curriculum, learning, and assessment to the development of programs.	Final project
Build learning communities	Online discussions
Design teaching and learning scenarios that include inquiry-based learning.	Final project
Design inclusive learning experiences that recognize and accommodate all children, including those with exceptional learning needs.	Topic 4, Topic 5, Final project
Engage in shared praxis.	Online discussions
Design and implement programs that incorporate attention to cultural realities and diversities.	Topic 4, Final project
Understand critical and creative thinking as essential to learning in all programs.	Topic, Final project
Demonstrate the essential dispositions that characterize a professional educator from the Ambrose University College Bachelor of Education program.	Throughout course
Design and develop teaching portfolios with an emphasis on electronic portfolios.	Final portfolio submission

Assessment

Assignments	%	Due Date
Assignment 1 - Topical Posts	30	On-going
Assignment 2 – Case Study: Dilemma of Practice & Strategic Plan	20	Monday, March 12
Assignment 3 – Final Project	50	Friday, April 13
Online Portfolio Completed	P/F	Friday, April 13

Assignment Details

Assignment 1 - Topical Posts (30%)

Rationale

This course is constructivist in nature, both personally and socially. It is also built on the concept of shared praxis; that is, sharing with one another your critical reflections on practical experience and research. The goal of the topical posts is to create a space in which to do this.

Instructions

There are three ways that you will participate in the discussion posts:

> 1. Contributing and responding to general questions (Topic 1, 5 & 8)

> 2. Contributing to small group discussions that are peer-led (Topic 2, 3, 4 & 6)

> 3. Facilitating discussion in a small group on one topic (group and topic allocation on Moodle)

There are separate forums created on Moodle for each group. As a facilitator you may choose to use another collaborative tool for your group that is less text based. Examples include PBWorks, a wiki, Google Docs, Voicethread, Lino...etc.

Topic 1 - Reflections on Practicum
Topic 2 – Trends, Initiatives and Documents of Alberta Education (Group Discussion)
Topic 3 – Finland-Alberta Partnership (Group Discussion)
Topic 4 – Inclusion and Diversity (Group Discussion)
Topic 5 – Anxiety in Schools
Topic 6 – Assessment (Group Discussion)
Topic 7 – No discussion post. Personal reflection
Topic 8 – Inspiring Teachers, Inspiring Programs & Inspiring Ideas

Assessment rubric

	Assigned Marks
Participation in Forum You must participate at least once on each topic with critical reflections that link your experience with literature.	20
Discussion Facilitator See the document, "Role of the Discussion Leader", which is located on Moodle for the criteria against which you will be marked.	10

Due

Friday 13 April, 2012

Assignment 2 – Case Study: Dilemma of Practice and Strategic plan (20%)

Rationale

During your career as a teacher you will encounter issues and dilemmas. The government constantly drives new initiatives, new theories of learning emerge, technology advances, there is often a gap between what should be happening in the classroom/school and what actually is, and sometimes students do not behave how they should! It is very easy to gripe about it in the lunch room! However, teachers have the power and capacity to drive change in a professional way so that student learning is improved. This assignment will give you a chance to consider a dilemma that you have encountered in your field experience and create a strategic plan for dealing with it.

Instructions

Read the following article, which is found on Moodle:

Weaven, M. (2011). *Dilemmas of Practice: Six of the Best.* (Retrieved Jan 30, 2011)

You will model your assignment on this paper. Think of a situation which presented a dilemma for you as a teacher. It could be related to *anything* to do with school. You will present your dilemma in the form as a case study with the following sections:

- Description of the Case (remember to maintain total anonymity).
- Commentary that presents the issue in light of literature, school culture, provincial standards, and/or your own philosophy. In other words, you must explain why this is an issue.
- Possible strategy for change that is supported by literature, school culture, provincial standards and/or your own philosophy. All stakeholders are considered.
- Bibliography (APA style)

It should be 2-3 pages long, including the bibliography.

Assessment rubric

	Assigned Marks
Description of Case Clearly and succinctly explained with relevant detail. Anonymity is maintained.	4
Commentary The issue is within the case is presented based on literature, school culture, provincial standards and/or personal philosophy.	8
Strategy A possible strategy is given which outlines all the effect on all the stakeholders. It is also supported by literature, school culture, provincial standards and/or personal philosophy.	6
Bibliography APA style	2

Due

Monday 12 March, 2012

Assignment 3 - Final project (50%)

Rationale

This assignment requires you to apply knowledge and understanding from LTA 700, SCMP 700 and CDPD 700. The assignment focuses upon the development of a framework for a year plan and requires you to apply knowledge and understanding from all of these courses. All three instructors will jointly mark the assignment.

Instructions

Your year plan framework will include six sections or chapters. They are:
- Introduction: 3-4 pages
- Literature Review: 4-5 pages
- Year Plan Framework: 4-5 pages
- Conclusions and Recommendations: 1-2 pages
- Researcher's Story: 1-2 pages

The **Introduction** will identify and briefly explain your choices and the rationale for your choices, in terms of the planning framework, curriculum (e.g., based upon the Programme of Studies, the chosen subject area and grade; **or** a thematic year plan across subject areas), supporting programs (e.g. bully-proofing; Virtues Project), and school-community relationships. In this section you may include definitions, assumptions, and limitations of your year plan framework. Length: 3-4 pages.

The **Literature Review** is summarizes and cites the documents that support your decisions regarding the design of your year plan (e.g., school-community relationships, instructional methodologies, model(s) of learning, developmental factors, and so on). Information regarding inclusion, FNMI education, large-scale assessment, classroom-based assessment, and cross cultural and multi-cultural education could be included. In this section

you should draw heavily on the content from CDPD 700, SCMP 700 and LTA 700. Length: 4-5 pages.

The **Year Plan Framework** is designed to guide your instruction, for children in your chosen subject area, grade and/or theme, over a one-year period. As an 'architect of learning', you should include at minimum, the activities of learning, time-lines, resources, instructional strategies/approaches, and the decisions and strategies for enhancing school and community relationships. The year plan will illustrate your design decisions e.g., for the course topics such as FNMI education, large-scale assessment, inclusion, and cultural realities (cross and multi-cultural).

The **Conclusions and Recommendations** is final summary on the matter of integration for the ideal learning community, one in which school-community collaboration is effective and well designed to promote learning for all students. Length: 3-4 pages.

The **Researcher's Story** is a final personal reflection. You will produce a manifesto (of sorts) that states the promises that you will make to your students. You should include between 8-12 statements. Each statement must begin with "I promise to, …." From your statements, your values and intentions in the following areas should be clear:

- Style of classroom management
- Preferred theory of curriculum
- Homework (or home tasks)
- Inclusion
- Role of schools (and teachers) in society
- Technology
- Skills for the 21st Century
- Yourself as a learner

The final Year Plan Framework is to be presented in two formats: written (on-line) submission in a Word Document; and, formal presentation to colleagues using some form of technology-assisted presentation. The written document is due April 5th; the formal presentations begin the week of April 9$^{th.}$ A symposium will be arranged across all 700 level classes during this week, and will be evaluated by instructors from the three 700 level courses.

Assessment rubric

(in development)

Due
Thursday 5 April, 2012 – Written Component
Week of 9 April, 2012 - Presentations

Grading

The available letters for course grades are as follows:

Percentage	Letter Grade	Grade Point Weight	Description
96-100	A+	4.0	
91-95	A	4.0	Excellent
86-90	A-	3.7	
82-85	B+	3.3	
75-81	B	3.0	Good
72-74	B-	2.7	
68-71	C+	2.3	
63-67	C	2.0	Satisfactory
60-62	C-	1.7	
56-59	D+	1.3	
50-55	D	1.0	Minimal Pass
0-49	F		Failure

Important Notes from Ambrose

It is the responsibility of all students to become familiar with and adhere to Ambrose Academic Policies, such as the policy on Academic Dishonesty, which are stated in the current Catalogue.

Please note that final grades will be available on the student portal. Printed grade sheets are no longer mailed out.

An appeal for change of grade on any course work must be made to the course instructor within one week of receiving notification of the grade. An appeal for change of final grade must be submitted to the Office of the Registrar in writing within 30 days of receiving notification of the final grade, providing the basis for appeal. A review fee of $50.00 must accompany the appeal to review final grades. If the appeal is sustained, the fee will be refunded.

Electronic Etiquette

Students are expected to treat their instructor, guest speakers, and fellow students with respect. It is disruptive to the learning goals of the course and disrespectful to fellow students and the instructor to engage in electronically enabled activities *unrelated to the class* during a class

session. During class, laptops and other hand-held devices should be used for class-related purposes only. The professor has the right to disallow a student to use their hand-held devices in future lectures and/or to ask a student to withdraw from the session if s/he does not comply with this policy. Repeat offenders will be directed to the Dean. If you are expecting communication due to an emergency, please speak with the professor before the class begins.

Extensions

Although extensions to coursework in the semester are at the discretion of the instructor, students may not turn in coursework for evaluation after the last day of the scheduled final examination period unless they have received permission for a "Course Extension" from the Registrar's Office. Requests for course extensions or alternative examination time must be submitted to the Registrar's Office by the appropriate deadline (as listed in the Academic Calendar http://www.ambrose.edu/publications/academiccalendar).   Course extensions are only granted for serious issues that arise "due to circumstances beyond the student's control."

Academic Integrity

We are committed to fostering personal integrity and will not overlook breaches of integrity such as plagiarism and cheating. Academic dishonesty is taken seriously at Ambrose University College as it undermines our academic standards and affects the integrity of each member of our learning community. Any attempt to obtain credit for academic work through fraudulent, deceptive, or dishonest means is academic dishonesty. Plagiarism involves presenting someone else's ideas, words, or work as one's own. Plagiarism is fraud and theft, but plagiarism can also occur by accident when a student fails or forgets to give credit to another person's ideas or words. Plagiarism and cheating can result in a failing grade for an assignment, for the course, or immediate dismissal from the university college. Students are expected to be familiar with the policies in the current Academic Calendar and the Student Handbook that deal with plagiarism, cheating, and the penalties and procedures for dealing with these matters. All cases of academic dishonesty are reported to the Academic Dean and become part of the student's permanent record.

Students are strongly advised to retain this syllabus for their records.