

**University of Ottawa
Faculty of Education**

EDU 5260

Introduction to Curriculum Studies
WINTER 2009, Wednesday 5:30-8:30 pm, LMX 243

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Office Hours: Wednesday 2:00-5:00, or by appointment

COURSE OUTLINE

Calendar Description

Overview of recurring curriculum issues in historical and contemporary perspectives; introduction to the practices of curriculum theorizing; investigation of the effects of shifting paradigms within the field of curriculum studies.

Background

Curriculum Studies is an intellectually dynamic and ever changing field. For curricularists engaging the processes of situating and defining curriculum theorizing and development remains a historically situated and contested “complicated conversation.” Furthermore, within the context of this course certain curricular issues will be contradictory, confusing, and paradoxical. As a result, each week we will try to reconceptualize and complicate our historical, present, and future understandings of the discrepancies between various disciplinary discourses, which in turn inform curriculum theorizing and development. Moreover, our weekly conversations will critically examine how such discrepancies create tensions between both internal and external stakeholders to the field of curriculum studies, and the school curriculum writ large. This course thus invites us to participate in a personal dialogue, indeed a “complicated conversation,” in which we will be asked to recursively consider alter/native approaches to curriculum theorizing and development, and in turn with the conversational issues that these alternatives involve.

Course Rationale

Introduction to Curriculum Studies 5260 is a graduate course designed to:

- 1) Investigate historical and present perspectives on curriculum issues within the field of curriculum studies;
- 2) Introduce various interdisciplinary strategies for curriculum theorizing; and
- 3) Understand the historical and present effects of various curricular paradigms and respective discursive trends within the field of curriculum studies.

Course Expectations

It is anticipated that through **active participation** in this course, each candidate will develop:

- i) An understanding of the dialectical tensions between curriculum theory and curriculum development;
- ii) An appreciation of the ironies, contradictions and paradoxes that influence curriculum theorizing;
- iii) An ability to examine historical and/or existing curricular discursive trends and illustrate an understanding of their theoretical basis; and
- iv) Engage in the playful processes of curriculum theorizing (and if needed, translating such theoretical implications in relation to our discussions around classroom practices).

Through group work, presentations, individual assignments, and thoughtful discussions, you are expected to critically engage course material, as well as develop educational perspectives that take into account the major curriculum theorists and issues covered in this course. The format of the course will vary each week according to content and will be organized to encourage your participation. This means that your thoughtfulness and engagement is both valued and important. At various points throughout the course, we will potentially cover difficult and controversial knowledge, and thus an important expectation is that all participants will be committed to creating an intellectually stimulating, “safe” (if there is such a thing), and respectful class atmosphere.

Required Readings:

The course reader can be purchased at Enviro-copy on Dalhousie Street.

At Agora bookstore:

Tyler, R. (1949). *Basic Principles of Curriculum and Instruction*. Illinois: University of Chicago Press.

Persons with Physical and/or Learning Disabilities

If you require accommodation due to any physical, cultural, neurological, or psychological needs, please schedule an appointment with me as soon as possible so that we can negotiate the necessary adjustments to course curriculum. You are strongly encouraged to visit Student Services on campus for assistance with regards to physical or psychological learning needs. Staff there can help you formally request the professor to arrange alternatives regarding assignments and exams. Please do so at the beginning of the term.

Late Assignment Policy:

Assignments which are submitted after the due date without an agreed upon extension are considered late assignments. The penalty on late assignments in all courses amounts to a grade loss of 5% per day up to a maximum of 10 days, after which time assignments will not be accepted. Submission of late assignments requires my prior consent and written verification of a medical professional or due to compassionate reasons necessitating a deadline extension. In the event of extraordinary personal circumstances that prevent completion of an assignment by the specified due date, students should speak with the instructor as soon as possible.

Attendance

The Faculty of Education policy that regular attendance in classes, seminars, and workshops is compulsory applies to this course. Any student who is unable to attend a scheduled meeting must notify the instructor before the scheduled meeting time. In the case of absence, students are expected to complete the required readings and in-class assignments on their own.

Academic Fraud

Students are advised to become familiar with the University of Ottawa's policy regulations on academic fraud. The University of Ottawa's regulations on academic fraud, as stated in the Teacher Education Calendar (pp. 6-8), apply in this course. It is imperative that any ideas or styles of writing that are not yours are properly referenced and will need to be done in compliance with American Psychological Association (5th ed.) style guidelines. Failure to properly reference places you in a situation of academic fraud. Academic fraud/Plagiarism is one type of academic fraud. A student found guilty of committing plagiarism will be subject to sanctions, which range from receiving a mark F for the work in question to being expelled from the University, and even the revocation of a degree, diploma, or certificate already awarded. For useful guidelines to help you avoid plagiarism, please consult the following web pages:

http://www.uottawa.ca/academic/info/regist/fraud_e.html

<http://www.uottawa.ca/plagiarism.pdf>

Assignments and Evaluations

Your final grade will be determined arithmetically first by reducing the numerical grades for each assignment in accordance with each assignment's percentage value of the final grade (listed immediately below). Once summed, the individual figures yield a total that is the percentage grade for the course.

- 1) Reader Response Paper (20 %)
- 2) Reader Response Discussant Paper (10 %)
- 3) Curriculum Theorist Review Presentation (30 %)
- 5) Final Provoking Curriculum Studies Paper (40 %)

Reader Response Discussion Panel Paper (20 %):

Students must sign-up during first class to present *discussion panel paper* over the course of this term. The sign-up sheet will have a limited amount of spaces for each week.

During each class, a panel of three to four students will read their discussion papers to the other students and myself. Your commentary should stimulate an ensuing conversation on your assigned articles or book chapters for that week. Your discussion paper need only focus on the one assigned article for the week in question, but can make reference to the other articles covered prior to, and for that class. Assuming that each student, including myself, has read the assigned readings, *the discussion paper should not be a straight summary* of the article. Instead, you should *utilize the articles or book chapters as a methodological filter*, if you will, which in turn informs your discussion on the curricular issues you decide to *complicate* and put forth to your fellow graduate students. *You must send a draft of your discussion paper to your discussant and me one week prior to your panel presentation in order to afford your discussant enough time to read and respond appropriately to your discussion papers.* At that time, your discussant and myself should offer editorial suggestions as well as prepare a written response which will also be presented during that class.

I encourage you to *play with* the theoretical underpinnings of each article or book chapter. Focus on what speaks to your educative experiences? How do the various theoretical concepts *inform your educative experiences* both inside and outside the institutional walls of schools in term of curriculum? Or, how can *your lived experiences* inform or create dialectical tensions with the articles or book chapters in terms of *creating contradictions, confusions, and paradoxes*? For those who need them, I will provide possible discussion questions for each of the articles. Nonetheless, I strongly encourage you to create your own. *Your reader response discussion panel paper must be between 750-1000 words (which is 3 to 4 pages double-spaced in 12 font Times New Roman, no more than 1000 words).* You will have 15 minutes to present/read your discussion paper. Once you have read your paper, you will turn in a hardcopy to me at the end of class.

- 1) Reader Response Discussion paper 15 %
- 2) Responding to the discussant and audiences discussion and question in relation to your paper 5%

Reader Response Panel Discussant Paper (10 %):

Panellist discussants will send you a draft their paper at least 1 week prior to their presentation. Drawing the course reading(s) they choose address, or covered prior, you will write a response (1-2 pages maximum) that adds in some way to the discussion of concepts covered in their paper.

Curriculum Theorist Review Presentation (30 %):

In groups of 2-3, you are responsible for reviewing and presenting a genealogical study of a curriculum studies scholar's selected works. You will be required to select your curriculum scholar from a set list provided to you by the professor on January 14th, 2009.

Your multimedia presentation (poster, video, webpage, and/or power-point) will provide your fellow students with an overview of that scholars selected works. How does the scholar's work speak to your educational interests? What has and does their academic work focus on within the field of curriculum studies? Are they currently alive and at which university do they work at? What theoretical frameworks do they draw upon? In what ways do their theoretical interests (in gender, race, class, sexuality, cultural studies, aboriginal studies, phenomenology, the more-than-human world, etc.) speak to the field of curriculum theory/studies, for example? *Your presentation will be assessed based on your ability to demonstrate a working understanding of your chosen scholar's body of work (10-15 minutes).*

You are also required to *write joint review of what you learned from studying the historical and present works of your chosen curriculum scholar's work (500-1000 words)*. Curriculum scholar multimedia presentations and reviews which are deemed exceptional (or which have the potential to be) will be considered for publishing on a website called www.curriculumtheory.ca, or invited to present at the *Provoking Curriculum Studies Conference* schedule to take place between May 21-22, 2009 at the University of Ottawa. The sign-up sheet for these presentations will be available on January 14th, 2009.

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| 1) Curriculum scholar presentation | 20 % |
| 2) Curriculum scholar report | 10 % |

PROVOKING CURRICULUM STUDIES CONFERENCE PAPER (40 %):

Drawing on the course readings you will prepare a paper, which in turn will be presented at a *University of Ottawa Graduate Student Curriculum Studies Conference* (of which we will organize to take place at the end of the term). *You can choose any topic for your paper as long as you utilize the course readings*. Strategically, you might try to utilize our course readings to write a paper on your current thesis topic, if you are currently at that stage of the graduate program. This final paper could also be the commencement of a theoretical chapter for your thesis and/or synthesis paper. You can also organize panel presentations where each of you present an individual paper which focus on the same curricular/educational research question (for example, how might one develop a culturally responsive curriculum for urban aboriginal students?).

Each conference session will be 1 hour and 30 minutes. Each session will host three presenters and each of you will have a 20-minute slot to present your paper. As a result the conference version of your paper should not exceed 7-8 pages double-spaced (1750-2000 words), depending on how fast you read.

Final Paper Writing Schedule

- 1) Outline for final conference paper due *February 11th* (5 %)
- 2) First draft of final conference paper due *February 25th* (10 %)
- 3) Conference title and abstract due *March 18th* (5 %)
- 4) Second draft of final conference paper due *March 25th* (10 %)
- 5) Final papers due night of conference *April 8th* (10 %)

Grading framework:

Grades are awarded according to the following scale:

Grade	Percentage	Description
A+	90 - 100 %	Exceptional
A	85 - 90 %	Excellent
A-	80 - 84 %	Excellent
B+	75 - 79 %	Very good
B	70 - 74 %	Very good
C+	66 - 69 %	Good

All grades below C+ (66%) are failing grades for graduate students.