



# ST. FRANCIS XAVIER UNIVERSITY

## MASTER OF EDUCATION IN CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION (C&I) WITH A CONCENTRATION IN MENTAL HEALTH EDUCATION

July 2024 – July 2026

The StFX Faculty of Education is proposing to offer a *Master of Education in Curriculum & Instruction with a focus in Mental Health Education* for qualified in-service teachers and administrators beginning in the Summer 2024.<sup>1</sup>

Mental Health Education in the Faculty of Education at StFX largely follows four pillars of mental health literacy:

- 1) To achieve and maintain positive mental health. At StFX this would include the study of topics such as social and emotional learning, resiliency, restorative practices, and mindfulness in education.
- 2) To understand the signs and symptoms of mental distress and possible mental health disorders.\* At StFX this would include the study of topics such as the crisis cycle and trauma-informed practices.
- 3) To decrease stigma.
- 4) To increase help and health-seeking efficacy.

Additionally, we are guided by social determinants of mental health research. Mental health education is part of a greater 'equity literacy' because of the ways in which poverty and discrimination for example, are interwoven with mental health.

This program will advance the leadership capabilities of participants to understand and implement mental health education in public schools.

\*This graduate degree program is for educators. As such the instructors in the program do not teach therapeutic/ counselling approaches or the tools and assessments used for mental health diagnosis.

### Proposed program sequence and outline

LOCATION	Summer 2024	Fall 2024	Winter 2025	Spring 2025	Summer 2025	Fall 2025	Winter 2026	Spring 2026	Summer 2026
Online via Moodle / Collaborate and/or Zoom	534 505	527	567	509	532 510	508	5211	511	5201 536

### Information and Admission Procedures

**Applications for this program will be accepted until February 15, 2024.<sup>2</sup>**

APPLY

For StFX admission inquiries, please contact [med@stfx.ca](mailto:med@stfx.ca).  
Inquiries may also be directed to the Chair of Curriculum and Leadership, Dr. Dan Robinson ([drobinso@stfx.ca](mailto:drobinso@stfx.ca)).

**\*Please note on the application that you are applying to the Master of Education in Curriculum and Instruction—Mental Health Education cohort.**

<sup>1</sup> The offering of *concentrations* is subject to enrollment, and *concentrations* frequently reach capacity.

<sup>2</sup> All applications received by this date will receive due consideration; applications received after this date may only be reviewed subject to program availability.

**1. EDUC 534—Introduction to Educational Foundations:** This course provides graduate students with an opportunity to deepen their understanding and awareness of how issues of power and privilege have shaped their own and their students' lives. Educators will (re)think their pivotal role as leaders promoting Mental Health Education alongside larger issues of equity and social justice. Three credits.

**2. EDUC 511—Mindfulness and Social Learning:** In this course, students will explore and engage with practices and research related to mindfulness in education. Mindfulness has been interpreted as the ongoing practice of being awake and aware to what is inside and around us in the present moment. At the same time, students will explore readings that demand our careful attention to what is also culturally and sociologically produced in current efforts to engage in mindfulness in education. This course provides an exploration of research and approaches to school-based mental health education. Students will explore the balance between supporting mental problems, illness, and stigma to the positive support of mental health and inclusion in schools. Three credits.

**3. EDUC 567—School Law: Legal Issues relating to Mental Health and Youth, Child & Family Services:** This course provides an examination of legal issues in the field of mental health and youth, child and family services as they relate to school boards, administrators, and teachers. Consideration will be given to recent legislation and court decisions related to the organization, policy, and administration of school districts. Three credits.

**4. EDUC 505—Introduction to Educational Research:** This course introduces approaches to educational research, particularly as it relates to mental health education. It also includes a basic introduction to graduate student writing and literature review methodology. Three credits.

**5. EDUC 509—Trauma Informed Practices:** In this course, participants will recognize and respond to the impact of traumatic stress on children and youth, caregivers, service providers, and one another. Participants will learn to infuse and sustain trauma awareness, knowledge, and skills into their classrooms and school cultures, practices, and policies. At the same time, students will explore readings that demand our careful attention to what is also culturally and sociologically produced in current efforts to engage in Trauma Informed Practices. Three credits.

**6. EDUC 527—Principles of Learning:** This course examines theories of learning and development and their implications for instruction. In addition to the general cognitive and behaviourist theories, the course will focus on the aspects of cognitive learning that are relevant to understanding the diversity of learners. Three credits.

**7. EDUC 532—Curriculum Theory:** In this course, the ideas of major curriculum theorists will be examined and the implications of each position for program development for schooling will be explored. Three credits.

**8. EDUC 521I—Current Research in Instruction: Approaches to Mental Health Education - Mental Health Literacy & Social Determinants of Health:** This course provides an exploration of research and approaches to school-based mental health education. Students will explore the balance between supporting mental problems, illness, and stigma to the positive support of mental health and inclusion in schools. Three credits.

**9. EDUC 508—Critical Research Literacy:** This course examines how to critically read, interpret, and evaluate educational research. Graduate students will also have the opportunity to explore and understand the research literature in relation to Mental Health Education. Three credits.

**10. EDUC 520I—Current Research in Curriculum – Health:** A critical exploration of recent theories and research related to current issues in curriculum with a concentration in addictions, substance abuse and trauma. Three credits.

**11. EDUC 536—Program Development:** Program development is investigated from the practitioner's perspective using narrative inquiry to explore relationships among the four curriculum commonplaces of students, teacher, curriculum, and milieu. Three credits

**12. EDUC 510—Restorative Approaches in Educational Settings:** This course helps educators understand the principles of restorative approaches and the wider peace building movement in education. Educators will critically consider restorative approaches as a way to create safe, engaging, and inclusive educational settings. Educators will learn how to create a school climate that is relational and restorative and takes into account the contexts and causes of situations surrounding interpersonal interactions. Three credits.