

SOCI 231 – Education in Canadian Society

Department of Sociology

St.FX University

Fall, 2022

Instructor: Evan Curley

Email: ecurley@stfx.ca

Thursdays, 6:30-9:30pm, MULH 3030

Office Hours: Thursdays 3-5pm or virtually by appointment

Course Overview

This three-credit course offers a sociological approach to the study of education in the Canadian context. The course begins with the study of classical and contemporary educational theory (including the work of Jean-Jacque Rousseau, Mary Wollstonecraft, Émile Durkheim, John Dewey, Paulo Friere, Pierre Bourdieu, and bell hooks). We will then look at important historical periods of Canadian education including education in the early colonial period, the establishment of public education in Canada, rural educational decline in 20th and 21st century Nova Scotia, as well as early Mi'kmaq education. After studying educational theory and history, we will spend the rest of the course analyzing specific social issues in schools. This part of the course will begin by addressing the professionalization and feminization of teaching. Then we will consider class-based inequalities impacting educational achievement, emerging equity categories related to sexuality and gender, racial and ethnic inequalities in education, as well as the specific problems encountered by immigrants and refugees. We then will study the specialized history and context of Indigenous students by investigating the intergenerational trauma caused by the residential school system. After the fall reading break, we consider the impact of the commercialization of schooling on student experiences in higher education. We finish the course by considering some less traditional forms of education, such as craft-based experiential learning via the practice of apprenticeship.

Schedule of Readings

Required readings will be provided on the Moodle homepage in PDF files.

Week 1. Sept. 8 – No Topic. Introduction Class.

Week 2. Sept. 15 – Classical Educational Theory

Darling, John and Maaike Van De Pijpekamp. 1994. "Rousseau on the Education, Domination and Violation of Women." *British Journal of Educational Studies*, 42(2):115-132.

Week 3. Sept. 22 – Contemporary Educational Theory

Hopkins, Neil. 2018. "Dewey, *Democracy and Education*, and the School Curriculum," *International Journal of Primary, Elementary and Early Years Education*, 46(4):433-440.

Bauer, Michelle. 2000. "An Essay Review: Implementing a Liberatory Feminist Pedagogy: Bell Hooks's Strategies for Transforming the Classroom." *MELUS*, 25(3-4):265-274.

Week 4. Sept. 29 – History of Education in Canada and Nova Scotia

Corbett, Michael. 2004. "'It Was Fine, If You Wanted to Leave': Educational Ambivalence in a Nova Scotian Coastal Community 1963-1998." *Anthropology & Education Quarterly*, 35(4):451-471.

Week 5. Oct. 6 – The Professionalization and Feminization of Education

Dehli, Kari. 1994. "They Rule by Sympathy: The Feminization of Pedagogy." *The Canadian Journal of Sociology*, 19(2):195-216.

Week 6. Oct. 13 – Educational Inequalities

Edgerton, Jason D., Tracey Peter and Lance W. Roberts. 2008. "Back to Basics: Socio-Economic, Gender and Regional Disparities in Canada's Educational system." *Canadian Journal of Education*, 31(4):861-888.

Week 7. Oct. 20 – Sex and Sexuality

Horsman, Melissa and Patricia Cormack. 2016. "A Meaningful Meaninglessness: Canadian University 'hook-up' and 'party' culture as gendered and class-based privilege." *Gender and Education*. 30(1):119-133.

Week 8. Oct. 27 - Race and Ethnicity

Codjoe, H. M. 2001. "Fighting a 'Public Enemy' of Black Academic Achievement—the persistence of racism and the schooling experiences of Black students in Canada." *Race, Ethnicity and Education*, 4(4):343-375.

Week 9. November 3 – Residential Schools and Indigenous Students

Hansen, John G. and Rose Antsanen. 2016. "Elders' Teachings about Resilience and its Implications for Education in Dene and Cree Communities." *The International Indigenous Policy Journal*, 7(1):1-20.

Week 10. November 10 – No Class. Fall Reading Break

Week 11. November 17 – No Topic. In-Class Presentations of Academic Articles

Week 12. November 24 – The Commercialization of Schooling

Giroux, Henry A. "Neoliberalism, Corporate Culture, and the Promise of Higher Education: The University as a Democratic Public Sphere." *Harvard Educational Review*, 72(4):425-463.

Week 13. December 1 - Apprenticeship

Marchand, Trevor H.J. 2008. "Muscles, Morals and Mind: Craft Apprenticeship and the Formation of Person." *British Journal of Educational Studies*, 56(3):245-271.

Methods of Evaluation

Participation (10%) Participation will be based on class attendance and regular contribution to class discussion as well as the completion of occasional in-class activities.

Midterm Exam (20%) The midterm exam will be written in-class on Oct. 13th. The exam will consist of long answer/essay questions covering material from the first 5 weeks of class. The exam will be done individually and will be open-book. You will be expected to reference the course material and required readings to answer the questions. The questions will focus on application and exploration of course ideas (it will not focus on highly specific details such as dates, names, and events).

Presentation of Researched Academic Article (15%) Each student will make a presentation to the class (approximately 10 minutes in length – this may vary depending on how many students we have enrolled) about an academic article they have found, read, and analyzed. The article must be related to the Sociology of Education. The article should be on a topic that we haven't covered extensively in class. In other words, you should be able to present something unique to the class that they haven't heard in the lecture or in a required reading. The article can be related to class topics but must be different enough to offer a new idea/perspective. These presentations can be accompanied by a slideshow or done without. The content of the presentation should include a summary of the main ideas/arguments found in the article (you should indicate to us the main thesis statement and the main supporting arguments), explanation of important sociological concepts, a discussion of how the data/findings were collected and analyzed (in other words, the methodology of the research), and how the ideas relate to what we have learned in class – do the ideas in the article support the ideas we've learned in class? Do they offer an alternative perspective? Do they challenge class content? Each student in the class will present on a different article. To ensure that the articles you have chosen are different from your peers you will all send me your chosen article by Oct. 27th. If two students have chosen the same article, I will work with them on finding a good alternative. Presentations are scheduled for Nov. 17th. Tip – it would be a good idea to choose an article that you can then use as a reference in your auto-ethnography research paper.

Research Paper – Educational Autoethnography (25%) Autoethnography is a contemporary method of social research where the 'self' is examined objectively within a specific social and cultural context. In this exercise, you are given the chance to participate in self-examination and to look at the educational experiences that have shaped your life. Autoethnography is analytical, and not simply a personal narrative. Usually, autoethnographies are written in the first person, and they document the self as s(he) has been impacted by history, social structure (inequality) and as a member of a culture. This exercise will combine personal narrative, relevant literature and your own educational experience to produce a short paper. Autoethnographies can be accompanied by artifacts such as photographs or documents, but keep it simple, limiting them to one or two. Write a brief autoethnography using your educational experience that illustrates how your knowledge goes beyond an individual case study and becomes part of a social group where multiple members might have had similar experiences. The assignment should include 5 pages of text, double spaced. On a separate page, provide 5 scholarly, peer-reviewed references. Only two (2) of your references can be course texts, the other three must be articles you source yourself (you can use the article you read for your presentation as one). Tips for writing your

auto-ethnography will be provided in the lectures as the end of term approaches. Use ASA Style. Paper due by the end of day (11:59pm) November, 24th.

Final Take-Home Exam (30%) The final take-home exam will be distributed on the last day of class (December 1st). It is due by the end of the day (11:59pm) Dec. 11th. This exam will consist of long answer/essay questions covering material from the entire course. You will be expected to reference the course material and required readings to answer the questions.

Course Policies

Communication

Outside of the classroom, the primary form of communication with the professor in this course will be through email. University policy requires that all email communication between students and faculty or staff take place using St.FX email addresses. Please check your St.FX account regularly for important notices from your instructor or other St.FX departments, and only use your St.FX account when sending an email to your instructor. The instructor will try to respond to your email within 24 hours, but it could take 48 hours or longer for you to get a response on weekends and holidays, and in exceptional circumstances.

Academic Integrity

The highest standard of academic integrity is expected. All students must understand the meaning and consequences of academic offences such as plagiarism, cheating, tampering, and falsification. For more information, please see [“Academic Integrity Policies and Procedures”](#).

Assignment Due Dates

Assignments that are submitted after the due date stated in the Schedule, and for which no extension has been granted by the instructor in writing, will receive a grade of zero. Assignments for which such an official extension has been granted will be accepted up until the new due date. I am happy to give extensions, if you need them, on any assignment. Please let me (your instructor) know as soon as possible.

Dropped Course Refund Policy

Students may drop this course, online in Banner, on or before Wednesday, November 2nd. After this date students are not permitted to drop courses without permission from their Dean.

Attendance

In-class collective discussion will be frequent - much of the learning will occur in this conversation with your peers and instructor. We will also engage in in-class activities that will be collected and contribute to your participation mark. This means regular engaged attendance will be necessary for success in this course. However, occasional absences are perfectly fine. If you can inform the instructor ahead of time when you will miss a class, please do.

Accommodations and Accessibility

If you require accommodations but have not yet registered with the Tramble Centre for Accessible Learning (tramble@stfx.ca), please contact them right away. If you have or develop a prolonged illness or encounter a personal crisis that will impact your progress in the course, please contact the instructor as soon as the problem becomes apparent. Your best strategy for dealing with anything that may prevent you from completing the course in a way that is satisfactory to you is to discuss your concerns with the instructor as soon as possible so that a method of response can be devised. If you are a student with any form of disability that requires accommodation in teaching style or evaluation, you can speak with the instructor anytime so that appropriate arrangements can be made.

Equity

I (your instructor Evan Curley) am committed to fostering an environment for learning that is inclusive for everyone regardless of gender identity, gender expression, sex, sexual orientation, race, ethnicity, ability, age, class, etc. All students in this class, the instructor, and any guests should be treated with respect during all interactions. It is my hope that our class will support diversity of experience, thought, and perspective. Additionally, I recognize that much of the research and writing that has occurred in academia, including selections that have informed our course content is partially subjective because it has been created and conducted through a particular point of view. Historically in academia, this point of view has had a lack of inclusivity. I will strive to highlight these issues and promote critical thought about the nature of past research and its implications on our understanding in the present. Please feel free to contact me via email or in person to let me know about any experiences you have had related to this class that have

made you feel uncomfortable. I will continually strive to create inclusive learning environments and would therefore appreciate your support and feedback.

Mental Health

Being mentally healthy does not mean being "happy all the time" but rather, it is having the ability to cope with problems as they arise and enjoying and finding fulfillment in numerous and various aspects of life. Every single person experiences periods when they have no distress, as well as times when they experience mild or moderate mental distress. Mental health problems are real and we need to take them seriously. It is important to recognize that even though students (new and experienced alike) come to university with many strengths, at university they may not have access to all of the supports that they usually enjoy at home, and some of the coping strategies they have developed while living at home may no longer be as effective. As a result, many students experience some challenges adjusting to university life and they recognize that they need to learn new strategies to overcome these new challenges.

If you find yourself in distress, your instructor can provide immediate support and guidance in a safe environment. He can comfortably have a conversation about mental health related issues, and can provide you with information about professional and other supports. The Health and Counselling Centre is also a welcoming environment for all St.FX students, with medical and mental health professionals who are there to support student wellness, across all areas of health, including mental health. The Health and Counselling Centre is located in Bloomfield 305 (the Students' Union Building), around the corner from the Info Desk and is open Monday through Friday; students can either stop by or call (902-867-2263) to make a private appointment with the Intake Nurse. No issue is too big or too small to ask for help with.

Copyright and Course Materials

These course materials are designed for use in Course SOCI 231 at St.FX University and are the property of the instructor, unless otherwise stated by the instructor. Copying this material for distribution, online posting, or selling of this material to third parties without permission is subject to Canadian Copyright Law and is strictly prohibited.