

MULTICUTURALISM AND EDUCATION

GFDD 6541

Course description

This course is concerned with the experience of ethnic minority students in the Canadian school system. We will begin by examining historical trends in Canadian schooling with an aim to uncover the forces that resulted in the emergence of multiculturalism. We will then examine critical concepts used in defining multiculturalism in Canada. Various approaches to multicultural education will be examined in depth, paying special attention to the discourses of cultural understanding, cultural competence and critical emancipatory multiculturalism. In order to understand the kinds of cultural differentiation and racialisation that impact education, we will examine in some depth, specific cases of majority-minority relations in Canada. Our discussions will explore implications for pedagogical practices, that is, how, as educators, we ensure that structures of learning do address ethnic and minority concerns. Inherent in the structure of the course is a concern for an historical and comparative approach to understanding questions of contemporary importance.

Course format and requirements

The course will be conducted as a seminar. Students are expected to do the prescribed readings for the weekly topics and to actively participate in class discussions. There will be four assignments:

1. For this assignment, students are required to write two response papers on assigned weekly readings. Readings for the first response paper should be selected from week 1 to 5 material and for the second response paper-from week 8 onwards. These papers should be prepared for use in class and to hand over to me thereafter. This means that for whatever reading you chose to respond to, you will be expected to share your paper with others and to use it to lead class discussions. Response papers should not be summaries of the readings. Rather, they should critique the readings and be used as a means to connect the reading and class discussions to one's personal/political experiences and stances (10%).
2. This assignment concerns an application of the conceptual framework to our issues. For details, see weeks 6 and 7 in the course outline (35%).
3. Design a 1-hour multi cultural lesson on any subject and for an audience of your choice (20%). You should be prepared to implement this lesson to a larger audience, and to respond to questions about the lesson and about your subject choice. This assignment can be developed into assignment 4 below.
4. This assignment (see weeks 11 and 12 of course outline) is the term paper. While doing this assignment it is important to keep in mind some of the conceptual issues discussed in class. Proper use of language is an important criterion in the evaluation of this assignment (35%).

Prescribed text

Young, J. (1989) ed. *Breaking the mosaic: Ethnic identities in Canadian Schooling*. Journal articles and chapters from books will also be handed out in class.

Preliminary course outline and readings

Week 1

1. overview of course (purpose, content, operation, structure and evaluation)
2. introduction to course topics/concepts and ideological framework

Weeks 2 & 3

Defining multiculturalism

These two weeks will be devoted to discussion concepts that provide a framework to multiculturalism. Some of the concepts are race, ethnicity, culture, power, hegemony, marginality etc. We will also examine current multicultural approaches to education. Barth, (1969) and Simon (1989) provide interesting angles to the study of ethnicity and Mallea (1989) defines the concept of culture, McCarthy (1993) and Combleth & Waugh (1995) provide some multi cultural approaches to education.

Readings

Barth, F. (1969). Introduction. In Fedrick Barth (ed.), *Ethnic groups and boundaries: The social organisation of culture and difference*. London: George Allen & Unwin.

McCarthy, W. (1993). After the Canon: Knowledge and ideological representation in the multi cultural discourse on curriculum reform. In Cameron McCarthy & Warren Crichlow (eds.), *Race, identity and representation in education*. New York: Routledge.

Chapters 2 & 3 of *Breaking the mosaic: Ethnic identities in Canadian schooling*. Jon Young (ed.), Toronto: Garamond.

Week 4

Multiculturalism as curriculum

This week we will examine some of the challenges multi cultural ism places on the mainstream curriculum. We will examine the canon, analyse the multicultural curriculum and begin to link the former with the concept of anti-racism.

Readings

Section 2 of *Breaking the mosaic* is key for this week. - Particularly pp 75-108.

Banks, J. (1994). Chapter 5 of *An introduction to multicultural education*. Boston: Allan and Bacon.

Dei Chapter 3 of *Anti-racism education: Theory and practice*. Halifax: Femwood. (1996).

Week 5

Multicultural and anti racism models

Here we will begin to look at specific models of multi cultural and anti-racist classrooms.

Readings

Goli Rezai-Rashti (1995). Multicultural Education, anti racist education, and critical pedagogy: reflections on everyday practice. In Roxana Ng, Pat Staton, & Joyce Scane (eds.), *Anti-Racism, Feminism, and Critical Approaches to Education*. Toronto: OISE press.

Weeks 6 & 7

In week 6 the class will be divided into groups to prepare for an in-class presentation in week 7. Groups will be divided according to area of interest. Choices of themes may include but are not limited to the following:

1. An examination of the Nova Scotia curriculum paying attention to its multicultural/anti-racist aspect.
2. An examination of current curriculum materials or government documents, again paying attention to the multi cultural/anti-racist nature of the materials.
3. A historical analysis of how multiculturalism in Nova Scotial Canada evolved and its current status.

The purpose of this exercise is to give forum to explore and apply some of the theoretical issues examined in class so far. Both the actual participation format (process of preparation) and the oral presentation format will be considered in the evaluation. For this exercise, groups are encouraged to provide own evaluation of process/performance convincing me on a particular mark.

Weeks 8 & 9

Curriculum as practice: gender, labour and schooling

During these two weeks we will examine gender issues in curriculum practice. In a curriculum that focuses on ethnicity and races where and how are gender inequities identified and redressed? We will also examine the connections between education and the social division of labor.

Readings

Section 3 of *Breaking the mosaic*.

Week 10

A multicultural lesson plan

For this class there is no prescribed reading. This week is devoted to the preparation of assignment 3. A brief comment explaining why you consider your lesson plan to be a model of multiculturalism is expected.

Weeks 11 & 12

These two weeks will be devoted to the discussion of topics selected by course participants as a focus for their final paper. Each student will have a chance to focus, clarify or otherwise make progress towards defining the paper topic and content. These are working sessions rather than formal presentations and therefore differ from weeks 6 and 7. Part of week 11 will be devoted at examining assignment 3.