

Curriculum Studies and Classroom Practice
Education 5200OL Spring 2015



January 7th – April 18th, 2014 on-line (check **Moodle** as home website for 5200ol)
Instructor: **Dr. Leah C. Fowler** E-mail: **leah.fowler@uleth.ca**
Office: **TH256** Phone: (403) 329-2457 or 403-394-3526
Secretary: Jean Mankee at 329-2260 or Margaret Beintma at 329-2732

Course Description and Overview

Curriculum refers to a course of study, originating from the Latin word *currere*, meaning “to run a course.” In Roman society, the term was associated with the running of chariot races. In the modern period, from the late 19th century to approximately the 1960s, curriculum was linked with the development, administration, and implementation of prescribed and planned courses and programs within educational institutional frameworks...to run the course:

“Thus *currere* refers to an existential experience of institutional structures...devised to disclose experience, so that we may see more of it and see more clearly.

With such seeing can come deepened understanding of the running, and with this, can come deepened agency.” Pinar & Grumet, 1976

More recently, the focus has shifted away again from an instrumentalist, top-down approach toward an **inquiry** conceptualization of curriculum, incorporating enduring curriculum questions such as:

- Who decides what knowledge is of most worth?
- How do social, cultural, historical, political, and geographical forces influence curriculum change?
- What is the role of the teacher as curriculum worker and change agent?
- How do students and teachers negotiate the lived reality of the classroom together?
- How do we read and write the world and assess educational contexts?
- What does it mean to be a literate, ethical, participatory citizen?
- How should curriculum be designed, developed, implemented, assessed?
- What is curriculum and curriculum studies? (Hint: Programs of Study are only a very small part of the answer)
- What is the relationship of the teacher to the teaching?
- Who is the self that teaches?
- What is schooling? What ‘should’ it be? What ‘could’ it be?
- What is the role of schooling in society now?
- What do communities need the young to know and be able to do?
- What are established and new ways of working with curriculum?
- What are the histories, current states, and future directions of curriculum studies and classroom practice?

- What is the structure and function of education?
(individually, locally, provincially, nationally, and internationally)
- What do we need to learn as educators?
- What is involved in good curriculum thinking?
- What are effective curriculum practices and how do we assess them?



These kinds of questions engage us with issues of curriculum as a complex and often difficult, lived “text”. Teaching is incredibly demanding as a profession and a way of living. We will consider the traditional aspects of curriculum such as curriculum design, development, implementation, and evaluation, but we will enlarge those boundaries of discourse into a much more complicated conversation including the human, social, political, cultural, environmental, and philosophical curricula of students, teachers, schools, districts, communities, and countries.

Starting from our own situation and place, inside and outside the classroom, we are challenged to consider how we can create possibilities for curriculum education and change through the thoughtful interweaving of theory and practice. Through highlighting diverse curricular movements, 5200ol (2015) attempts to create opportunities to make sense of how we can run formal education creatively, professionally, and practically as educators--teachers and administrators--of subjects and courses, of students, and ourselves.

As a professional educator and as a graduate student, you are invited to think, write, draw, work on and assess authentic questions about the how, what, when, and where of your (and our collective) curricular ideas, values, theories, and practices in order to arrive at a personal and public, meaningful understanding of the why and how of curriculum and classroom practices. We can study historical and contemporary foundations that inform current curriculum thought and practice what is worth learning for 21st century students and their complicated contexts. We conclude the course with discussions about the challenges, issues and trends in Curriculum Studies, critical pedagogy and the role of schools and schooling, and eco-pedagogy with tensions, politics, and responsibilities in both local and global contexts.

“The short answer is that curriculum theory is the interdisciplinary study of educational experience.” Pinar, 2004

“Our schools should teach children the skills to work with others—cooperative learning can be effective when practiced well and in moderation—but also the time and training to deliberately practice on their own.”

Susan Cain, 2012, in *Quiet: The Power of Introverts in a World that Can't Stop Talking*, p. 94.

The time is certainly right for curriculum change. So in an era of crisis and complaint, we are cautiously optimistic and hopeful.

William Doll, 1983, p. 109.

Getting Started with 5200 when you are ready.

I have posted a few initial articles, readings and notes for you on Moodle:

Please check the **Readings** link for 5200ol2015 and choose those that interest you most. That resource of research articles will grow as we progress through 5200.

Interesting curriculum readings can also be found in a number of textbooks, including three by professors at the University of Lethbridge. Although not required, they may be helpful to you in your research. You can check out the Tables of Contents online and if you are interested in a particular section or chapter, please let me know. They are all available of course digitally, but the library has them too.

- Hurren, W. (2013). *Contemplating curriculum*. Routledge.
- Hasebe-Ludt, E. & Hurren, W. (2003). *Curriculum intertext: Place/language/pedagogy*. New York: Peter Lang
- Ng-A-Fook, N. & Rottman, J. (Eds.) 2012. *Reconsidering Canadian Curriculum Studies: Provoking historical, present, and future perspectives*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Fowler, L. (2006). *A curriculum of difficulty: Narrative research in the practice of teaching*. New York: Peter Lang.

We can begin our complicated conversations about Curriculum Studies and Classroom Practice on January 7 when Moodle is opened. This course outline and Moodle materials can help us get us started on the course, so we can really enjoy our time together in personal study and conversation online about what matters most to us.

Readings will emerge through our work over the course, as each topic develops. You could get started by looking the assignments, beginning to read, and starting with Assignment #1 for the first week, about your own context and current views on curriculum. For a strong start, it would be helpful for you to read (or re-read) John Dewey's 1897 "*My Pedagogy Creed*" <http://dewey.pragmatism.org/creed.htm> and then Cynthia Chambers' "*A Topography for Canadian Curriculum*" (online/Moodle).

- - - - -
 "Teach them, then, or bear with them." Marcus Aurelius, 61 B.C.E.
 - - - - -

What authorizes curriculum developers to be curriculum developers is not only their expertness in doing tasks of curriculum development, but more so a deeply conscious sensitivity to what it means to have a developer's touch, tact, attunement that acknowledges in some deep sense the uniqueness of every teaching situation....To raise curriculum planning from being mired in a technical view is a major challenge to curriculum developers of this day. Aoki, 1986, p. 10

"A curriculum plan should be seen as an opening up of possibilities that enable learning, rather than as the management of expected outcomes." T. Carson, 1989, p. 66

Key Course Topic Suggestions for Education 5200 could include:
(depending upon your interests, once we get acquainted)

Introduction to Curriculum Studies and Classroom Practice

- Pedagogic creeds – what do we know and believe about curriculum (after reading Dewey's Creed)
- Curriculum definitions, beliefs, theory, and knowledge of many
- Key curriculum questions and frames for thinking about curriculum
- Curriculum aims and goals of education – more than the Program of Studies!



Historical Foundations and Origins of Curriculum;

- Informing curriculum leadership, assessment, and evaluation
 - Traditional frames, components, and language of curriculum
 - From past to present: what is worth keeping and authentic; what needs to be built?
-

Metaphors of Curriculum: Curriculum-as-Plan; Curriculum-as-Lived

- Curriculum-as-Lived; Narrating curriculum; Assessing Curriculum; Curriculum Vision
 - Curriculum design and development: Theory and current, effective practices
-

Re-conceptualist Movement in Curriculum Studies

- Teacher as curriculum; Administrator as curriculum
 - Curriculum research projects - your own topics
 - Curriculum implementation: Theory and best practices
 - Curriculum assessment: Theory and current Practices
-



World Curriculum Issues (in local, provincial, national, international communities)

- The Future of Curriculum Studies: Challenges for Education
- Issues and Trends in Curriculum Studies
- Critical Pedagogy and the Role of Schools and Schooling
- Difficulty in Curriculum and Teaching
- Eco-pedagogy and Critical Global Curricula
- Tensions, politics, and responsibilities in Curricular Accountability (for students, parents, teachers, leaders, boards, trustees, provinces, Canada, globally)
- Cosmopolitan Approaches to Curriculum (work of William Pinar)
- Indigenizing Curriculum

With all the above topics, questions, and issues, how do we authentically assess our work in educational curricula?

The path of understanding, if it is not to "simplify," must be tread gently. Boler, 1999, 175

Alone and together let us participate in complicated conversation with ourselves and with colleagues worldwide. Pinar, 2004

Course Assignments and Evaluation - Education 5200, Spring 2015
Instructor: Dr. Leah C. Fowler

Guidelines for written assignments are consistent with School of Graduate Studies at the University of Lethbridge: Please use APA Manuscript format as described in that style manual. [You can get this on-line.] Please cite all references used in your work. Work is assessed and graded on the basis of thought and detail, conceptual development, descriptive support and elaboration of statements made, and academic, scholarly style conventions, usage, grammar, spelling, punctuation, referencing, and professional format.

Please label the files of the assignments you email to me and include in the subject line. [E.g. "Your Name 5200 #1 Working from Within", with name, number, assignment title]

Assessment Policy: I have a practice of reading your work and assigning an "as-is" grade. If you want to discuss and then work more at it and re-submit, you are welcome to do that. As well, I suggest a due date for each assignment and you have a week's flex time after that. If you are not able to get an assignment done within that one-week period of grace, please let me know. I encourage you to work at your own optimum pace, and submit your assignments to me when you have a draft ready, and I will return it in a natural flux that works best online. Assignments are conceptually designed, build on what you do from one to the next.

**With any of these assignments, please email or phone me for clarification if you need. This course content and agenda is subject to change dependent upon the needs and interests of the students enrolled, but the focus is on Curriculum studies and classroom practice with respect to relevant curriculum studies and classroom practice.

In keeping with the standardized grading schedule of the Graduate Studies in Faculty of Education and School of Graduate Studies, letter grades are assigned at end of course.

Numeric Value	Letter Grade	Grade Point
97 - 100	A+	4.00
93 - 96	A	4.00
90 - 92	A-	3.70
87 - 89	B+	3.30
83 - 86	B	3.00
80 - 82	B-	2.70

Note: Any course with a grade of less than B- cannot be considered for credit in the M.Ed. Program.

In all assignments, there is the expectation of scholarly and professional content, format, conventions that all Canadian University Graduate Programs adhere to: **original** work, clear writing, and good presentation for others to read.

*There will be no exams or quizzes given in Educ5200ol. *

Assignments and Course Work – Details Below

#1 Key question: What is my professional curriculum context?

[10 marks; max 1000 words. Suggested due Jan. 12, 2014.]

“Working from Within” – This assignment is an informal introduction and description of your current professional, curriculum, and working/life context, and beginning thoughts about curriculum studies.

This is a chance for you to reflect on your educational circumstances, in light of two beginning articles. For this first assignment, you can use a journal or informal voice and format for the comments you want to make about your current state of thinking about curriculum and education in general as you go through this master’s course, and what areas of experience, education, and interest you have about subjects and teaching and curriculum. (I suggest you read (re-read) John Dewey’s “My Pedagogic Creed” (on line) and Cynthia Chambers’ article on “A Topography for Canadian Curriculum Theory” –uploaded to the readings in our 5200 Moodle site.) Please describe your own professional context and your reading response to those two articles (looking back, looking now, looking ahead) as a way of beginning your written work. Please send this first assignment to me by email as an attachment. I would like to have it by January 12 (January 19th at latest) so that I can learn your needs and interests. Although this assignment is not shared with everybody, this will help shape our course together in a more relevant way.

#2 Key Question: What connections are there between my local curriculum issues with other Canadian and global contexts?

[15 marks, a one-page Concept Map/Poster (PDF or public link), due Jan. 26]

Using curriculum questions and topics, please identify, think deeply about, and describe 3-5 key issues or aspects of education that you feel should be an essential part of the curriculum of becoming human and living well as a citizen in Canada. They may be already existing knowledge, skills, or attributes in established curriculum, or new ones you think we should be teaching children now. You are welcome to research, check out the new Alberta Inspired Education curriculum documents, etc. and refer to your research as you construct a one-page poster identifying these curriculum issues, with brief suggestions for design, development, implementation, and evaluation/assessment of each. There are resources and links and reading on our Moodle site that may provoke your thinking. This poster assignment is one I would like you to share with your colleagues in an online forum on Moodle. Please send me a digital copy by attachment by email to assess. Once everyone is finished this second assignment, please save your Concept Map as a PDF file and post to the forum on Moodle. [For your work on one, you will get many others in return, and we will get a sense of what some serious current challenges and needs there are in curriculum.]

#3 Key Question: What do the research experts and curriculum studies scholars say about a curriculum issue(s) related to my own professional practice?

[Builds on first two assignments and addresses putting curriculum theory into practice. This is a summary of, and reader-response to, your chosen relevant research article.

[20 marks, maximum 1000 words, suggested due date February 23]

Given what you have written in the first two assignments and your current focus of research and interest, a) please choose and read a new reputable scholarly curriculum studies article on a curriculum area of interest to you (since 2010). Search in library or on-line, record the full (on-line) citation, and b) write a **90-word summary** of key ideas in the article and c) your thoughts and response to those ideas. Write an abstract in your own words of the connection and relevance to your own interests and career.

e.g. sample kind of articles you could choose: To What Questions are Schools Answers?
http://www.educ.ualberta.ca/css/Css_39_2/ARdenHeyer_throughline_questions.htm

Link of use to you may be: <http://www.csse.ca/CACS/LLRC/index.htm> and some key Canadian research scholars' names to start: Cynthia Chambers, William Pinar (honorary Canadian), Dwayne Donald, Rita Irwin, Tetsuo Aoki, Rebecca Luce-Kapler, Deborah Britzman, Jacques Daigneault, Hans Smit, David Smith (U of A.), Dennis Sumara, Carl Leggo, Leah Fowler, Donna Trueit, Max Van Maanen, and use the textbook or bibliographies available to you in articles by these writers to find other Canadian Curriculum Scholars concerned with global contexts.

#4 Key Question: What is one personal experience you have with a need for change in classroom/professional practice?

This is short curriculum story [15 marks, 800-1000 words or combination with visuals depending on how you wish to represent this issue suggested due date **March 16]**
 Please write a short story of an experience in teaching, an event, or classroom difficulty or challenge that has affected your work as an educator. It also could be in the form of a children's picture book to teach others or a mini graphic novel format of 3-4 pages. After you have written the story, please journal a brief reflection of the process, results, and insights you may have had, as a narrative analysis. For a couple of stories I have written about this, please see the narrative analysis link on Moodle, if you like, following by a brief summary of my narrative analysis model. *If this assignment frightens you, please suggest another equivalent assignment to me related to curriculum experienced with others.

#5. Key Question: How would I analyze and assess a current curriculum or classroom practice that is connected to my own experiences?

Analysis and Assessment of a relevant existing curriculum/issue. [**20 marks; due March 30**]
 Please do a close reading, analysis and critique of an existing curriculum document or issue. You can choose a subject or curriculum topic (from your previous assignments if you like to build on it) and research existing curriculum documents (new or outdated) from the Alberta Programs of Studies or Alberta Learning/Education website. The goal is that it should be applicable to your education needs, interest, research, or context.

#6. Key Question: What does making a positive or restorative curriculum change look like? [This final assignment is 20 marks, due April 13.]

Using the outline below, and built on all your assignments 1-5, identify a curriculum change in the world (a real one) you would like to design, develop, implement, and evaluate (it

could be a change in your classroom, school, or professional practice). Perhaps it is a curriculum difficulty or challenge (even for this coming year). If useful, you can pose a research question about this curriculum project to which you would like to find an answer for your own life. Please develop a series of 15-20 slides along with a brief journal reflection on the process and topic of change. The format is like a presentation you could make to other teachers at a conference or PD day to improve some practice in curriculum and assessment. Please email to me as an attachment, and once everyone is finished, please post assignment to other students on our class discussion forum on Moodle.

#6 Curriculum Change Project Power-point Guidelines

Format: 15 – 20 Slides in a power-point format. Slide content should include:

1. Title of Your Curriculum Change Project Plan and Research Question(s)
2. Context of curriculum site: type of institution, level, categories, subjects, response to need, rationale, background notes you need for curriculum change
3. Goals and Aims (intentions, objectives of the curriculum project)
4. Human Resources, Equipment, Materials Needed:
5. Activities: a. Design: b. Development: c. Implementation:
- d. Authentic assessment/evaluation of curriculum plan
(i. formative, ii. Summative, iii. Involving participants in evaluation) including timeline/schedule
6. Possible significance, challenges and benefits:
7. Reflection on your process constructing this assignment

It may be that when we no longer know what to do, we have come to our real work, and that when we no longer know which way to go, we have begun our real journey. Wendell Berry

Some useful websites: Many more are on Moodle 5200ol site

<http://education.alberta.ca/teachers/program.aspx>

<http://www.uleth.ca/edu/currlab>

<http://www.uleth.ca/education/programs-degrees/graduate-studies/current-grad-students>

<http://www.ccfi.educ.ubc.ca/publication/insights/>

<http://www.curriculumtheoryproject.ca/members/>

<https://pi.library.yorku.ca/ojs/index.php/jcacs/issue/current/showToc>

<http://journal.jctonline.org/index.php/jct/issue/current>

<https://pi.library.yorku.ca/ojs/index.php/jcacs>

<http://web.camosun.ca/cetl/curriculum-design/learning-about-indigenization>

<http://cjar.nipissingu.ca/index.php/cjar>