Teaching for Equity and Social Justice: A Focus on Inclusive Curriculum
EDUC 5424
Tuesdays, 3:30-5:30pm
AND 2 hours ONLINE per week

Instructor: Dr. Jennifer C. Ingrey, Office 2045, 519-661-2111 ext 88593, jingrey2@uwo.ca

Course Description:
A focus on issues of equity—race, culture, religion, gender, social class, sexuality, and disability—in education. Critical analysis of school curricula and classroom practice. Development of teaching strategies appropriate for an increasingly diverse and heterogeneous student population.

Aims, Goals, Objectives, Outcomes:
The main objective of this course is to make participants familiar with issues of inequities such as race, culture, religion, gender, social class and sexuality in education. It examines the meaning of equity and social justice within the context of multiculturalism in the public education system in Ontario. More specifically, the course will provide participants with opportunities to critically examine current school curriculum, policy and classroom practices and develop strategies for an equitable and inclusive curriculum. Curriculum units are examined for their relevance in a society that is increasingly characterized with diversity and heterogeneity of its student population.

Standards of Practice for the teaching profession:
All five of the key elements in the Ontario College of Teachers Standards of Practice are integral to this course:

- **Commitment to Students and Student Learning** is integral to this course. This course examines factors and characteristics that enhance learning in cross-cultural settings. More importantly, pedagogical strategies that address distortions in thinking about race, cultural differences, sexual orientation and gender are explored.

- **Professional Knowledge** relating to cultural diversity and education (both in Canada and in Ontario) is examined. An important component will be the evolution of equity policy, and students will have an opportunity to challenge significant decisions made over time.

- **Teaching Practice** and the exercise of professional judgement are a vital component of the course. Students will investigate how cultural, racial and gender disparities in the
classroom and in the school may be addressed in order to enrich the schooling experience and enhance learning and cooperation rather than serve as a basis for conflict.

- **Leadership and Community** is stressed in those components of the course in which students themselves might become change agents through their commitment to equity ideals.
- **The Necessity for ongoing Professional Learning** is established throughout the course. Participants learn that the cross-cultural approach provides a reservoir for effectiveness in the teaching-learning experiences, that professional recognition of this medium is belated, and that further explorations are required. In particular, teacher candidates will learn that Canada is at the threshold of a new and necessary approach to education.

**Course Content:**

**Major Themes**

This course will specifically deal with the following topics:

- Equity and social justice
- Race, culture, multiculturalism, and anti-racism
- Gender and education
- Social class and the education system
- Sexuality and transgender issues in education
- Disability and oppression
- Indigenous issues and education
- Intersection of race, gender, sexuality and social class

**Course Materials:**

The following required text is available for purchase from Books Plus:


**Assignments and Other Course Requirements:**

**Expectations**

1. Because of the nature of the program, it is very important that you participate in every scheduled session both onsite and online. If you are absent for more than a week, confer with your instructor as soon as you can. More than one absence without a legitimate excuse will result in the lowering of your grade.
2. It is expected that you read the assigned readings and be prepared to participate in class discussions based on assigned readings. You are required to complete only two or three readings per week.
3. Assignments are expected to be handed in on due dates. It is your responsibility to organize your time and meet the expectations of the course.
Assignments/Evaluation

1. Weekly Responses/ Participation in Class  40%
2. Group Presentation and In-class Activity/Discussion  30%
3. Final Research Reflection Paper  30%

Total: 100%

Policy Statements:

Accessibility: The University of Western Ontario is committed to recognizing the dignity and independence of all students and seeks to ensure that persons with disabilities have genuine, open and unhindered access to academic services. Please contact the course instructor if you require course materials in an alternative format or if any other arrangements can make this course more accessible to you. You may also wish to contact Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD) at 661-2111 x 82147 for information about requesting academic accommodation, or go to the following website: http://www.edu.uwo.ca/teacher-education/docs/policies/Accessibility_Western.pdf

Attendance: The B.Ed. program is an intense and demanding programs of professional preparation. You are expected to demonstrate high levels of both academic and professional integrity. Such integrity is demonstrated in part by your commitment to and attendance at all classes, workshops, tutorials, and practicum activities. Read more about the Faculty’s attendance policy online at http://www.edu.uwo.ca/teacher-education/docs/Attendance%20Policy%202016.pdf.

Excused Absences: If you are ill, require compassionate leave, or must miss classes for religious observance, your absence is excused; you will not be penalized but you are responsible for work missed.

UNEXCUSED ABSENCES: Any absence that is not a result of illness, bereavement, or religious observance is an unexcused absence. Three unexcused absences will result in you being referred to the Associate Dean and placed on academic probation. Any further unexcused absence will result in failure of the course and withdrawal from the program.

Language Proficiency: In accordance with regulations established by the Senate of the University, all teacher candidates must demonstrate the ability to write clearly and correctly. Work which shows a lack of proficiency in the language of instruction is unacceptable for academic credit, and will either be failed or, at the discretion of the instructor, returned to the teacher candidate for revision to a literate level.

Late Penalties: Normally, the only acceptable reasons for late or missed assignments are illness (for which a doctor’s statement may be required) or extreme compassionate circumstances.

Academic Offences: Scholastic offences are taken particularly seriously in this professional Faculty. Teacher Candidates should read about what constitutes a Scholastic Offence at the following Web site: http://www.edu.uwo.ca/teacher-education/docs/policies/WEB_ScholasticDiscipline.pdf
**Plagiarism:** Plagiarism means presenting someone else’s words or ideas as one’s own. The concept applies to all assignments, including lesson and unit plans, laboratory reports, diagrams, and computer projects. For further information, teacher candidates may consult their instructors, the Associate Dean’s Office, and current style manuals. *Advice about plagiarism and how to avoid it can also be found on the Preservice website:* [http://www.edu.uwo.ca/preservice/downloads/Plagiarism%20Policy.pdf](http://www.edu.uwo.ca/preservice/downloads/Plagiarism%20Policy.pdf)

**Plagiarism-Checking:**

*a.* All required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to the commercial plagiarism detection software under license to the University for the detection of plagiarism. All papers submitted for such checking will be included as source documents in the reference database for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of papers subsequently submitted to the system. Use of the service is subject to the licensing agreement, currently between The University of Western Ontario and Turnitin.com ([http://www.turnitin.com](http://www.turnitin.com)).

*b.* Computer-marked multiple-choice tests and/or exams may be subject to submission for similarity review by software that will check for unusual coincidences in answer patterns that may indicate cheating.

**Use of Laptops & Notebooks in Class:** As a courtesy to members of the class, please put your cell phone on ‘vibrate’ or turn it off during class. Laptops and other electronic devices may be used in a professional manner to facilitate your activities in the course, but out of courtesy to colleagues and the instructor, please engage in personal networking and non-course communication only outside class time – before or after class, or at the break.

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**SUPPORT SERVICES**

A variety of support services are available at Western. If you need advice or assistance, do not hesitate to get in touch with any of these services.

**FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE:** Registrarial Services ([http://www.registrar.uwo.ca](http://www.registrar.uwo.ca))

**WRITING SUPPORT:** Student Development Centre ([http://www.sdc.uwo.ca/](http://www.sdc.uwo.ca/))

**LEARNING SKILLS SUPPORT:** Student Development Centre ([http://www.sdc.uwo.ca/](http://www.sdc.uwo.ca/))

**INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS:** Student Development Centre ([http://www.sdc.uwo.ca/](http://www.sdc.uwo.ca/))

**ABORIGINAL STUDENTS:** Student Development Centre ([http://www.sdc.uwo.ca/](http://www.sdc.uwo.ca/))

**STUDENTS with DISABILITIES:** Student Development Centre ([http://www.sdc.uwo.ca/](http://www.sdc.uwo.ca/))

**SOCIAL & CULTURAL ISSUES:** University Students’ Council ([http://westernusc.ca/services/](http://westernusc.ca/services/)).
EMOTIONAL or MENTAL DISTRESS: Students who are in emotional or mental distress should refer to Mental Health @ Western http://www.uwo.ca/uwocom/mentalhealth/ for a complete list of options about how to obtain help.

B.Ed. PROGRAM ISSUES: zuber@uwo.ca, Teacher Education Office, room 1131

NEED HELP but not sure what to do: zuber@uwo.ca, Teacher Education Office, room 1131

Additional Information:

About the Course:

The University of Western Ontario and the Faculty of Education interpret letter grades as follows. All assignments in this course are marked on this basis.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Percentage Range</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A+</td>
<td>90-100%</td>
<td>outstanding work which can hardly be bettered</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>80-89%</td>
<td>superior work which is clearly above average</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>70-79%</td>
<td>good work, meeting all the requirements, and eminently satisfactory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>60-69%</td>
<td>competent work but not of the standard normally expected in the Faculty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>50-59%</td>
<td>inferior work which is clearly deficient but minimally acceptable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E</td>
<td>40-49%</td>
<td>work that is not acceptable but which qualifies for a supplementary examination to achieve a passing grade of 50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>Below 40%</td>
<td>work which is below minimally acceptable standards and which, while it is subject to the normal rights of appeal, does not automatically qualify for supplementary examination privileges.</td>
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Topical Outline:

Session 1 (October 17) - Introduction
Introduction to the main topics of the course
Discussion of the course requirements and evaluation
Readings:

Session 2 (October 24) – Oppression and Privilege
Readings:

**Session 3 (October 31) – Teaching for equity and social justice: The foundations in theory**

**Readings:**

**Session 4 (November 7) - Classism and Ableism**

**Readings:**

**Session 5 (November 14) – Racism and Anti-Racist Education: Beyond Multiculturalism**

**Readings:**
Session 6 (January 9) – Gender and Education
Readings:

Session 7 (January 16) – Addressing Homophobia and Heteronormativity in Schooling
Readings:
4. Youtube (2012) *Hate in the hallways: Challenging homophobia in schools:* [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=I7_MRmU6TEo](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=I7_MRmU6TEo)

Session 8 (January 23) - Transphobia and Gender Queer/Variant Youth in Schools
Readings:

Session 9 (January 30) - Aboriginal Education
Readings:

Website resources:
Where are the children: [http://wherethechildren.ca/en/resources/#443](http://wherethechildren.ca/en/resources/#443)
Teaching for Indigenous Education: [http://www.indigenouseducation.ubc.ca/](http://www.indigenouseducation.ubc.ca/)
Submit Individual Research Reflection Paper

Practicum:

Assignment Guidelines:

1. **Weekly Responses/Participation in Class and Online (40%) [350 – 400 words]**
   
   You are expected to post in FORUMS every week excluding the week you are presenting.
   
   **Content:** Must make explicit reference to at least ONE reading via a quotation or paraphrase that you then follow up via discussion of its meaning to you, interpretation, etc., and relevance for your teaching practice. Use the first-person. Avoid summarizing. Provide a focus to your reflection. Consider posing questions based on the topic and then think about answering them.

   You have from Wednesday (after the Tuesday class) to Sunday to post on FORUMS. You may respond to colleagues online, but you are expected to participate in class discussions and thus may concentrate your responses to on-site meetings.

   What issues are raised in the course readings? How do the readings relate to practice in schools? Perhaps you do not entirely agree with the issues that are raised. What we are looking for here is critical thought, genuine engagement and analysis. Each question will be used to enhance class discussions and to broaden insights on issues emerging from the literature.

2. **Group Presentations and Class Activity/Discussion: Building Knowledge and Understanding about Teaching for Equity and Social Justice (30%)**

   **Presentations will begin in Week 6 and continue to the end of the course (Week 9).**

   You must post your presentation on Voice Thread by the Sunday night before we meet on Tuesday to allow students to have viewed your presentation. You may comment on each other’s presentation using the commenting tool in Voice Thread directly but you will not be evaluated explicitly for this activity.

   **Purpose:** This is a fairly open-ended project but it should be tied to the weekly topic in which you are presenting. The major purpose is to give students the opportunity to research or examine a particular equity or social justice issue in greater depth. Once you have investigated the topic then you will need to plan in your groups how you are going to present what you have learned and what the implications are for teaching equity and social justice in schools.

   **Suggested topics/foci for your research projects:**
   - Addressing the Gender and Sex based dimensions of harassment in schools
   - Straight/Gay Alliances in Schools
   - Anti-Homophobic Education in Schools
   - Anti-Racist Education in Schools
   - Combating Islamophobia or addressing Anti-Semitism in Schools
   - Finding out more about the experiences of visible minority or First Nations’ students in schools
- What does addressing equity and social justice mean in your particular discipline or curriculum area? (You may choose to work with a group of students who are all training to be English teachers, for example)
- Examining/Evaluating a particular resource for teaching equity and social justice in schools (How effective or useful is it?)
- Using popular culture to teach about equity and social justice in schools?
- How can learning about students’ backgrounds and outside of school lives make you a better teacher?
- Talking to recent graduates from visible/sexual minority groups about their lives at school.
- Finding out more about what teachers are doing in schools to address issues of equity and social justice
- Case study of social justice/equity program in a particular school
- Seeking out reliable background knowledge of the racial and ethnocultural make-up of a school community and its implications for practice
- Providing culturally-relevant pedagogy for children from diverse communities

Group Presentation & Activity

Component 1: Online Voice Thread Group Presentation: 15% (15-20 minutes): In groups of approximately four to five students, you will prepare at least two slides per person in a Voice Thread presentation which involves powerpoint slides and a voice over and/or ‘talking head’. Each student must speak to their prepared slides. The total presentation should last 15 – 20 minutes. The main purpose of the presentation is to present to the rest of the group what you have learned about your topic and how it informs your understanding about teaching for equity and social justice.

Component 2: In-class Discussion/Activity: 15% (30 minutes): The second part of the group project is to lead an activity or extension discussion in class. Your group will have 30 minutes to do this. The best way to do this is to engage the class by involving them in some activity or task i.e. use a resource or develop an activity to illustrate your point and what it means in relation to practice. Think also about the curricular and pedagogical implications of your topic as the basis for an activity.

Criteria for Assessment for Group Presentation on VoiceThread
1. Introduction: Outlines topic and its significance. Why is this focus important?

2. Background Information/Context: What sources did you use? Any other details about context or resources or literature that you have read to build your knowledge and understanding about the topic. What course readings have you found useful in helping you to think about what teaching for equity and social justice might look like in practice?

3. Framework: What framework informs your understanding of the topic?
Draws on course readings and/or set texts to present an informed perspective on your chosen topic.

4. Implications for practice: Is able to translate theory into practice or demonstrates how practice is informed by course readings/set texts. What does this knowledge about the topic mean for you as a prospective teacher. How has it helped you to think through what teaching for equity and social justice entails? What does teaching for equity and social justice involve in relation to your chosen topic/focus?
Criteria for Assessment for In-class Activity/Facilitated Discussion

- **Introduction**
  - Topic is outlined/explained
  - Reasons for choosing the topic are made explicit
  - Why is this topic important/significant to you?

- **Content**
  - What have you gained from doing this research/analysis?
  - What has been learned about the topic? How is this communicated?
  - Are other media and/or activities used to engage the class?
  - What attempt is made to actively involve the class?
  - Are implications for practice made explicit?

- **General**
  - Illustrates how in-depth knowledge about the topic informs policy and/or practice in schools

3. Individual Research Reflection Paper (30%) (Due January 30)
Each individual group member will be responsible for writing on the chosen topic. Here you have the opportunity to develop certain aspects or dimensions of the presentation/topic from your group presentation project as you see fit. However, this paper should deal with outlining what knowledge has been gained and what the implications are for practice in the classroom and/or schools. This component enables you to provide more detail and to engage with the issues raised throughout the course as they relate to your topic/focus in a more in-depth manner. Your paper should be between 6-8 pages (2000-2500 words including references), double-spaced and typed. You have to carefully edit your work and make sure it is presented without spelling and grammatical mistakes. The following criteria should help in writing up this paper:

Criteria for Assessment

1. **Introduction**: Outlines topic and its significance. Why is this focus important?

2. **Background Information/Context**: What external (to the course) sources did you use? Any other details about context or resources or literature that you have read to build your knowledge and understanding about the topic. What course readings have you found useful in helping you to think about what teaching for equity and social justice might look like in practice?

3. **Framework**: What framework informs your understanding of the topic? What internal (to the course) sources did you use? How did you build upon the course topics? Draws on course readings and/or set texts to present an informed perspective on your chosen topic.

4. **Implications for practice**: Is able to translate theory into practice or demonstrates how practice is informed by course readings/set texts. What does this knowledge about the topic mean for you as a prospective teacher. How has it helped you to think through what teaching for equity and social justice entails? What does teaching for equity and social justice involve in relation to your chosen topic/focus?
Bibliography:


