
Outdoor Ecological and Experiential Education (Individual Action Project)

INSTRUCTOR: Dr. Bob Jickling
CLASS TIME/RM: DAY: Thursday TIME: 1:00 – 3:00
BL2036 (See syllabus) for details
TEL / RM: 807- 343-8704, BL 2029
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OFFICE HRS: Thursday 10:00 A.M.– 12:00 Noon

COURSE DESCRIPTION

An introductory first-hand examination of knowledge, skills, and values necessary to develop and implement an outdoor experiential education program. The focus will be interdisciplinary, including science, geography, history, and art perspectives, as well as the more traditional outdoor education focus.

FOUNDATIONS OF PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE

A commitment to a clear vision of what it means to be a teacher is at the core of teacher professionalism and is the foundation for this course. The principles of the Ontario College of Teachers' (OCT) *Foundations of Professional Practice* have been embedded in the learning expectations for this course.

COURSE EXPECTATIONS

This course explores, both theoretically and practically, relationships between education and action.

In practical terms, this course takes place in the community. Students must first imagine how they might make a contribution to their community—how they might make a difference socially and environmentally. They must then research organizations and/or sites where they can enact their contribution by providing a strong environmentally-based service. In this context they must then provide 15 - 20 hours of service prior to the last class.

Theoretically, the course will examine questions like: What is the relationship between education and citizen action? Should we enable student action projects? If not, then what might be the consequences? What do we do when action projects become controversial? And, is it the educator's role, or even responsibility, to be a citizen too—enacting their own actions?

It is expected that, by the end of the course, learners will have:

- become involved in an action project and provided a service to the community,
- engaged with the theoretical questions posed in readings and through discussions,
- considered these questions in light of their community service experiences, and
- begun to re-imagine the roles and responsibilities of professional educators relative to community service and action.

COURSE CONTENT (see attached syllabus)

"All things that represent life at its most vital and wild wiggle. Words wiggle into metaphor; sperm wiggles; dancing and jokes and giggling wiggle; the shape and character of tumultuous life is a wiggling one" (Jay Griffiths, (2006). Wild: An Elemental Journey. p. 66). The same is true of education; so, this course will wiggle, too. Effective August 31, 2011

TEXTS

Required readings

A collection of readings is assigned. Some readings may be provided by instructor; the balance will be available at the Bookstore.

Supplemental reading

Tripp, P. & Muzzin, L. (Eds), *Teaching as activism: Equity meets environmentalism*. McGill-Queen's University Press. Ontario College of Teachers, *Foundations of Professional Practice*: <http://www.oct.ca/standards/foundations.aspx>

ASSIGNMENTS AND DUE DATES

General comments

Some worthwhile educational activities defy measurement and evaluation. Indeed, they can even be hard to talk about, especially when the learning is experientially driven. The action project largely fits this description. One way to look at this aspect of an experientially-based course is to think of it, at least in part, as something of a pass/fail experience. So this is along the lines of what I suggest we do with portions of the grade. The expectations that we have for students here is to achieve a standard right at the border between Level 3 and Level 4 on the faculty rubric—80 %.

Individual Action Plan (5%)

Early planning is essential for a course like this. A summary of the action project plan, including specific contacts and phone numbers, is due on September 16. This will be viewed as a pass/fail item (See General Comments.) Late plans will be reduced by 1 mark/ day that they are late.

Action Project (50% total)

I expect you to complete 20 hours of community service to meet this standard. So to summarize:

- completion of 20 hours of community service will result in Level 4/3 assessment (pass/fail) as outlined above, and
- completion of 15 hours of community service will result in Level 3/2 assessment.

Service evaluation (5%)

Submit an evaluation completed by the organization you served (stating that you fulfilled the required hours). A letter template will be provided. This, too, will be viewed as a pass/fail item.

Experiential dialogue (10%)

Ongoing participation in class dialogue is critical and is thus recognized.

Final In-class essay (30%)

This essay will require learners to provide a thoughtful exploration of relationships between education and community action in light of their emerging understanding of education through the readings, and through their own experiences—during this course and before. The essay will be framed by choosing one of several questions provided at least one week beforehand. This will be evaluated with aid of the faculty rubric.

Summary

		<i>Due date</i>
Individual Action Plan	5%	September 15
Action Project	50%	Ongoing
In-class essay	30%	October 20
Submitted service evaluation	5%	October 27
Experiential dialogue	10%	Ongoing

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ASSESSMENT AND EVALUATION

In general terms, evaluation of written material in this course will be based on the student's: depth of engagement with the course activities, questions, and readings; their clarity of thought, intellectual curiosity; and their intellectual generosity, self-reflexiveness, and critical thinking. Assessments, where appropriate, will be made using the 4-level rubric scale.

All assignments are due at the beginning of class on the prescribed date. Grades will be determined by the quality of the assignments as applicable to a professional educator. All written assignments must be typed and all late assignments will receive a late penalty of 10% per calendar day (excluding weekends), unless accompanied by a medical certificate.

ATTENDANCE

Active participation is always a critical component of field-based or discussion-oriented courses. There is important learning that takes place through experiences that lie outside of evaluation practices. The expectation is that your absences should not exceed (for important appointments, etc.) 1 class per semester. Missing 30 % of classes in a course during a semester is unacceptable and will result in a failing grade.

RELATED LAKEHEAD UNIVERSITY and FACULTY OF EDUCATION POLICIES

INCOMPLETE STANDING

See: <http://mycoursecalendar.lakeheadu.ca/pg35.html> [V Standing]

FACULTY OF EDUCATION GRADING POLICIES

See: <http://education.lakeheadu.ca/undergraduate/uploads/Microsoft Word - Faculty of Ed Grading Policies.pdf>

SYLLABUS

Week One: September 1. Introduction. Individual Action: When School and Community Meet.

Week Two: September 8. The virtues of controversy.

Thomashow, M. (1989). The virtues of controversy. *Bull. Sci. Tech. Soc.*, 9, 66-70.
Clarke, P. (1992/93). Teaching controversial issues. *Green Teacher*, 31, 9-12.

Week Three: September 15. Alternatives that may involve less controversy.

Weston, A. (1996). Deschooling environmental education. *Canadian Journal of Environmental Education*, 1, 35-44.
Spencer, D. The Gayngaru land rehabilitation project. In J. Andrew and I. Robottom, *Environmental Education Across Australia*, Case study 3, pp. 1-6. Geelong: Australian Association for Environmental Education.

Individual Action Plan Due. Share project ideas.

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Week Four: September 22. Respect.

- Sterling, S. (2002). Yaya' and the firbough: A philosophy of respect. *Canadian Journal of Environmental Education*, 7,(1), 43-53.
- Wren, L., Jackson, M., Morris, H., Geddes, C., Tlen, D., Kassi, N. (1996). In a panel discussion: What is a good way to teach children and young adults to respect the land? In B. Jickling (ed.), *A colloquium on environment, ethics, and education*.(pp. 32-48). Whitehorse: Yukon College.
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Week Five: September 29. Ethics as an everyday activity.

- Naess, A. & Jickling, B. (2000). Deep ecology and education: A conversation with Arne Naess. *Canadian Journal of Environmental Education*, 5, 48-62.
- Kaza, S. (2002). Teaching ethics through environmental justice. *Canadian Journal of Environmental Education*, 7(1). 99-109.
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Week Six: October 6. Education, advocacy, and action.

- Jickling, Bob. (2005). Education and advocacy: A troubling relationship. In E. A. Johnson & M. Mappin (Eds.), *Environmental Education and Advocacy: Changing Perspectives of Ecology and Education*, (pp. 91-113). Cambridge, U.K.: Cambridge University Press.
- McLaren, M. & Hammond, B. (2005). Integrating education and action in environmental education. In E. A. Johnson & M. Mappin (Eds.), *Environmental Education and Advocacy: Changing Perspectives of Ecology and Education*, (pp. 267-291). Cambridge, U.K.: Cambridge University Press.
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Week Seven: October 13. **No Class.**

Week Eight: October 20. Group Action Project, brainstorming and planning.
In class essay.

Week Nine: October 27. Report on action projects. **Service evaluation due.**

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