

EDU 326A FA 2016

REDEEMER UNIVERSITY COLLEGE

EDU 326A: Environmental Education

Course Weight: 1.5

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Course Description

The purpose of this course is to facilitate teacher candidates' building of theoretical knowledge and pedagogical skills in Environmental Education (EE). Within the course opportunities are provided for participants to interrogate fundamental concepts, philosophies and curricular approaches for integrating EE into elementary school settings. Opportunities are also provided for participants to evaluate some of the tensions and practical problems surrounding the implementation of EE in schools. While student teachers will be introduced to a wide range of perspectives, Christian responses to environmental education are emphasized. Course activities will consist of lectures, demonstrations, multimedia presentations, inquiry activities, whole group discussions, outdoor activities, and student presentations.

Course Objectives

At the end of the course students will be able to:

- a. Discuss a diversity of perspectives regarding the nature and purposes of environmental education
- b. Justify the need for comprehensive programs of environmental education in elementary schools
- c. Outline major concepts inherent to environmental literacy from Christian and non-Christian perspectives
- d. Critically evaluate Creation Care as a unique Christian perspective regarding human relationship with nature and a guide to action regarding environmental problems
- e. Describe different curricular approaches to environmental education especially emphasizing how these intersect with or diverge with a Christian worldview
- f. Articulate current Ontario Ministry of Education policy positions with regard to theory and practice of environmental education
- g. Plan, design and prepare suitable curriculum experiences to meet environmental literacy goals for a diverse range of students
- h. Demonstrate a mindful awareness that environmental education is a developing field fraught with tensions, opportunities and challenges that need to be addressed with humility and open-mindedness.

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Course Resources

Ministry of Education Documents:

(Copies of these documents can be freely downloaded from the Ontario Ministry of Education website <http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/teachers/enviroed/publications.html>)

1. Ontario Ministry of Education (2009). *Acting today shaping tomorrow: A policy framework for environmental education in Ontario school*. Toronto, ON: Queens Printer.
2. Ontario Ministry of Education (2008). *The Ontario Curriculum Grades 1-8. Environmental Education: Scope and Sequence Expectations*. Toronto, ON: Queens Printer.
3. Ontario Ministry of Education (2007). *Ready set green! Tips, techniques and resources from Ontario educators*. Toronto, ON: Queens Printer.
4. Working Group on Environmental Education (2007). *Shaping our schools shaping our future*. Toronto, ON: Queens Printer.

Course Text/Readings

There is NO course textbook for this course. Instead relevant readings will be assigned applicable to sessions/topics as listed below. These readings will be made available on your Course Website.

Boumer-Prediger, S. (2010). *For the beauty of the earth: A Christian vision for creation care*. Grand Rapids Michigan: Baker Academic. **Chapter 3**

Chief Seattle (1854). *Chief Seattle's reply to a government offer to purchase the remaining Salish lands*. Read online from <http://www.halcyon.com/arborhts/chiefsea.html>

Dalai Lama (1992). *A Buddhist concept of nature*. Read online from <http://dalailama.com/messages/environment/buddhist-concept-of-nature>

Dalai Lama (1990). *Ecology and the human heart*. Excerpt from *My Tibet* (p. 53-54). London: Thames and Hudson Ltd. Read online from <http://dalailama.com/messages/environment/ecology-and-the-human-heart>

Hodson, D. (2003). Time for action: Science education for an alternative future. *International Journal of Science Education*, 25(2), 15-20.

Inwood, H. (2010). Shades of green. Growing environmentalism through art education. *Art Education*, 63(6), 33-38.

Jensen, B.B., & Schnack, K. (2006). The action competence approach to environmental education. *Environmental Education Research*, 12(3), 472-486

Kostamo, L. (2013). *Planted: A story of creation, calling and community*. Eugene, OR: Cascade Books. **Chapters 1, 3, 12**

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Nolet, V. (2016). *Educating for sustainability. Principles and practices for teachers*. New York and London: Routledge. **Chapter 1**

Ontario Ecoschools (2016) <http://www.ontarioecoschools.org/>

Orr, D. (2004). *Earth on mind. On education, environment and the human prospect*. Washington, DC: Island Press. **Chapter 1 and Conclusion**

Sauve, L. (2005). Currents in environmental education: Mapping a complex and evolving pedagogical field. *The Canadian Journal of Environmental Education*, 9(3), 299-315.

White, L. (1967). The historic roots of our environmental crisis. *Science*, 155(3767), 1203-1207.

Course Assignments

Assignment	Description	Course Value
Professionalism and Classroom Participation	Each class includes a number of experiential and collaborative activities relevant to preparing student teachers for Environmental Education at the elementary levels. Classroom attendance and professional, active participation are therefore essential for this course. Students are expected to communicate beforehand, their non-attendance or inability to participate in particular sessions.	15% (Ongoing)
Reflective Paper	Each person will write a reflective response demonstrating their growing understanding of the complexity of the intersection between Christianity and environmentalism/environmental education. In the paper students will also be expected to thoughtfully discuss how a Christian worldview/ideology can be variously interpreted either to support or hinder environmentalism and environmental education. This response should be about 500- 1000 words.	20%
Student Presentations	Each person in the class will be expected to sign up once to lead an in-class seminar to be conducted during the first 40 minutes of a class session. The seminar will be based on the topic for the class (Sessions 7-10) and can be founded on the required readings for the week or another relevant direction the person or group chooses. It will be the responsibility of the presenter(s) to facilitate/lead the class during the seminar. Presenters can be as creative as they like by including provocative	25% (In-class presentations, ongoing)

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	comments, outdoor components, multimedia components, curriculum materials and activities within the seminar.	
Curriculum Development Project	For this assignment teacher candidates will need to plan a short unit (set of related lessons) or a project appropriate for the elementary level that incorporates some of the ideas discussed in the course and reflective of a positive Christian response to environmentalism. Teacher candidates may choose to take an existing unit/project and modify it into a form that better accords with their growing understanding of the theory and practice of EE or develop a new unit/project altogether. The unit/project should outline of 3-5 lessons/sessions and an overall assessment plan. Lesson/session and assessment plan outlines should include enough details to enable another educator to implement the unit. The unit/project must be prefaced with a 300-500 word report describing and justifying why you chose the particular topic, your strategy for teaching it, and some challenges the educator might encounter when implementing the unit. The preface should include relevant citations derived from the course readings and/or broader academic literature.	40%
		100%

Course Outline

Dates	Topic/Reading	Class Activities/Assignments
Session 1	What is EE?	
Session 2	The Growing Need for EE	Reflective paper Assignment given
Session 3	Environmental Literacy I- Secular responses	
Session 4	Environmental Literacy II- Non-Christian Spiritual Responses	Student presentation topics finalised
Session 5	Environmental Literacy III- Creation Care (A Christian response)	

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Session 6	Approaches to Environmental Education	Reflective paper Assignment due Curriculum Development Assignment given
Session 7	Science-based EE	
Session 8	Education for Sustainable Development	
Session 9	Place-based and Outdoor Education	
Session 10	Arts-based EE	
Session 11	Integrated/Whole School Approaches	
Session 12	Maintaining Hope in EE	
Session 13	Conclusion and Course Evaluation	Curriculum Development Assignment Due