

Simon Fraser University
Spring Semester 2008
Education 100W
Selected Questions and Issues in Education
E100

Monday & Wednesday
4:30-6:20 pm AQ 4150

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“What is an education and can I still get one?”

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This is a course about what “education” is. Where, when, how, and why does “it” happen (if it does at all)? Who benefits? Who is hurt? Who gets to participate? Who doesn’t? Who cares about it? Who sees it as a means to an end? Is your idea of an education the same as the ideas of everyone else who talks about education?

We will attempt, first, to disentangle education from all of those other aspects of human endeavour that command and deserve our attention. Next, we will attempt to reweave the web of understanding of our lives in a way that includes and honours the contribution of education. We will examine how this understanding contributes to educational institutions, such as they are, and the individuals and groups who participate in those institutions. We will wonder how one becomes an authority ‘on’ education, and how one becomes an authority ‘in’ education.

There will also be a social and historical component to the course. Why are so many concerned with education? Where do the current ideas about education come from? Where will those ideas go from here?

This is not intended to be primarily a course for future teachers, but those who consider teaching, at any level, might wish to consider the issues it will cause to surface. This is not intended to be primarily a course for those who wish to study education in their university futures, but those who consider a life in the study of education might wish to engage in the conversations this course is intended to generate.

The course is called “Selected Questions in Education;” some of the questions explored will arise from our discussions in class.

The course is a writing intensive designated course. So, yes, writing will be required, but the writing required will focus on the revisioning process; on the ‘making better’ of the presentation of ideas. The types of assignments required will be varied, from straight-forward essays to stories... to genres and types of writing particular to each individual’s interests.

Selected readings will be distributed in class or via the web.

The final grade for the course will be determined as follows:

Written work/Assignments:	50 %
Individual and pair presentations:	25%
A "take home" final:	25%