

Spring Semester 1998

**EDUC 240 - 3**  
**Social Issues in Education**

Tuesdays & Thursdays 3:30 - 5:00  
Study Groups: Tuesday 2:30 - 3:30\*

**D01.00**

Dr. S. Wassermann  
Office: MPX 8638  
Tel: 291-4483  
selma\_wassermann@sfu.ca

**PREREQUISITE**

None.

**COURSE DESCRIPTION**

This course uses a case study approach to examine social, political, economic and cultural influences on schools, teachers, students, and the practices of education.

Students will study cases that explore conflicts arising from such pivotal questions as:

- Who should teach? Who does teach?
- Who decides what happens in classrooms?
- What do students learn in school?
- How are issues such as multiculturalism, class and gender bias, racism, children with special needs, addressed in educational practice?
- How do kids' special needs impact the teaching-learning process?

The primary goals of the course include:

- to promote awareness of educational practice as a decision making process
- to examine how educational decisions are influenced by complex and inter-related social, political, cultural and economic factors
- to promote intelligent "meaning making" of the complex processes of decision-making in educational practice
- to promote a healthy tolerance for the uncertainties in professional decision making
- to develop understanding of how a teacher's own beliefs and values bear on the choices he or she makes in professional decision making contexts

**\*Note:**

Students should note that this course meets for two, 1 1/2 hour discussion sessions on Tuesdays and Thursdays. In addition students also meet in scheduled, but unsupervised Study Groups, for an additional hour on Tuesday afternoons.

**EVALUATION**

- a. The extent and quality of individual participation in class discussions and Study Groups is a primary requirement and plays a major role in assessment.
- b. The completion of required readings and the student's ability to use these to inform his or her discussion.
- c. The completion of a major assignment, e.g. writing a case study
- d. The completion of a self evaluation profile.

**REQUIRED READINGS**

Wassermann, Selma (1993). Getting Down to Cases. New York: Teachers College Press. ISBN 0-8077-3291-5 (paperback)

All journal articles related to topics (Custom Courseware - SFU Bookstore)

Two additional books from the list of supplementary readings