

SIMON FRASER UNIVERSITY
EDUC 486-4 (E1.00)
SPECIAL TOPICS: TEACHER RESEARCH -- TEACHER KNOWLEDGE
AND TEACHER EDUCATION
(Cat. #12866)

Summer Session, 1994
(July 4 - 29)
Monday, Tuesday & Thursday
17:30-21:20, MPX 7600B

Instructor: Fred Korthagen
Office: TBA
Phone: 291-3395 (messages)

PREREQUISITE: EDUC 401/402

COURSE OUTLINE

The central question in this course is: what practical solutions do we have for the integration of theory about teaching and practice in teacher education? A century ago, teaching was mastered mainly by imitation: the student was apprenticed to a master teacher, and more or less imitated his or her teaching. Then teacher education gradually became professionalized and teacher education institutions now teach both skills and theory. One of the most pressing problems in teacher education, however, is the gap between theory and practice. On the one hand, there is poor application of the theory and, on the other, general disappointment about the effectiveness of teachers learning from experience.

A position taken in the course will be that underlying these problems there is a misconception about the nature of teacher knowledge. A teacher's behaviour is not so much directed by educational theories but by "images" or "gestalts." The term "gestalt" refers not so much to a mental picture but to the inseparable whole of a person's needs, values, meanings, thoughts, feelings, and intentions for action. Gestalts are no static entities located somewhere in the brain; they are dynamic in character, triggered and re-created by actual teaching and intertwined with action. This leads to a redefinition of the problematic relationship between theory and practice: How can teacher educators facilitate the development of these gestalts in a way that is both professionally and personally relevant? And, even more important: how can teacher education promote in teachers the capability to take responsibility for their own professional development? This implies the development of a capability for *reflection*.

TOPICS (see enlarged course outline for specific details)

The course offers concrete solutions to a number of key problems in teacher education and teacher development. Using relevant research and examples, the following issues will be discussed:

Week 1: the promotion of experiential learning and reflective teaching; a spiral model for experiential learning and reflection and implications for teacher education

Week 2: the role and nature of personal theories, beliefs, gestalts, and metaphors; constructivist and conceptual-change approaches in teacher education

Week 3: activities in teacher education seminars that promote reflection, and the integration of theory and practice; organizational models for teaching practice that promote reflection, self-directed learning and the integration of theory and practice; learning styles of student teachers and mentoring/supervision styles

Week 4: the use of a personal log; reflection on one's own learning and reflection; meta-reflection.

The course will consist of two interrelated strands: a practical strand having in part a development character and a theoretical strand oriented toward research and theory in the field of teacher knowledge and teacher education. The stance adopted in the course implies that participants' own practice will be integrated with theory on teacher knowledge, reflection, professional development, and educational arrangements in teacher education.

READINGS

The course will draw on selected readings from texts as well as on a wide range of current articles.