

Educ. 407-5
THE THEORY AND PRACTICE OF IMPLEMENTATION:
MEETING THE CHALLENGE OF EDUCATIONAL CHANGE

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Meeting Dates and Times

Wednesdays, 4:00 - 7:30 p.m.
January 10, 24, 31; February 7, 21; March 7, 28; April 4.

Purposes

Education 407-5 is a five-credit course that provides teachers with the opportunity to use their own classrooms as laboratories for exploring, analyzing and evaluating the processes of implementation. Theory and practice are linked through workshops, seminars and classroom implementation projects. The course is operated on a pass/withdraw basis. No grades will be assigned.

This specific course focuses on the implementation of new program directions arising from the Sullivan Royal Commission in British Columbia. The purposes of the course are to help practising teachers and administrators:

- a. Understand the base of theory and research in curriculum, child development, language learning and other fields on which the recommendations of the Royal Commission are based;
- b. Examine the beliefs, values and intentions reflected in the Commission's recommendations, the Year 2000 document, and recent program and curricular documents;
- c. Explore the practical implications of new program and curriculum directions by becoming familiar with a variety of instructional and evaluation strategies that support a developmental approach to learning and teaching;
- d. Clarify personal beliefs about the teacher's role in a program that assumes a developmental approach;
- e. Be able to articulate a rationale for using a developmental approach in the classroom, supported with examples from current educational literature and classroom practices in such areas as whole language, cooperative learning and teaching for thinking.

The implementation project provides an opportunity for you to focus on one aspect of your professional growth, and to consciously and deliberately develop your classroom practices in that area. The process of designing, implementing and evaluating the project is your major assignment for Education 407.

Each teacher participant will develop an individualized project plan with support from colleagues and the instructor. The choice of focus area, goal and level of challenge is expected to vary from teacher to teacher depending on individual backgrounds, previous experiences and current teaching situations.

Choosing a focus area and a goal for the project

Perhaps the most difficult part of this assignment will be selecting the particular aspect of your classroom program that you would most like to develop during the course. Some questions to keep in mind when selecting your project focus are:

- a. Will I learn something new and worthwhile from this project?
- b. Will the project help me become a better facilitator of students' development in the focus area?
- c. Is my focus area worthy of a significant investment of time and energy?
- d. Is my goal clear enough that I can identify specific practices I want to try?
- e. Is my project manageable within the time frame of the inservice course?
- f. Have I tried to anticipate problems that might arise during implementation and how I might deal with them?

Developing a project plan

The project plan should include a list of the activities you will undertake and, where appropriate, a timeline. Your plan may include background reading or research into instructional strategies as well as a classroom implementation overview. It should also indicate what signs you will look for to indicate that you have moved toward your goal.

Setting up a support system

Although each teacher will engage in an individualized project, colleagues can provide invaluable support in the form of encouragement, specific suggestions, empathy during times of challenge, problem-solving ideas, and constructive feedback. As part of your plan you will be asked to identify a small support group with whom you will regularly discuss the planning, implementation and evaluation process.

Implementing the project

Your project plan provides a guide to direct your implementation efforts during the course. However, you may find that as you try new practices, you need to make