

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

*a course for educators working with the Intermediate Program*

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**Meeting Dates and Times**

Wednesday evenings, 4:30 - 7:30  
September 12, 19, 26;  
October 3, 17, 24;  
November 7, 21;  
December 5.

**Location** Richmond School District (specific location to be announced)

**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 *at the intermediate level* (formerly grades 4-10), 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 the draft Intermediate Program;
- c. Explore the practical implications of new program and curriculum directions by becoming familiar with a variety of instructional and evaluation strategies appropriate for intermediate students;
- d. Clarify personal beliefs about the teacher's role in the intermediate program;
- 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.

## **Course components**

### *Workshops.*

The workshop component of the course will model a student-centred approach to instruction. Activities will include examination of:

- \* the Royal Commission recommendations, the Year 2000 document, the Intermediate Program, and other materials which support their implementation;
- \* a developmental approach to teaching and learning based on current theory and research;
- \* learning as a constructive, generative and collaborative process;
- \* principles and criteria for educational decision-making based on a coherent educational philosophy;
- \* strategies for creating developmental learning environments;
- \* strategies for selecting, organizing and implementing appropriate instructional approaches;
- \* strategies for assessing and evaluating pupils, teachers and educational programs.

### *Seminars*

The seminar component of the course will provide a forum in which participants can support and learn from one another as they compare their implementation experiences. Seminars will provide opportunities for participants to reflect on their personal knowledge of children, teaching and learning, and how these change through the processes of implementation.

### *Implementation Project*

The classroom component of this course will involve the design, implementation and assessment of a focused project in participants' own classroom or school settings. Ongoing support, coaching and consultation will be provided jointly by the course instructor and district personnel. Participants will be asked to keep a reflective journal in which they document and assess changes in their understanding and teaching practices throughout the semester, and to create a portfolio which represents their learning.

### **Implementation Project Guidelines**

Professional growth is an ongoing, developmental process. Like their students, teachers are always learning, developing their understanding through trying on new ideas, experimenting in the classroom, and discussing and evaluating their experiences.

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 modifications in the plan in response to unanticipated events along the way. It is expected that your plan may change during implementation. Your reflective journal should document what actually happens during the implementation phase, as well as your analysis of what you are learning from the experiences. Your instructor will be available during class sessions to discuss your experiences, and your support group will also help you deal with challenges you may encounter.

### *Evaluating the project*

At the end of the course you will be asked to summarize what you have learned from the implementation project by submitting a portfolio accompanied by a reflective self-evaluation. The self-evaluation will discuss your observations of the effects of your project on your classroom practices and your students as well as on your own learning. A well-kept reflective journal should provide much of the data for your self-evaluation.