

Critical Incidents in Teaching: The Teacher as
Decision Maker

Summer Semester, 1985

INSTRUCTORS: Dr. M. Manley-Casimir
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Wednesdays, 5:30 - 9:20

LOCATION: MPX 8542

This course is offered for pre-service and in-service teachers who wish to examine the various pressures influencing the decision-making processes of teachers.

One of the important aspects of professional functioning is the autonomy of professionals to arrive at decisions based upon their sound professional judgment. The ability to examine and interpret data, to analyze assumptions, and to project potential consequences is considered a true mark of professional functioning.

In some professions, a variety of pressures -- political, social, emotional, personal -- serve to influence professional judgment and consequently to influence decision making. Such influence may have a deep and pervasive effect upon the degrees of freedom and emotional health of professionals, upon their beliefs and values about the profession itself, and upon their subsequent professional practice.

This course will use contemporary film and literature to raise levels of awareness about factors influencing teachers' decision making, vis a vis examinations of critical incidents in teaching. Students who enroll will engage in film viewing, study of specific literature and focused group discussion, in order to examine more critically the many facets of the decision-making process in education. Through this process, students will become more critically aware of personal decision-making in their own professional educational context.

Course Objectives

- (1) To increase understanding of the various and complex factors involved in the decision-making process.
- (2) To increase awareness of factors influencing a teacher's decision making process.
- (3) To promote more critical awareness of personal decision making and the consequences of decisions made upon person-in-the-process.

Texts

No texts will be required, readings will be distributed.