Spring Semester 2003

EDUC 437 - 4
Ethical Issues in Education

E01.00

Mondays 16:30-20:20

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PREREQUISITE:
Educ 230 or Educ 401/2

DESCRIPTION

Living in a pluralist democracy, teachers are often faced with complex ethical situations calling for informed decision-making. Some of the ethical issues currently being debated in schools are: bullying, the increasing corporatization of schools, marginalization, the erosion of social and personal responsibilities, character education, parents' and students' rights, mainstreaming, the general lack of moral guidance, questions of social justice and equity (based on race, gender, sexuality, ability), environmental issues, and so on. Nonetheless, there is relative lack of opportunity for educators to participate in reflective inquiry and critical dialogue around these issues. This course aims to further the goal of cultivating teachers as reflective practitioners and agents of change, and will therefore emphasize ethical action as well as ethical reflection.

OBJECTIVES
The course will aim to foster:

- the capacity for (written and oral) reflexive inquiry into our theoretical frameworks and practices
- the ability to read philosophical texts accurately and critically, and to employ philosophical vocabulary
- the ability to participate in productive large and small group dialogues in a community of inquiry
- the ability to identify and articulate a personally meaningful ethical issue; develop a strategy for personal and/or social transformation; engage in ethical action; and reflect on the experience in a way that brings together ethical theory and practice

REQUIREMENTS

- short reflective essay   10%
- project proposal   15%
- interim report   20%
- final essay   40%
- participation   15%

REQUIRED TEXTS

Hooks, Bell. (1994). Teaching to Transgress: Education as the Practice of Freedom. New York: Routledge. ISBN: 0-4159-0808-6.

Custom courseware package of additional readings