“Thank goodness I was never sent to school; it would have rubbed off some of the originality”
Helen Beatrix Potter (1866–1943)

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Office Hours: Monday & Wednesday; 12:00 – 1:00 pm
Class Time and Dates: Monday & Wednesday; 3:00 – 4:30 pm
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1. Introduction & Orientation:

Welcome to a course I considered one of my favourites during my own undergraduate studies. Sociology of Education allows the student to consider both formal and non-formal locations of Canadian education and processes and analyze them through the multiple theoretical lenses of sociological theory and research. The course will be dedicated to both introducing the student to the foundations of the most prominent sociological interpretations of education as well as engaging students to dialogue schooling and education through a critical perspective. Although Canadian schools are familiar and almost commonplace to most of us, it is hoped that this course will help students understand the nature, function and both expected and unexpected outcomes that can be both overt and covert in these locations.

2. Course Description: (Reproduced from the Bishop’s calendar the course description for this course is as follows)

The purpose of this course is to examine education in Canada from a critical sociological perspective. Education is a major institution in most societies and is a vital part of our
social existence. The sociology of education, a subfield of sociology, focuses on the institution of education and the structures, processes and interaction patterns within it. We will look at the educational system as a whole, integrated and dynamic entity. To do so, reference will be made to a variety of sociological studies, but the main perspective is critical.

3. **Readings:**

- Course Pack – Available at the bookstore

4. **Evaluation & Assignments:** All work in this course will be graded in the normal Bishop’s percentage manner. Further clarification on each assignment will be given orally during class time.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment Name</th>
<th>Due Date</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Critical Incident (Individual work)</td>
<td>TBA: First half of Semester</td>
<td>10%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mid Term (Individual work)</td>
<td>TBA: Midway in the Semester</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Academic/Movie Trailer Presentation (Group work)</td>
<td>TBA: Second half of Semester</td>
<td>25%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final Exam (Individual work)</td>
<td>TBA: End of Semester</td>
<td>30%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Participation/Moodle Responses (Individual work and within the group setting)</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>15%</td>
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I. **Critical Incident (Individual work)**

In this assignment students are asked to reflect on a critical incident they experienced in school that had a significant impact, either positively or negatively, on their views of the nature and function of education.

II. **Mid Term (take home)**

In brief, the mid-term take home exam will be a written analysis based on the class readings and discussions (to date). A single question will be emailed to your Bishop’s account and you will have 48 hours to respond to the question via a Microsoft Word attached document to my Bishop’s email account (as well as carbon copied to your own).

III. **Academic/Movie Trailer Presentation (Group work)**

What can be said about the manner in which schools, students, teachers (etc.) are represented through film and in what way do they connect with the various sociological theories as well as considerations regarding race, religion, gender (etc...) discussed in
class? Is it completely haphazard that Western society’s most creative citizens are also the staunchest critics of our education system? What kinds of messages are being displayed in these “school/teaching genre” films that both denounce the experience, but at the same time inspire so many to join the teaching profession? The assignment requires a critical analysis identifying relevant sociological thought that are symbolized (intentionally or not) in the film. In groups of 4-5, students will watch one of the ten following films (or make a suggestion on their own), and then create a Movie Trailer that exposes and interprets the film through a single theoretical lens. In keeping with the tradition of the movie trailer, it can be no longer than three minutes long. Included in the assignment is a short presentation of the group’s rationale of interpretation, followed by leading the class in discussion. A digital version must be included to be posted on Moodle to continue the dialogue.

1. Stand and Deliver
2. Lean on Me
3. Freedom Writers
4. Chalk
5. Mr. Holland’s Opus
6. Dead Poet’s Society
7. Breakfast Club
8. The Ron Clark Story
9. School of Rock
10. Dangerous Minds

IV. Final Exam (Individual work)

In brief, the final, formal exam will be a written essay response based on the class readings and discussions. You will be expected to draw upon the concepts of the class readings and synthesise them along with personal academically grounded experience and classroom discussions into a relevant and comprehensible response.

V. Participation/Moodle Responses (Individual work within the group setting)

Participation: Beyond regular attendance of the class, students are expected to participate within the class and during collaborative activities and assignments. Please note, in the case of excessive absence from class (over three classes missed) a meeting will be scheduled between the professor and student to discuss possible ramifications.

Moodle Responses: Students are expected to actively and thoughtfully participate in discussion questions regularly posted on Moodle.

5. Evaluation & Assignments: All work in this course will be graded in the normal Bishop’s percentage manner. As a “rule of thumb” & in brief:

An “A” range mark indicates “exemplary work that demonstrates excellent comprehension of the subject, exceptional thoughtfulness and an inquiring mind”.
A “B” range mark indicates “strong work that demonstrates in-depth comprehension of the subject”.
A “C” range mark indicates “satisfactory work; no major weaknesses in comprehension are evident”.
A “D” range mark indicates “some flaws or deficits in understanding. Unable to integrate broad orientations towards language and learning”.
An “F” mark indicates “inadequate for successful completion of the course or submitted beyond the final date of acceptance. Reveals an inadequate or lack of engagement with learning experience …”.

Please Note: Half points are given with the possibility of the student receiving another half point; in the case of the final mark having a half point, I will round down. Furthermore, assignments not handed in on the due date will have their mark reduced at the discretion of the professor.

Further clarification on each assignment will be given orally during class time.

6. E-mail communication: It is encouraged that E-mail communication between myself and all students should only be carried out via the authorized e-mail addresses as approved by the University. All students are required to use their own individual official university email address when communicating with professors. It is each student’s responsibility to use his/her own authorized professional/scholastic e-mail address and to monitor this site for all messages.

7. Professional Competencies: For education students the main professional competencies to be addressed in this class will be (but not limited to):

#1: To act as a professional inheritor, critic and interpreter of knowledge or culture when teaching students.

On the subject of professional conduct, students are expected to follow the Bishop’s code of conduct, especially in regard to ensuring a positive class experience. As such, the increased use of communication devices (cellphones, tablets, laptops, etc.) that are not related to coursework will not be tolerated. Students engaging in such behaviour will be asked to leave the class.