EDUC 450 — INQUIRY SEMINAR I - Revised July 2016
Secondary (3 credits)

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Inquiry Seminar (I) is designed to engender in teacher candidates:

1. an understanding of teaching as a moral and intellectual activity requiring inquiry, judgement and engagement with multiple others—students, parents, colleagues, scholarly community,
2. an appreciation of the importance of research in understanding curriculum, teaching and learning,
3. a desire to engage in their own educational inquiries—to become students of teaching.

In this course, teacher candidates formalize their engagement in teacher inquiry based on a question/proposal they individually develop and explore.

Inquiry is understood as a deliberate, sustained and systematic process—beyond the everyday reflection that is required in teaching—where professionals explore what they do and how they do it, and the reasons for both; it involves professionals sharing their inquiries with colleagues. The notion of teacher inquiry connotes classroom teachers, individually and collectively, in a cycle of questioning, reflection, and action. Teachers take a close and critical look at practice, address problems and issues from a variety of perspectives, consider inquiry alternatives, try out new or revised practices, and evaluate the results; then the cycle begins anew based on the outcomes, responses, and possibilities emerging from the inquiry.

Teacher candidates will develop an inquiry question of their choosing based on a theme (e.g., the cohort theme such as “social and emotional learning” or “community”), a disciplinary topic (e.g., sustainability or health education), a particular curriculum emphasis (e.g., textbooks as cultural objects) or an educational issue (e.g., accessing multilingual resources within BC classrooms), propose an inquiry question and exploration plan and undertake preliminary educational research.

EDUC 450, 451, 452: Inquiry Seminars I, II, III (Secondary)

The inquiry process across the BEd (Secondary) program consists of

- learning about teacher inquiry (EDUC 450 - Inquiry I)
- preparing to explore an inquiry question (EDUC 450 - Inquiry I)
- developing and sharing one’s inquiry process (EDUC 450-4511 – Inquiry I and II)
- exploring links to practice (EDUC 451 - Inquiry II)
- reflecting on the inquiry process, links to practice, ongoing questions, learning over the year and developing professional learning goals (EDUC 452 - Inquiry III)

Exploration of an inquiry question should demonstrate an emerging ability to

- engage substantively with a selected topic,
- inform their understanding of the topic through careful reading of the literature (including a
Inquiry Instructor Resources

- require more than one week, particularly in the latter part of the course.

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<tr>
<th>COURSE OUTLINE</th>
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<td>The guiding questions outlined below are based on the understanding that teaching and learning are interdependent. (Treating 10 topics in 13 weeks allows for some flexibility, i.e., some topics may require more than one week, particularly in the latter part of the course.) Instructors may choose from the selection of suggested readings that follows this chart and are available on UBC Connect - Inquiry Instructor Resources and/or identify other readings they deem appropriate.</td>
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<tr>
<th>Theme 1: Reimagining Learning through an Inquiry Lens</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Topic</td>
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<td>Guiding Questions</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reading/s [Please insert]</td>
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<tr>
<th>Theme 2: Exploring Teacher Inquiry</th>
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<tr>
<td>Topic</td>
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<tr>
<td>Guiding Questions</td>
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<td>Reading/s [Please insert]</td>
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<th>Theme 3: Generating Questions for Inquiry - Initiating a Mini-Inquiry.</th>
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<tr>
<td>Topic</td>
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<td>Guiding Questions</td>
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### Theme 4: Engaging in Professional Learning Through Inquiry

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Teachers’ conversations with children and colleagues</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Guiding Questions</td>
<td>Where do teachers go with their questions? What kinds of conversations are possible, with whom, and in what contexts? What is the role of professional learning communities and on-line professional communities in teacher learning? What do teachers (and I) pay attention to? Why?</td>
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### Theme 5: Enlarging Perspectives

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Teachers’ conversations with scholarly and professional communities</th>
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<tr>
<td>Guiding Questions</td>
<td>Why and how might teachers, individually and collectively, enlarge their perspectives on a classroom issue or problem? What are some of the key perspectives they use to frame educational research? How do teachers identify and assess arguments in the research literature?</td>
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### Theme 6: Generating Observations

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<th>Topic</th>
<th>Observing and Noticing</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Guiding Questions</td>
<td>What questions do my observations raise (about curriculum, teaching, learning, students, context)? What questions do my observations raise about particular teachers (and myself) as observers, each with his/her values, assumptions and interests? What impact might observations have on those/that observed?</td>
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### Theme 7: Generating Questions that Matter

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<tr>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Making Judgments</th>
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### Theme 8: Formulating an Inquiry

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<tr>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Developing a focus and locating sources</th>
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<tr>
<td>Guiding Questions</td>
<td>What are some questions I have about education and schooling, teaching, learning and curriculum? Why are these questions significant, and to whom? How would I explore my particular interest? Which resources shall I consult?</td>
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### Theme 9: Proposing an Inquiry

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<th>Topic</th>
<th>Identifying a framework for understanding</th>
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<td>Guiding Questions</td>
<td>What values motivate my inquiry? What do I currently believe about the object of study? How might my inquiry be situated in the context of the particular writers who study similar questions/concerns? What are my personal and professional connections to the topic? What ethical issues are raised when a teacher researches?</td>
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### Theme 10: Sharing, Exploring and Receiving Feedback.
Teacher candidates begin to explore their inquiry question collaboratively with the instructor and/or peers. This exploration could take the form of creating inquiry learning groups in which teacher candidates begin the exploration of their topic with others in their group who are inquiring into related areas. Individuals and groups meet with course instructor to advance their thinking, for regular reporting and feedback.

Teacher candidates work collaboratively with their instructor and/or peers (about their readings, ideas and questions); they respond to questions about their own inquiry journey from instructor and peers. They explore the topic through a variety of resources including journals, books, web-based information such as educators’ professional blogs, educational discussion forums and conversations with other educators.

Guiding Questions
How can I learn collaboratively with other educators? How will I engage critically with other questions generated by my colleagues?

Reading/s
[Please insert]

**COURSE EVALUATION**

Students must provide evidence that they have engaged thoroughly and thoughtfully with the subject matter of the course. Assignments will be assessed as Pass/Fail/Resubmit. The course is graded on a PASS/FAIL basis.

**Participation is essential to success.** If you are not in class, you cannot participate. Your active participation is integral both as a contribution to your own learning and also to the learning of others. During the course, we will deal with a range of ideas, some familiar and others unfamiliar concepts. We hope to enable one another to engage with the ideas and encourage each other to think about our thinking. In light of the above, some questions to consider are:

- Do I come to class prepared?
- Do I read and listen carefully and respond thoughtfully during discussions?
- Do I contribute to group discussions?
- Do I take the risk of engaging in open dialogue, to formulate and reformulate ideas?

**POSSIBLE ASSIGNMENTS**

Instructors assign some or all of the following. May be conducted in class, out of class, as individual, pair or small group tasks, etc.

**A) Engaging with Readings: Entrance &/or Exit Slips**

Evidence of on-going engagement with readings such as entrance and exit slips, jigsaw reading activities, posts and discussion on a course blog or similar. Entrance or exit slips may take the
form of notes and jottings (a paragraph or so) that may provide a starting point to class discussion.

B) Engaging with Readings: Group Facilitation

Engaging in the inquiry process through group facilitation of a reading, e.g., with focus questions and/or an activity to engage understanding about key topics and broadening of perspectives.

C) Mini-Guided Inquiry: An opportunity to engage in a brief inquiry in which teacher candidates investigate a question or questions relevant to their area of focus with guidance from their instructor. Through this initial inquiry, teacher candidates learn how to engage in inquiry as a process while pursuing learning relevant to their area of interest. Teacher candidates share their work in a variety of formats.

D) Lesson with Inquiry Focus: An opportunity to link the teacher candidates’ understanding of the inquiry process to their teaching practice. Candidates create a lesson, or connected lessons, considering links to curriculum content, essential understandings, objectives, question development and the inquiry procedure. Examples of lessons with an inquiry focus are available in several of the resources listed in the readings list, notably Alvarado and Herr (2003) and Harvey (2015).

E) Inquiry Proposal: A proposal to explore an inquiry question may consist of a brief context (how the question arises and why it is significant), a statement of the inquiry question, an outline of the approach taken, including possible sources of supporting information (literature, media and other resources). Typically, a proposal is 3-5 pages in length but may also take the form of an oral presentation (with one-page summary), small group presentation (with summary), and guided discussion with others in the cohort, a post on a professional blog, or other.

PLEASE NOTE THE FOLLOWING ABOUT EXPLORING YOUR INQUIRY QUESTION

Exploring one’s inquiry question during field experiences, e.g., sharing with school and/or faculty advisors during your weekly visits and/or practica in schools) is one way to learn - in addition to consulting the literature, considering media, policy statements, and other sources of information. Please note that citations or any other data collected from students, teachers or others from the field may NOT be included in any written material related to your inquiry.

Citing an article that is already publicly available is part and parcel of academic practice; no permissions are necessary because the author(s) have, of their own volition, represented their ideas in a public manner.

Citing a human subject (e.g., expert) involves a researcher recording, interpreting, and representing the ideas of the human subject in the public where the human subject has no control over that interpretation or representation; to protect the human subject, therefore, protocols (ethical approval by UBC’s Behavioural Research Ethics Board) are required in advance, including demonstration that the
researcher has fully informed the human subject about the purpose of the research and the research questions; that conditions of anonymity will be created in so far as possible, etc. Such ethical approval and, therefore, direct citation is beyond the scope of the inquiry process outlined in EDUC 450 & 451.
POSSIBLE READINGS FOR EDUC 450 AND 451


Fischer, J. (2001). Action research rationale and planning: Developing a framework for


   In D.L. Coulter & J.R. Wiens (Eds.), *Why do we educate? Renewing the conversation* (pp. 21-41). Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing.


WEB RESOURCES

BC Teachers Federation: Teacher Inquiry

Networks: An online journal of teacher research

Carnegie Foundation: Inside teaching: A living archive of practice