ES234

EDUCATIONAL CONTEXTS AND PHILOSOPHIES: EARLY LEARNING AND PRIMARY SCHOOL CENTRES (P-7)

This sample unit outline is provided by CHC for prospective and current students to assist with unit selection.

Elements of this outline which may change with subsequent offerings of the unit include Content, Required Texts, Recommended Readings and details of the Assessment Tasks.

Students who are currently enrolled in this unit should obtain the outline for the relevant semester from the unit lecturer.
Unit Name | Educational Contexts and Philosophies: Early Learning and Primary School Centres (P-7)  
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Unit Code | ES234  
Award | Bachelor of Education (Primary)  
Core/Elective | Core  
Pre/co-requisites | Nil  
Mode | Internal  
Weighting | 10 credit points  
Delivery/Contact hrs |  
| Class contact | 33 hours  
| Engagement with unit materials readings | 44 hours  
| Assignment preparation | 63 hours  
| Total | 140 hours  
Teaching Staff | To be appointed  
Unit Rationale | Schools exist in a very familiar ‘space’ in society, which has changed little in over a century. While outward structures, buildings and technologies have changed and continue to change, the fundamental goals, purposes and structures of schools are resilient to change and so may often go unnoticed by casual observers.  
In order to properly understand the role of teacher and learner, and the underlying assumptions and forces shaping education in early phase and primary contexts, it is important for preservice teachers to have a good understanding of philosophical and sociocultural foundations for these contexts. These contexts include, in the early phase, play-based learning and the development of self-identity and a sense of belonging in a local community and culture.  
Schools have a fundamental, inherent potential to be mechanisms for change and transformation of school students, and ultimately of the wider society. As perhaps the most influential agent for change in a school, the primary teacher should be an informed professional, possessing a deep understanding of the philosophical and sociocultural assumptions, norms and unspoken ‘truths’. From this position of informed professional, the teacher is in a position to question and challenge inequities and systems which work to produce disadvantage for sectors within a school population, such as indigenous students or other minority groups.  
This unit will encourage preservice teachers to identify themselves as active participants in considerations of the role and purpose of the school and the teacher, and as innovators and key facilitators of equitable outcomes for the P-7 school students in their care. Preservice teachers will be encouraged to develop a distinctively Christian rationale for change working in and through schools, to influence their communities and their schools in godly, positive, transforming ways.  
Learning Outcomes:  
On completion of this unit, preservice teachers will have provided evidence that they have:  
1. Explored, defined and explained the meaning and significance of culture, learning, development, context and education in the sociocultural contexts of early phase and primary school contexts and classrooms.  
2. Described and appreciated their personal cultural, developmental and educational heritage, when studying philosophical assumptions and sociocultural contexts.  
3. Compared and contrasted various sociocultural contexts and their impact upon educational experiences and opportunities in P-7 classrooms.  
4. Investigated and interrogated philosophical foundations of schooling in primary contexts (P-7) in order to inform their own personal philosophies of education.
5. Developed understanding of the principles of the play-based curriculum and the development of a sense of belonging, being and becoming in young children; and applied these understandings to their own practice as preservice P-7 teachers.
6. Developed an informed Christian philosophy of education which is supported by research, is sensitive and respectful of other worldviews and which addresses questions of teaching ‘Christianly’, in either Christian or secular school contexts.
7. Written at an appropriate tertiary standard (with special attention to correct grammar, punctuation, spelling, vocabulary, usage, sentence structure, logical relations, style, referencing and presentation).

Professional Standards for Queensland Teachers:

The learning opportunities provided in this unit contribute to the development of the following Professional Standards for Queensland Teachers:

3. Design and implement intellectually challenging learning experiences.
7. Create and maintain safe and supportive learning environments.
9. Contribute effectively to professional teams.

Successful completion of this unit will provide significant evidence about the following Professional Standards for Queensland Teachers:

4. Design and implement learning experiences that value diversity.
6. Support personal development and participation in society.
10. Commit to reflective practice and professional renewal.

Christian Teacher Practitioner Standards:

1.0 Committed to understanding and applying a distinctive yet wide-ranging Christian worldview in all aspects of their life, character, scholarship and profession.
2.0 Dedicated to learning in relationship through consultative, cooperative and critical partnerships embedded in learning communities.
4.0 Skilled professionals demonstrating a comprehensive knowledge base and higher order thinking that informs all aspects of their pedagogy, curriculum, professional relationships and practice.
6.0 Learner-focused and committed to developing contextually relevant, safe, supportive and stimulating learning environments that are inclusive, socially just, intellectually challenging and sensitive to socio-cultural imperatives.
7.0 Reflective professionals who are praxis oriented and committed to ongoing transformation, personal and professional renewal and development within their learning communities.

Content:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Topic</th>
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| 1-2  | *Educational advantage and disadvantage*  
- A sociocultural view of the person - the person through the lens of Theology, Philosophy, Psychology, and Sociology  
- Sociocultural contexts and the person of the teacher  
- Cultural influences on educational experiences and opportunities in early phase, primary, middle years and secondary school contexts  
- Sociocultural issues of gender, economic and indigenous perspectives |
| 3    | *Alternative models for education*  
- Classical, modern and post-critical philosophies and indigenous and their impacts on education  
- Unpacking philosophical ideas and their relationship to learners and their needs  
- A Christian approach to philosophy and education  
- Developing a personal philosophy of education |
### Models of education: Early learning
- Nature and purpose of early learning contexts
- Philosophical and sociocultural foundations for early learning contexts
- Developmentally responsive curriculum as a philosophy
- Learning holistically; making curriculum connections
- “Investigation” and “Play-based” curriculum philosophies
- Developing a sense of belonging, being and becoming in the early phase
- Connections and challenges in developing appropriate early learning classrooms within diverse communities, including indigenous

### Models of education: Primary schools
- Nature and purpose of primary schools
- Philosophical and sociocultural foundations for primary school contexts
- Connections and challenges in developing appropriate primary learning classrooms within diverse communities, including indigenous
- Addressing the sociocultural needs and priorities of early adolescents in appropriate ways in a primary classroom

### Innovations in the primary years
- Addressing underlying philosophies and sociocultural assumptions in the primary classroom
- Being an agent for positive change in lives of P-7 school students

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**Set Text Requirements:**

**Recommended Readings:**


**Assessment:**

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Assessment Item</th>
<th>Topic/s</th>
<th>Learning Outcomes assessed</th>
<th>PSOT</th>
<th>CTPC</th>
<th>Week Due</th>
<th>Weighting</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Research Paper (2500 words)</td>
<td>Investigate the philosophical and sociocultural assumptions and foundations which differentiate early learning from primary contexts.</td>
<td>1-7</td>
<td>4p1; 4p3; 4p8; 4k1; 4k2; 4k3; 4k8; 4k9; 6p2; 6p8; 6k1; 6k4; 6k5; 6k10; 10p1; 10p2; 10k1; 10k5; 10k8; 10k9</td>
<td>1.1: 1.2; 1.4: 1.5; 1.7: 1.8; 2.2: 2.3; 2.5: 4.1; 4.4: 4.6; 4.7: 4.8; 6.3: 6.5; 6.6: 7.1; 7.2: 7.4; 7.5: 7.6</td>
<td>Week 6</td>
<td>50%</td>
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<td>Debate and Brief (2000 words)</td>
<td>Reflect, prepare and present a position on a topic addressing issues of educational disadvantage. Prepare a Debate Brief defending the position, including analysis of alternative views and rebuttals.</td>
<td>1-7</td>
<td>4p1; 4p3; 4p8; 4k1; 4k2; 4k3; 4k8; 4k9; 6p2; 6p8; 6k1; 6k4; 6k5; 6k10; 10p1; 10p2; 10k1; 10k5; 10k8; 10k9</td>
<td>1.1: 1.2; 1.4: 1.5; 1.7: 1.8; 2.2: 2.3; 2.5: 4.1; 4.4: 4.6; 4.7: 4.8; 6.3: 6.5; 6.6: 7.1; 7.2: 7.4; 7.5: 7.6</td>
<td>Week 11</td>
<td>50%</td>
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**Unit Overview:**

This unit encompasses the notion that culture and philosophy underpin the context, perceptions and outcomes of education, and that, in order to be professional and effective, educators need to be cognisant of this. As such, it introduces students to the sociocultural contexts of both early phase and primary school classrooms and contexts and investigates these from a number of philosophical positions. Specific attention is paid to the particular sociocultural needs of early phase and primary students within diverse cultural settings.

Drawing upon the tenets of philosophy, preservice teachers will develop an understanding of the ideas and philosophies that have shaped contemporary education in the P-7 school. Overall, this unit will provide the tools for the preservice teacher to think in critical and reflective ways about teaching philosophy and practice, and to develop Christian ways of thinking about and reconceptualising education in the P-7 classroom.