

EDU150 Education Systems Spring 2010

Instructor: Tomomi SAEKI, Ph.D.
Style of Class: lectures; presentations and discussions
Number of Credits: 2
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COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course is open for both home and overseas students and conducted in English. It gives the students support so that they can gain a basic understanding of education systems, education laws and regulations, and everyday issues in education. The topics will mainly be on the Japanese educational systems but we will occasionally examine those found overseas for comparison. This course is mandatory for those students wanting to gain a high school teacher certificate in Japan. Therefore, this course tries to give students opportunities to allow them acquire fundamental competencies needed to work as a practitioner. Although this course is mainly lecture-based, it will try to incorporate presentations and discussions as much as possible, so that the students can share their ideas in class.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

This course aims to deepen students' understanding of what education is by examining: the features of the current educational systems; the provision of education both inside and outside schools; the meanings and roles of education in relation to society and its impact on children's personal growth and well-being, and future prospects. The topics considered in this course are mainly about education in Japan, but we will also look at education overseas with the aim of finding some differences and similarities between them.

The educational systems in Japan is conducted and maintained based on the Constitution of Japan, the Fundamental Law of Education as well as a host of other laws and regulations. The educational systems must not only be approached in an abstract manner, but must also deal with practical and everyday issues.

Therefore, three primary goals of this course are as follows;

- 1) Students need to understand the current educational systems and its historical background. They also need to understand some main features of the laws and regulations. To complete these goals, they need to understand the basic terminology and concepts. This will provide a foundation from which we can discuss more complex issues on the course.
- 2) Students need to be familiar with everyday issues within education. Practitioners' reports published in newspapers and academic magazines might be effective resources to help students complete this goal.
- 3) As the final goal of this course, students need to develop their own perspective on education, and be able to contribute to the improvement of the educational systems and its efficacy. Knowledge and understandings gained in the process of completing goals 1 and 2 should be linked to individuals' ideas, so that they can be utilized. To complete this goal, sharing ideas between students through presentations and discussions in class should be encouraged.

PREREQUISITES: none

CLASS MATERIALS:

<Textbooks>

No required textbook for this course. Several reference materials are announced in the class.

<Website Reading for News Brief Analysis>

Students are required to read daily articles regarding education on the online version of several newspapers.

EVALUATION / ASSESSMENT

1 Mid-term and final term paper (70%): A Mid-term paper and a final term paper based on ideas and concepts dealt with during the course must be submitted before the deadline. This is a requirement to gain credits. The topic will be suggested in the class.

2 Homework (20%)

a summary of what they have learned in the previous lesson;

3 Participation in class (10%): Students are expected to contribute towards class discussions positively.

COURSE SCHEDULE

<WEEK 1> Introduction (Educational Laws and Regulations)

Students will be introduced to the contents of the course, as well as requirements. Students will also gain an understanding of the systems of laws and regulations concerning education and other related fields, as well as an overall perspective of the field.

<WEEK 2> Aims and Principles of Education

Students will explore the aims and principles of education as defined by the new and old Fundamental Law of Education.

<WEEK 3> Lifelong Learning; Social Education

Students will gain an understanding of lifelong learning in terms of its meaning, background and current issues. They will explore recent development in this field. Students will explore the field of social education in terms of both its historical background and current issues. They will also gain an understanding of the administrative support for social education provided by institutions such as libraries, museums and community centers.

<WEEK 4>Rights to Learn and Equal Opportunity in Education

Students will gain an understanding of 'rights to learn' and 'equal opportunity in education' through examining a host of resources which define these concepts and reports of current issues in this field. One topic is "school size" including small schools at rural areas and big schools in cities.

<WEEK 5>Special Support Education

Students will gain an understanding of Special Support Education, including special support schools and special support classes. Students will examine this issue through examining a host of resources which define these concepts and reports of current issues in this field.

<WEEK 6>Presentation (mid-term exam)

<WEEK 7>Compulsory Education

Students will gain an understanding of compulsory education and school education, in terms of both the historical background and current issues. We will

examine role of parents, teachers and educational administration to secure children's rights to learn.

<WEEK8> High schools

Students will gain an understanding about high schools, in terms of both the historical background and current issues. We will examine the problems high schools are currently facing, including high rate of drop-outs.

<WEEK9> Education in the Family; Early Childhood Education

Students will explore the issues of education at home and the role of parents. They will also explore the issues of partnerships between schools, families and communities. Students will also explore the field of early childhood education in terms of both its historical background and current issues. They will also examine recent developments in this field.

<WEEK 10 > Other Issues of Education (political education and religious education) ; revision

Students will explore other issues including political education and religious education especially at schools. In the latter half of this session, students will have a revision of this course.