

**UNIVERSITY COLLEGE NORTHAMPTON
POSTGRADUATE MODULAR SCHEME**

MODULE SPECIFICATION

SCHOOL	Education
FIELD*	Education
MODULE TITLE*	<i>History of Critical Educational Thought</i>

Module Code	Level*	Credit Value*	Leader
EDUM046	Level M	20	Glenn Rikowski

Pre-requisites*:

None.

Co-requisites*:

None

Restrictions*:

None

Context And Rationale

This module encourages students to trace the historical development of critical ideas in educational theory, policy and practice from the sixteenth to the mid-twentieth centuries. It compliments and provides a foundation for the *Critical Education Studies* module that focuses on critical education from the mid-twentieth century to the present day.

The notion of *critique* is central to the module, and in relation to educational ideas it has a range of meanings. Thus, it could refer to ideas about what is appropriate, 'better' or constitutes progress in some technical sense in relation to education. Secondly, it could refer to issues of equity and social justice in the educational field. Thirdly, it could refer to the ways in which the study of education enlightens us about the constitution of society and education's role in it.

In all these – and more – senses, students will examine the ideas and policy prescriptions of key figures in the history of critical educational thought. They will also explore the relationships between the educational ideas of these radical thinkers and practitioners and their social, economic and political ideas, as these typically point towards a critique of the society of their day within which their specific *educational critique* is embedded.

The module will also have an historical element in the sense that the various critical educational

thinkers examined will be placed within their social, economic and political contexts and their educational ideas explored in relation to these. The biographical details of the educational thinkers studied will also be a focus. This helps to explain further how and why the radical philosophers, theorists and practitioners studied developed their specific educational ideas and forms of practice.

The legacy of the educational thinkers studied, in particular how they influenced educational thought and practice after their deaths, will also be a concern of this module. Finally, the contemporary significance of the educational thinkers under scrutiny will be a key issue for this module: what relevance do they have for practitioners, education policy and educational theory today?

Learning Outcomes

The module aims to enable students:

1. To understand the nature of *critique* and the aims and purposes of *critical educational thought*
2. To understand and appreciate the significance of the educational ideas of a range of critical and radical educators and to be able to analyse and evaluate these ideas in relation to the thinkers' own times, how their ideas were subsequently received and developed and their significance today.
3. To critically reflect on the relationships between the *educational* ideas of the thinkers under scrutiny and the social, economic and political contexts in which they lived and worked.
4. To appreciate the relationships between the biographical circumstances of the educators examined and the development of their educational ideas.
5. To discern links and relationships between the educational ideas, policy prescriptions and practices of the educational thinkers examined and to assess the notions of "progress" and "development" in educational thought.

Knowledge And Understanding

On successful completion of the module students will be able to:

- a) Know, understand and evaluate the key educational ideas of critical and radical educational thinkers and practitioners. **(A1-5)**
- b) Understand and analyse critically the *relationships* between the ideas of the critical educational thinkers explored in the module. **(A1-5)**
- c) Understand and appreciate how the social, economic and political contexts within which the critical educators worked and lived affected the development of their educational ideas, and how aspects of their biography impacted on their views on education and society and the relationships between the two. **(A1-5)**

- d) Understand and analyse the significance of the ideas of the critical educators for the development of critical educational thought and also for educational critique in contemporary society. **(A1-5, 7)**

Subject-Specific Skills

- e) Critically consider the educational ideas, policy prescriptions and practices of the critical educators under scrutiny. **(A3, C1, C2)**
- f) Evaluate the educational ideas of the thinkers in terms of their: (a) coherence, practicality and effectiveness (b) degree of development on the basis of previous critical educational ideas (c) relevance to contemporary educational critique. **(A1-8, B2)**
- g) Develop and to justify their own views and perspectives on the critical educators' ideas, prescriptions and practices and to expound on the contemporary significance and relevance of these ideas. **(B1-2, C5-6)**
- h) Explain (with reference to specific educators) relationships between the development of critical educational thought and the social, economic and political contexts in which it was developed. **(B8-9)**
- i) Articulate the relationships between the biographies of particular critical educators and the development of their educational ideas. **(B8-9)**

Key Skills

- j) Critically analyse (a) primary source material drawn from the works of the critical educators examined in the module, and (b) the validity and significance of secondary source material on the critical educators. **(B2-3, B8, B9, C3)**
- k) Present reasoned, complex and clear arguments on the ideas of the critical educators examined in the module in written and oral forms. **(C1-2, C5-6)**
- l) Function effectively within the student group in terms of interaction, taking on a variety of roles (e.g. presenting analyses, responding to questions and justifying their ideas and perspectives). **(C2, C4-6)**

Indicative Content:

The module will begin with a focus on Thomas More's critical educational ideas in his *Utopia*. More's work sets up the notion of educational *critique* in a very sharp form. Following an appreciation of the radical educational ideas of Thomas More, the module will explore two strands of critical educational thought.

One strand of radical educators will be examined which flows from Rousseau's Romanticism and developments from it and reactions to it. Critical educators in this strand will include Wollstonecraft, Godwin, Froebel, Pestalozzi and Montessori and Dewey (this last being a figure that relates also to the second strand).

The second strand will examine the educational ideas of specifically Socialist educators. Here, the educational ideas of Fourier, Saint-Simon and the Utopian Socialists, Robert Owen, Karl Marx, Lev Vygotsky and Antonio Gramsci will be explored.

As well as examining primary sources for each of these thinkers (with extracts, quotations and chapters from key texts), secondary sources (exposition and analysis) will also be examined, to yield a multi-faceted view of the educators explored in the module.

Teaching and Learning Strategy

TEACHING, LEARNING + ASSESSMENT ACTIVITIES	STUDY HOURS
13 x 1 hour staff lecture/presentation or staff-led	13
13 x 1 hour seminar or student-led activity	13
2 x 2 hours for Student Presentations	4
15 x 6 hours independent study	90
1 x 2,000 word Review of 3 articles on an educational thinker	30
1 x 2,000 word Essay on an educational thinker	30
1 x Presentation on an educator (including Planning & Preparation)	20
TOTAL	200

Assessment Strategy and Assessment Criteria

?**Assignment 1:** Review of three articles on a critical educational thinker, 2000 words.

?**Assignment 2:** The Essay, student to select from **set** essay titles.

?**Assignment 3:** The Presentation

Module Rule

Students must examine **different** educational thinkers for **each** of the three assignments.

ASSESSMENT ITEMS	UNITS	WEIGHTING	LEARNING OUTCOMES
Assignment 1: 1 x 2,000 Review of 3 articles on a critical educational thinker	2	40%	a,c,e,f,h,i,j,k
Assignment 2: 1 x 2,000 word Essay on a critical educational thinker	2	40%	a,b,c,d,e,f,g,h,i,j,k
Assignment 3: Presentation on a critical educational thinker	1	20%	a,b,c,e,f,h,i,k,l

Assessment Criteria

Assessment will be conducted in accordance with UCN assessment procedures as detailed in the specification. Specific assessment criteria will be produced adapted from UCN's generic M Level grade descriptors.

Indicative Reading:**Recommended Books for the Module:**

Lawton, D. & Gordon, P. (2002) *A History of Western Educational Ideas*, London: Woburn Press.

Palmer, J. (2001) *Fifty Major Thinkers on Education: From Confucius to Dewey*, London: Routledge.

Other relevant texts:

Beck, J. (2001) *Writing the Radical Center: William Carlos Williams, John Dewey and American Cultural Politics*, New York: State University of New York Press.

Borg, C., Buttigieg, J. & Mayo, P. (2002) *Gramsci and Education*, Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield.

Daniels, H. (Ed.) (1996) *An Introduction to Vygotsky*, London: Routledge.

Garrison, J. (1997) *The New Scholarship on Dewey*, Hingham MA: Kluwer Academic Publishers.

Gunther-Canada, W. (2001) *Rebel Writer: Mary Wollstonecraft and Enlightenment Politics*, DeKalb, Illinois: Northern Illinois University Press.

Leibschner, J. (2001) *A Child's Work: Freedom and Guidance in Froebel's Theory and Practice*, Cambridge: Lutterworth Press.

Podmore, F. (1982) *Robert Owen: A Biography*, New York: Haskell House Publishers.

Polk Lillard, P. (1997) *Montessori in the Classroom: A Teacher's Account of How Children Really Learn*, London: Kuperard.

Rorty, A. (1998) *Philosophers on Education*, London: Routledge.

Taylor, B. (2003) *Mary Wollstonecraft and the Feminist Imagination*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Approval and review dates:

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