### Educational Studies

### Course 011

**Curriculum and Knowledge**

**MAX MARKS – 100**

**INTERNAL – 20**

**EXTERNAL – 80**

Approximately 80 hours of classroom instruction. Time spent on assignments, projects, discussions, etc is additional (adding up to a total of approximately 240 hours of overall effort).

Curriculum which seeks to develop certain understanding, skills, values and mental dispositions in the students (‘aims’ of education) is deeply embedded in the culture and structures of the society. As such it is also contested and debated within the society. Curriculum is therefore not given but something developed through dialogues and negotiations. This course is designed to enable the student-teacher to not only understand the social character of curriculum but also engage with its implications for her or his own work as a teacher.

Curriculum defines the broad contours of the experiences that need to be given to students through a planned intervention, and it is delivered through the syllabi and eventually through the teaching learning materials (like text books, library, films, and laboratory equipment) and the class room experiences (‘lessons’). A teacher constantly needs to see the linkages between the aims of education, the curriculum, the syllabi, the materials and the class room processes and how they influence each other. While it appears to the teacher as being given by higher authorities, a teacher both individually and as a member of a professional group, has an important role in shaping it. In fact each school and even each class has its own curriculum, whether consciously designed or not.

Contrary to the emphasis given to the teaching of ‘subjects’ it is important to realize that curriculum encompasses not only the realm of knowledge but also skills, values and dispositions (states of the mind) which enable an individual to live a fruitful adult life and contribute to the common good while reinforcing his or her autonomy. Knowledge, moral values etc. too are embedded in the social context and need to be seen as fluid and in the making and not given. Power enables certain strata of society to determine which knowledge, moral values or skills are worthy of imparting and in the process to marginalize the knowledge and values of the underprivileged. This can be illustrated with the example of how colonialism privileged the knowledge of certain subjects developed in Europe and communicated through English and marginalized and even obliterated other forms of knowledge of indigenous people. The same can be said of the poor and marginalized communities of today. It is therefore vital for a student teacher to understand this relation between knowledge and power to be able to respectfully engage with the knowledge that children bring with them to the school.

The social constructivist framework of education assumes that all children do not passively assimilate knowledge etc. but actively construct them by engaging with their own prior conceptions and that of their fellow students and the experiences offered by the teacher. Thus the class room cannot be merely seen as a place for transmission of knowledge but a place where knowledge and values are constructed through a collective and collaborative enterprise.

**Objectives**

1. To understand the nature of curriculum and its relation to syllabi, text books and class room practices
2. To understand the nature of knowledge, moral values and skills
3. To examine the place of work in education
4. To understand the implications of constructivism for education
5. To develop and apply a framework for studying curriculum documents.

**Unit 1**

**Curriculum, Syllabi, Text books and Class room**

1. Understanding the meaning and nature of curriculum, need for curriculum in schools.

Objectives behind framing/developing a curriculum. Aims and curriculum; the relationship between the two. Relationship between these two and pedagogy. Curriculum, syllabi and textbooks: what’s the relationship between these? What are implications of this for a teacher?

1. ‘Hidden Curriculum’ – meaning and concerns of ‘hidden’ curriculum

Unstated implications of some text book features and class room practices especially relating to gender and marginalized groups.

1. Types of curriculum:

Liberal curriculum which seeks to develop understanding and perspectives, vocational curriculum which focuses on skills and is geared towards livelihood, mixed curriculum.

1. Curriculum visualized at different levels – national-level, state-level and related issues

**Unit 2**

**Nature of Knowledge**

1. Introduction to discussions about knowledge: What is knowledge? Knowledge as human endeavor: Curiosity, Practice and Dialogue. The nature of human curiosity, its limits; the complex interaction between knowledge and social practice; knowledge being formed through dialogues and shared with a larger community.
2. Growth of knowledge and revision of knowledge.
3. Analysis of the concept of knowledge; types of knowledge: propositional (belief, truth and justification), procedural and acquaintance. Notions of objectivity and universality. The place of propositional, procedural and acquaintance knowledge in the curriculum.
4. Sociology of knowledge: privileging of certain kinds of knowledge through curriculum and its impact upon unequal learning opportunities.

**Unit 3**

**Moral Values**

1. What are values?
2. Nature value and morality.
3. What are the values prevalent in contemporary society?
4. Morality in a multi-cultural, multi religious and democratic society: different cultures/religions have different value systems and preferences. Can any one of them become the basis of moral education in schools? Can there be democratic norms of dialogue between different value systems
5. Objectives of moral education: Is it to impart information about what is valuable or to train the student how to take moral decisions or is it to instill in the student a desire to be moral person? Should investigation into why it is difficult to be moral be a part of curriculum?
6. Psychological theories of development of moral reasoning in children and adolescents. (Kohlberg)
7. How can morality be inculcated? Through analyzing moral questions and decisions, through providing models of behavior for emulation, through creating situations in which moral decisions have to be taken and reviewing them?
8. How does the school system nature a culture of peace?

**Unit 4**

**Curriculum and Productive Work**

1. Understanding work as a productive activity which aims at producing tangible goods or services. Changing nature of work in recent times. Is ‘work’ incompatible with education?
2. Gandhian notion of education through productive work and a review of experience of its actual implementation. Can we substitute traditional crafts with modern industrial work? From Gandhian notion to ‘Socially useful productive work’ (SUPW).
3. Vocational Education: education as preparation for a particular field of employment Vs liberal education to prepare for adult life in general. Possibility of combining work skills of several fields as a part of general education.
4. Visioning - human beings and just society, the role of students and teachers, the nature of knowledge and learning, the role of assessment and evaluation in education.
5. Areas of study (subjects) and the objectives of learning them.

**Unit 5**

**Children and knowledge construction**

1. How knowledge can be constructed? What is involved in construction of knowledge?
2. Teaching as ‘imparting’ knowledge Vs teaching as enabling children’s construction of knowledge
3. Children as individual constructors of knowledge vs the notion of social construction of knowledge and scaffolding by peers and seniors.
4. Children’s experience and knowledge and community knowledge in the shaping of their understanding new concepts and ideas.
5. Class room as a space for collaborative construction of new knowledge vs a space for transfer or re-construction of pre-existing knowledge.
6. Should children determine their own curriculum?

**Practicum**

1. Studying sample text books to identify ‘hidden curriculum’ in them especially relating to tribal people, minorities, rural people, women etc.
2. Conduct a collaborative knowledge construction class in a school and prepare a report on its basis. (Some exemplar themes: ‘let us find out about what kind of food we all eat and enjoy.’ Or ‘what is the nature of our family lives?’ or ‘what is the difference between a fly and an ant?’ or let us find out the rules for use of masculine and feminine gender in Hindi language.’)
3. Comparative study of various curriculum documents.
4. Prepare a report comparing national curriculum framework, the text books and class room practices in the school in which the student teacher has been interned. To what extent does the class room practice carry out the curricular objectives or the objectives set out in the text books?
5. The context/cultural embeddedness of curriculum.

Curriculum as a mode of transmission of culture and social norms. Diverse strands of culture and contestations and debates within them. Problems involved in questions about cultural choices and their implications for curriculum. Who defines culture? Who defines curriculum? (Relate this to the discussion on negotiating diversity in aims of education)

**Essential readings**

1. Krishna Kumar, What’s the Worth Teaching; (d`’.kdqekj] “kSf{kd Kku vkSj opZLo)
2. Christopher Winch, Philosophy and Education Policy, chapter 1&2.
3. John Dewey, Democracy and Education, Chapter 2 (tkuMhoh] yksdra= vkSj f”k{kk
4. National Curriculum Framework NCERT 2005, (Chapter 2)
5. Position Paper, National Focus Group on Curriculum, Syllabus and Text books (NCERT, 2006)
6. Position Paper, National Focus Group on Work and Education (NCERT, 2007)
7. Kku f”k{kkdze vkSj f”k{kk”kkL=] Mh ,M izFke ,oa f}rh; o’kZ&iBu lkexzh ] ,l lhbZvkjVh] jk;iqj 2012
8. jksfgr /kudj] f”k{kk vkSj le>] vk/kkj izdk”ku] t;iqj] 2007
9. jksfgr /kudj] yksdra=] f”k{kk vkSj foosd”khyrk] vk/kkj izdk”ku] t;iqj] 2004
10. jksfgr /kudj] f’k{kk ds lanHkZ] vk/kkj izdk”ku] t;iqj] 2007
11. Ryle, G. ‘Can Virtue Be Taught?’ in R. E. Dearden, P. Hirst and R. S.Peters (eds) Education and the Development of Reason, London, Routledge. (1972)
12. Straughan, R. Can We Teach Children to Be Good?, London, Allen and Unwin. (1982)
13. Kohlberg, L. The development of children's orientations toward a moral order, Vita Humana,(1963).
14. R Meighan, Hidden Curriculum, in IramSiraj-Blatchford, A Sociology of Educating,
15. Anthony Giddens, Sociology (5th Edition) Cambridge 2006 (Chapter on Education)
16. Relevant sections of 1975, 1988, 2000 and 2005 curriculum documents of NCERT.
17. Christopher Winch and John Gingell. Philosophy and Education: A Critical Introduction. Routledge, 2005.
18. Robin Barrow. An Introduction to Moral Philosophy and Moral Education. Routledge, 2007.
19. Paul Hirst. “The Demands of Moral Education: Reason, Virtues and Practices.” In Education in Morality, edited by J H Halstead and T H Mclaughlin. Routledge, 1999
20. Noah Lemos. An Introduction to the Theory of Knowledge. Cambridge, 2007.
21. Christopher Winch. “Curriculum Design and Epistemic Ascent.” Journal of Philosophy of Education, 47, 2013, 128-146.