School of Education

EDST5451
Educational Policy: Theory and Practice

Term 3 2021
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IMPORTANT:
For student policies and procedures relating to assessment, attendance and student support, please see website, https://education.arts.unsw.edu.au/students/courses/course-outlines/

The School of Education acknowledges the Bedegal people as the traditional custodians of the lands upon which we learn and teach.
1. **LOCATION**

Faculty of Arts, Design & Architecture  
School of Education  
EDST5451 Educational Policy: Theory and Practice (6 units of credit)  
Term 3 2021

2. **STAFF CONTACT DETAILS**

Course Convenor: Dr Meghan Stacey  
Office Location: Morven Brown Building, G18  
Email: m.stacey@unsw.edu.au  
Availability: Email to arrange an appointment.

3. **COURSE DETAILS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course Name</th>
<th>EDST5451 Educational Policy: Theory and Practice</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Credit Points</td>
<td>6 units of credit (uoc)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Workload</td>
<td>Includes 150 hours including class contact hours, readings, class preparation, assessment, follow up activities, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Schedule</td>
<td><a href="http://classutil.unsw.edu.au/EDST_T3.html#EDST5451T3">http://classutil.unsw.edu.au/EDST_T3.html#EDST5451T3</a></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**SUMMARY OF COURSE**

In this course you are introduced to education policy, education policy debates, and some of the major issues facing Australian and international education policymakers. The course aims to increase your understanding of the complexities, advantages, and limitations of education policy and to assist you in becoming effective leaders and practitioners who inform, shape, and influence education policy. The course has a particular focus on federal and state policy in education, including the impact of education policy on schools and students; the interests of stakeholders in designing education policy; the theories of change underpinning education policy initiatives; the implementation challenges of policy approaches, and the impact of various reform strategies on building teaching capacity, accountability, and improving learning for all students. You will develop “policy skills” through writing a policy brief and writing policy-based commentary analysing an aspect of one of the policy issues examined in this course.

**THE MAIN WAYS IN WHICH THE COURSE HAS CHANGED SINCE LAST TIME AS A RESULT OF STUDENT FEEDBACK:**

- Increased support for use of online tools
- Inclusion of sample response excerpts to support assessment completion
- Simplified course content requirements when assessments are due
## STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Outcome</th>
<th>Assessment/s</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Understand and use research on educational policy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Critically analyse educational policy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Design policy solutions to issues in education</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## PROGRAM LEARNING OUTCOMES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Standard</th>
<th>Assessment/s</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 1        | **Advanced disciplinary knowledge and practices**  
Demonstrate an advanced understanding of the field of education as it relates to their specialist area of study, and the ability to synthesize and apply disciplinary principles and practices to new or complex environments. | 1, 2 |
| 2        | **Enquiry-based learning**  
Demonstrate an in-depth understanding of research-based learning and the ability to plan, analyse, present, implement and evaluate complex activities that contribute to advanced professional practice and/or intellectual scholarship in education. | 1, 2 |
| 3        | **Cognitive skills and critical thinking**  
Demonstrate advanced critical thinking and problem-solving skills | 1, 2 |
| 4        | **Communication, adaptive and interactional skills**  
Communicate effectively to a range of audiences, and be capable of independent and collaborative enquiry and team-based leadership | 1, 2 |
| 5        | **Global outlook**  
Demonstrate an understanding of international perspectives relevant to the educational field | 1, 2 |
| 6        | **Ethics**  
Demonstrate an advanced capacity to recognise and negotiate the complex and often contested values and ethical practices that underlie education | 1, 2 |

## AUSTRALIAN PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS FOR TEACHERS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Standard</th>
<th>Assessment/s</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.6.4</td>
<td>Initiate and lead the review of school policies to support the engagement and full participation of students with disability and ensure compliance with legislative and/or system policies.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.4.4</td>
<td>Evaluate the effectiveness of student well-being policies and safe working practices using current school and/or system, curriculum and legislative requirements and assist colleagues to update their practices.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.5.4</td>
<td>Review or implement new policies and strategies to ensure the safe, responsible, and ethical use of ICT in learning and teaching.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.2.2</td>
<td>Participate in learning to update knowledge and practice, targeted to professional needs and school and/or system priorities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.2.3</td>
<td>Support colleagues to review and interpret legislative, administrative, and organisational requirements, policies and processes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.4.2</td>
<td>Participate in professional and community networks and forums to broaden knowledge and improve practice</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4. **RATIONALE FOR THE INCLUSION OF CONTENT AND TEACHING APPROACH**

A broad critical understanding of the policy debates and approaches in Australian education is necessary to assist students in becoming effective leaders and practitioners who inform, shape, and implement education policy and to be an informed, engaged educator. The teaching, learning, and assessment activities in this course are designed to provide students with the opportunity to develop a critical understanding of policy issues, existing policy approaches, and alternative policy solutions.

5. **TEACHING STRATEGIES**

The course will use a combination of lectures, whole-group discussions, and student-led discussions designed to provide participants with the opportunity to deeply study the themes of the course.

6. **COURSE CONTENT AND STRUCTURE**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Topic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>What is (Educational) Policy?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>The Policy-Making Framework in Australia and Beyond</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>The Policymaker’s Perspective</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Theme: Standardisation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Theme: Testing, Data and Evidence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Theme: Teachers, Teaching &amp; Teachers’ Work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Theme: Markets &amp; Funding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Theme: Commercialisation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Global Perspectives on Educational Policy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Teachers and Policy: Where to From Here?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
7. RESOURCES

Week 1


Week 2


Week 3


Week 4


Week 5


Week 6


Week 7

Week 8

Week 9

Week 10

8. ASSESSMENT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assessment Task</th>
<th>Length</th>
<th>Weight</th>
<th>Student Learning Outcomes Assessed</th>
<th>Program Learning Outcomes Assessed</th>
<th>Australian Professional Standards Assessed</th>
<th>Due Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Task 1: Policy analysis</td>
<td>2000 words</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>1-3</td>
<td>1-6</td>
<td>1.6.4, 4.4.4, 4.5.4</td>
<td>Friday 8th October by 5pm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Task 2: Policy briefing</td>
<td>3000 words</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>1-3</td>
<td>1-6</td>
<td>6.2.2, 7.2.3, 7.4.2</td>
<td>Friday 19th November by 5pm</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Submission of assessments
Students are required to follow their lecturer’s instructions when submitting their work for assessment. All assessment will be submitted online via Moodle by 5pm. Students are also required to keep all drafts, original data, and other evidence of the authenticity of the work for at least one year after examination. If an assessment is mislaid the student is responsible for providing a further copy. Please see the Student Policies and Procedures for information regarding submission, extensions, special consideration, late penalties and hurdle requirements etc.
https://education.arts.unsw.edu.au/students/courses/course-outlines/
Assessment Details

Assessment 1

Analyse an existing policy document related to education.

The policy may exist at school/university, state or federal level. A list of possible documents to choose from for this task will be available on Moodle; alternatively, students can select their own however it must be clearly referenced and, if not available online in English, a translated copy must be made available.

Drawing on Bacchi (2009), prepare a 2000 word analysis of the policy that:

1. Identifies the ‘problem’ being addressed
2. Identifies assumptions underlying this representation of the ‘problem’
3. Explores the history behind the policy and how it came about
4. Identifies the silences within the policy
5. Identifies the potential effects of the policy
6. Suggests how this representation of the ‘problem’ could be questioned, disrupted or replaced.

Draw on academic literature, policy documents and/or related sources (e.g. reports, reviews and legislation) as appropriate to support your response.

Reference

Assessment 2

Prepare and analyse a policy brief for a policymaker.

Part 1: Policy brief (2000 words)

Write a policy brief to a state or federal policymaker, addressing a particular issue in education policy. The issue should be drawn from themes covered in the course. Explain the issue, present possible courses of action, and then argue for a particular position, i.e., how you think the issue should be addressed.

Part 2: Analysis of policy brief (1000 words)

Reflect on the ‘solution’ you have put forward in Part 1, and how you have constructed a particular policy ‘problem’, by drawing on the policy analysis approach developed in Assessment 1 to critically analyse the position you have taken. Conclude with an overall evaluation of this position.

Draw on academic literature, policy documents and/or related sources (e.g., reports, reviews, and legislation) as appropriate to support your response. You must include reference to unit readings as well as self-identified academic and policy sources.
### SPECIFIC CRITERIA

**Understanding of the question or issue and the key concepts involved**
- Appropriateness of policy document selected for analysis
- Explicit engagement with Bacchi’s (2009) approach to policy analysis
- Clear understanding of the concept of policy ‘problems’

**Depth of analysis and/or critique in response to the task**
- Clear and reasoned identification of the ‘problem’ represented within the selected policy document
- Clear and reasoned identification of assumptions within the selected policy document
- Detailed analysis of relevant historical context/s
- Clear and reasoned identification of silences within the selected policy document
- Considered exploration of potential effects of the selected policy document
- Thoughtful suggestions for how the problem could be questioned, disrupted, or replaced

**Familiarity with and relevance of professional and/or research literature used to support response**
- Uses academic literature effectively to support response
- Uses policy documents and related sources effectively to support response

**Structure and organisation of response**
- Logical sequencing of ideas in response to task requirements
- Effective use of paragraphing
- Clarity and coherence of organisation, including use of subheadings where appropriate

**Presentation of response according to appropriate academic and linguistic conventions**
- Writing adheres to academic standards of grammar, punctuation, and spelling
- Accuracy and consistency in use of APA conventions, including both in-text citations and the reference list
- Within +/-10% of the word limit

### GENERAL COMMENTS

Lecturer: [Name]
Date: [Date]
Recommended: [Score]/20 (FL PS CR DN HD) Weighting: 40%

NB: The ticks in the various boxes are designed to provide feedback to students; they are not given equal weight in determining the recommended grade. Depending on the nature of the assessment task, lecturers may also contextualize and/or amend these specific criteria. The recommended grade is tentative only, subject to standardisation processes and approval by the School of Education Learning and Teaching Committee.
## Specific Criteria

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Understanding of the question or issue and the key concepts involved</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• A relevant issue in education policy at state or federal level is clearly identified and explained, and a position relevant to the issue is taken</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Clear understanding of the relationship between policy ‘problems’ and ‘solutions’</td>
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<tr>
<th>Depth of analysis and/or critique in response to the task</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Issue is explored in depth, demonstrating a thorough grasp of the content</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Considered, reflexive analysis of position is articulated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Overall evaluation of position is thoughtful and well-reasoned</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Familiarity with and relevance of professional and/or research literature used to support response</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Uses a wide range of academic literature to effectively support response</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Uses unit readings as relevant to effectively support response</td>
</tr>
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<td>• Uses policy documents and/or related sources as relevant to effectively support response</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Within +/-10% of the word limit</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## General Comments

Lecturer:  
Date:  
Recommended: /20 (FL PS CR DN HD)  
Weighting: 60%

NB: The ticks in the various boxes are designed to provide feedback to students; they are not given equal weight in determining the recommended grade. Depending on the nature of the assessment task, lecturers may also contextualize and/or amend these specific criteria. **The recommended grade is tentative only, subject to standardisation processes and approval by the School of Education Learning and Teaching Committee.**