

**UNIVERSITY COLLEGE NORTHAMPTON
POSTGRADUATE MODULAR SCHEME**

MODULE SPECIFICATION

SCHOOL	Education
FIELD*	Education
MODULE TITLE*	Critical Education Studies

Module Code	Level*	Credit Value*	Leader
EDUM045	Level M	20	Dave Hill/ Glenn Rikowski

Pre-requisites*:

None

Co-requisites*:

None

Restrictions*:

None

Context/rationale:

This module focuses on the nature of critique and alternatives in education and training in contemporary society. It also raises and explores the issue of the nature of 'critical education studies' and critical pedagogy and their relevance to education in Britain and in other societies today. Thirdly, it explores theories regarding how education and training in society function to reproduce existing society – with its attendant patterns of economic and social inequalities. It also takes a critical attitude towards those theories: how valid and useful are they in explaining the nature of education and training in society today? Finally, it explores the nature of economic and social transformation and the role that education and training might play in the processes of transformation.

Learning Outcomes*:

Aims

To enable students:

?To understand and develop the concepts of 'critique', 'critical education studies', critical

pedagogy, and 'alternatives' in education

?To evaluate a range of critical education studies as presented in the module

?To critically reflect on the studies explored in the module in terms of their own experiences and perspectives on and hopes for education and society.

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

Knowledge and Understanding:

- a) Understand a range of Critical Education Studies and their relevance to education theory, policy and practice **(A1-7)**
- b) Become acquainted with a range of concepts within Critical Education Studies – e.g. banking education (Paulo Freire), cultural capital (Pierre Bourdieu), ideological and repressive state apparatuses (Louis Althusser), economic reproduction (Bowles and Gintis), border pedagogy (Henry Giroux), praxis (Antonio Gramsci, Paula Allman) and revolutionary critical education (Peter McLaren) – and to critically reflect upon and critique these **(A7-8, B2)**
- c) Become aware of a range of theories within Critical Education Studies that address the nature and shortcomings of contemporary education and training, and to discuss the utility, coherence and value of these for both understanding the nature of education and training as constituted currently and for social transformation **(A7-8, B2, C5-6)**

Subject-specific skills:

- d) develop a sophisticated critical appreciation of range of Critical Education Studies, Critically contextualising the studies, thinkers, concepts and theories examined in relation to education and training practices, and processes, ideologies and policies (such as neo-liberal policies) in the UK and also other countries of the students' choice **(B2)**
- e) evaluate the connections between a range of theoretical explanations and developments in critical education studies **(A1-4)**
- f) develop and justify own well-considered evaluative judgements on issues of `critical education, critical ,pedagogy, critical theory and other aspects of critical education studies **(A1-4, B1-3, B5)**
- g) relate such evaluative judgements to their own first and second hand experience and practice and /or to developments within selected states or regions, relating the studies under scrutiny (and studies which oppose them) to their own experiences within and hopes for education and society **(B7-8, B11-12)**

Key Skills:

- h) engage in critical analysis of a wide range of texts and their ideological components **(C1-2)**
- i) present complex arguments, logically and clearly and with reference to a wide range of print and non-print sources. **(B1, C1, C3, C5, C6)**
- j) lead, stimulate and structure discussion of complex material, interacting effectively within the

student group taking on a variety of roles. **(B1, C1, C4)**

Indicative Content:

Module participants will study the major concepts, theories, studies and research with the field of Critical Education Studies. They will explore the nature of Critical Education Studies and Critical Pedagogy, and this will be a constant reference point throughout the module: what is Critical Education Studies and what is Critical Pedagogy? What are they for and what are they supposed to do? And what do they critique and oppose? And what are salient critiques of Critical Education Studies, and responses to those critiques.

Students will consider key Critical Education Studies. Each of the studies examined will be approached critically, and students will also explore and reflect on the secondary literatures behind each of the key studies.

The module is split into three time periods. The first, *The Classical Age of Critical Education Studies*, analyses studies that appeared from 1970 to 1982 which have become constant reference points in the development of Critical Education Studies. These studies set key terms of the debate and questions for educational research for critical education. They also generated massive secondary literatures. Finally, the weaknesses and drawbacks of these theories also became apparent from an early stage, and students will examine these too.

The second period, *Stagnation, Diversity and Reaction* charts the break-up of the classical age of Critical Education Studies. Regarding *stagnation*, students will come to appreciate how the weaknesses of the 1970s studies led to decline of certain kinds critical education study (e.g. Marxist educational theory). They will also become aware of how and why little progress was made in the 1980s and early 1990s after the heady days of the 1970s and that the structuralist neo-Marxism of the 1970s became widely replaced by culturalist neo-Marxism. On *diversity*, students will discover how new forms of Critical Education Studies emerged from Culturalist neo-Marxism— principally postmodernism and poststructuralism. They shall also examine limitations of these studies in terms of their 'criticality' and their shortcomings regarding the generation of forms of education and training that pose a substantive challenge to mainstream conceptions and policies.

The third period, *Renaissance in Critical Education Studies* uncovers the course of Critical Education Studies from 1994 to the present day. The key proposition here is that there has been a renewal of Critical Education Studies. Furthermore, it appears that at last, real progress has been made and that the weaknesses of studies and research of The Classical Age no longer inhibit possibilities for progress and development in Critical Education Studies. Students will examine some new works in the field, and will be able to critique these and offer alternatives for driving on further development in Critical Education Studies.

The module will develop skills in theoretical and conceptual analysis, the ability to relate social and educational theories to practice and policy, and to relate these also to personal experience and aspirations. Above all, it will seek to engage students with the issues involved in viewing education and training as having the potential to be aspects of social transformation.

Teaching and Learning Strategy:

TEACHING, LEARNING + ASSESSMENT ACTIVITIES	STUDY HOURS
8 x 1 hour seminars	8
8 x 1 hour seminars	8
7 x 2 hour seminars	14
15 x 7.3 hours independent study	110
1 x 2,000 word individual presentation and critical examination	30
1 x 3,000 word essay	30
TOTAL	200

Assessment strategy*and assessment criteria:

?Students will give a presentation critically evaluating the work of a selected critical thinker or group of critical thinkers, analysing and commenting on that corpus with substantiating documentation.

?Module participants will complete an assignment of 3000 words which examines an aspect of one of the course issues. This aspect may be related to the student's own current or past experience.

ASSESSMENT ITEMS	UNITS	WEIGHTING	LEARNING OUTCOMES
1 x 2000 word individual presentation and critical examination		50%	a-j
1 x 3,000 word assignment		50%	a-g

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 and other learning resources:

Allman, P. (2001) *Critical Education against Global Capital: Karl Marx and Revolutionary Critical Education*. Westport, Conn: Bergin and Garvey.

Althusser, L. (1971) *Ideology and State Apparatuses*. In *Lenin and Philosophy and Other Essays*. London: New Left Books.

Aronowitz, S. and Giroux, H. (1991) *Postmodern Education: Politics, Culture and Social*

Criticism. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

Bourdieu, R. and Passeron, J. (1977) *Reproduction in Education, Society and Culture*. London: Sage.

Bowles, S. and Gintis, H. (1976) *Schooling in Capitalist America: Educational Reform and the Contradictions of Economic Life*. New York: Basic Books.

Cole, M., Hill, D., McLaren, P. and Rikowski, G. (2001) *Red Chalk: on Schooling, Capitalism and Politics*. Brighton: Institute for Education Policy Studies.

Ellsworth, L. (1992) Why doesn't this feel empowering? Working through the repressive myths of critical pedagogy. In C. Luke and J. Gore (eds.) *Feminisms and Critical Pedagogy*. New York: Routledge.

Giroux, H. (1988) *Teachers as Intellectuals: Toward a Critical Pedagogy of Learning*. Granby, Massachusetts: Bergin and Garvey.

Harris, K. (1994) *Teachers: Constructing the Future*. London: Falmer Press.

Hill, D. (2003) Global Neo-Liberalism, the Deformation of Education and Resistance'. *Journal for Critical Education Policy Studies*. 1 (1) (www.jceps.com)

Hill, D., McLaren, P., Cole, M. and Rikowski, G. (eds.) (2002) *Marxism Against Postmodernism in Educational Theory*. Lanham, MD: Lexington Press.

Hillcole Group/ C. Benn and C. Chitty (eds.) (1997) *Rethinking Education and Democracy: a Socialist Alternative for the Twenty- First Century*. London: Tufnell Press.

McLaren, P. (2003). *Life in Schools: an Introduction to Critical Pedagogy in the Foundations of Education* (fourth edition) Arlington, MA, USA: Allyn and Bacon.

McLaren, P. and Rikowski, G. (2000) Pedagogy for Revolution against Education for Capital: An E-dialogue on Education in Capitalism Today. *Cultural Logic*, 4 (1), 2000. <http://eserver.org/clogic/4-1/mclaren&rikowski.html>. Accessed on 20April 2003 via www.ieps.org.uk.

Rikowski, G. (1996) Left Alone: End Time for Marxist Educational Theory? *British Journal of Sociology of Education*, 17 (4) pp.415–451.

Rikowski, G. (1997) Scorched Earth: Prelude to Rebuilding Marxist Educational Theory." *British Journal of Sociology of Education*, 18 (4) pp. 551–574.

Students should also read print journals such as The Harvard Educational review, the British Journal of Sociology of Education, The Journal of Education Policy, the Journal, of Education (Boston), and e-journals such as The Journal for Critical Education Policy Studies, Rethinking Marxism and Education, Educational Theory, Cultural Logic, EDUcate, Socialist Review.

Approval and review dates:

Date of approval: June 2003

Date of revision:

Section: