



EDST 548

Critical Perspectives on Teachers' Unions in Educational Leadership

Teachers in public K-12 and postsecondary institutions (and also those in some private educational institutions) have chosen to unionize in Canadian provinces and in many international contexts. Unionization has had profound impacts on teachers and their work. The course will employ a critical social theory approach, which problematizes social issues by situating them within historical, cultural, economic and political contexts. This course will examine, among other things: when and why teachers in Canada unionized; how unionization has impacted teachers' social, economic, and political status in society; and how teachers and teachers' unions are represented in discourses promoted by different groups, including teachers' unions. Particular attention will be given to how globalized neo-liberal ideology, policy, and practice have impacted education, teachers, and teachers' unions in Canada and in international contexts. How do processes like marketization, privatization, internationalization, and competition impact teachers and how are their unions responding?

An overarching theme of the course will be the problematic nature of unionization and educational leadership and the interrelationships between them. For example, do teachers' unions engage in educational leadership and, if so, from whose perspectives and in what ways? How does the relative bureaucratization or democratization of union organizations impact teachers' roles and freedoms? What influences relationships between teachers and educational administrators and policy makers within unionized educational institutions and systems and what are the possibilities for establishing and maintaining positive relationships?



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Winter Term 1
Tuesdays from 4:30 - 7:30 PM