

EDST 565 Educational Environments, Summer 1, 2021
Dr. Amy Scott Metcalfe, Department of Educational Studies

Course Description

“Educational Environments” is an elective graduate course open to all Master’s and Doctoral students. Educational environments are considered broadly, to include formal as well as informal spaces and places for learning. There are no prerequisites. Educational Environments invites students to spatially contextualize specific educational settings through various lenses, such as Indigenous perspectives on land-based education, critical place inquiry, ecological criticism, critical cartography, spatial theory, digital environments, critical theories of security and surveillance, environmental humanities, affective geographies, space/place and critical race theory, critical disability studies, decolonization, and critical spatial perspectives on sexual orientation and gender identity.

Mode

The course will be offered online via Canvas in the Summer 1 term (May/June), 2021. Weekly live Zoom sessions will be held in a seminar style.

Course Objectives

The course aims to connect pertinent scholarship on the topic of educational environments to relevant learning contexts from the students’ perspectives. The course is designed to:

1. Introduce or expand awareness of various bodies of scholarship and modes of inquiry for the study of educational environments,
2. Offer opportunities for students to develop their own space/place-specific inquiry related to an educational environment of their choice.
3. Showcase student learning through their Presentations, emphasizing opportunities for creative expression, analysis, and generative scholarship.

Course Organization

In addition to discussion of assigned readings, students will formulate their own reading lists to build understanding in three broadly defined (yet closely related) areas: sensory experiences, interpretive practices, and memories in place. The course will begin with an introduction, and follow with the sections below. The course will end with student presentations (asynchronously presented online with follow-up discussion with the whole class via Zoom).

Sensory experiences. How do we experience educational environments through our senses? Suggested approaches include: soundscapes, music, food, photography, video, visual arts, environmental arts, performing arts, ceremony, olfactory methods, virtual reality, movements or other techniques chosen in consultation with the instructor.

Interpretive practices. How do we make sense of, and communicate our understandings of, the educational environments we encounter? Suggested approaches include: critical cartography (mapping, un-mapping, re-mapping), environmental history, storytelling, alternative campus tours, creative writing/poetry, eco-criticism, creative photography, or other techniques chosen in consultation with the instructor.

Memories in place. What and who are remembered in and through places of learning? Suggested approaches include: archival and historiographical research/writing, analyzing on-site memorials, landscape analysis, architectural analysis, storytelling, auto-ethnographic practices, rephotography or other techniques chosen in consultation with the instructor.

Assignments

Individualized Reading List, 10%
Literature Review, 40%
Presentation, 50%