

EDMONTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

June 19, 2001

TO: Board of Trustees
FROM: E. Dossall, Superintendent of Schools
SUBJECT: Curriculum Additions
ORIGINATOR: M. de Man, Department Head Designate

RESOURCE

STAFF: George Arndt, Steve Ashworth, Karen Bardy, Wilma Bayko, Bob Boruszcak, Gloria Chalmers, Mary Frances Fitzgerald, Bill Howe, Geoff Jackson, Tanis Dolman-Johnson, Karen Linden, John Macnab, Trudy Oatway, Geoff Salmon, Allison Smith, Sid Shurgarman, Stuart Wachowicz

RECOMMENDATION

That the following locally developed courses be approved for use in the district:

Horsemanship 7/8/9
Television Production and Writing 7/8/9
Women's History 9
Drill and Parade 35 (3 Cr.)
Philosophy 35 (5 Cr.)

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Background: Locally developed courses are designed to meet specific identified needs of students and of alternative programs. The courses are developed in accordance with district standards according to guidelines set by Alberta Learning. Courses are renewed every three years and presented again to the Board for approval at that time.

Horsemanship 7/8/9:

Horse Hill School requested the development and approval of this academically rigorous course which would provide students opportunities not normally available to many, and make use of high quality facilities in the community.

The course, while focusing on the theory and practice of caring for and handling horses, serves to transfer skills from core areas like mathematics, science and social studies as well as aspects of character education. In addition to learning physical skills of handling, riding and caring for a horse, students will become familiar with careers related to horses and horse care.

Specialized instruction will be provided by a licensed instructor in a registered facility, under the supervision of teachers.

Television Production and Writing 7/8/9:

Victoria School is in need of a junior high course that serves to provide a pre-high school introduction into screen writing and technical aspects of television program production.

The course has been carefully designed to draw on the English skills students have developed, and allows them to focus on the purpose of writing. Students also master organizational skills needed to put together a television production as well as to learn aspects of the technical operations of complex modern equipment. From this series of courses, students gain valuable experience and can determine if this is to be an area of focus in high school and beyond. Instruction is provided only by highly specialized teachers who are themselves experts in this area.

Women's History 9:

This course provides curricular and program support to the Nellie McClung alternative program, and was created by the district, in partnership with Nellie McClung staff and members of the Department of History and Classics of the University of Alberta.

The course is designed, over a period of 75 hours of instruction to review key concepts, events, personalities and contributions related to Women's history over the past 500 years. It will examine the period of 1500 to 1800, and subsequently 1800 to the present. The role of women in daily life and in the political and social order will be studied and students will be provided an accurate and contextual framework within which to understand the role women have played and are currently playing in society.

Drill and Parade 35:

This is the final course in the sequence of courses developed to meet the unique programming needs of L'Academy Vimy Ridge Academy. The five credit course serves to complete the sequence of drill and parade skills needed to be drill instructor in the Cadet Corps.

As such the course stresses the more complex components of parade square movement and formations, as well as learning the leadership skills, knowledge base and timing needed for a drill and parade instructor. The course stresses the very disciplined and visually impressive routines and requirements of Imperial Drill, which also serves to preserve an invaluable piece of Canadian heritage.

Philosophy 35:

Philosophy 35 is a senior high locally developed course that has been developed with the support and participation of district teachers, Department of Philosophy and Faculty of Education, and Alberta Learning.

The course was designed as a result of an initial approach from Dr. Martin Tweedle, Dr. Oliver Schulte and Dr. Stephen Norris of the University of Alberta. As part of the Canadian Philosophy Association they, along with colleagues in other provinces sought to help philosophy have a presence in provincial curriculum. Alberta Learning supported the concept, realizing the present Philosophy 30 course was insufficient and in need of revision. Alberta Learning has had a member on the committee receiving regular updates by e-mail.

The district staff and university representatives have produced a superb course in philosophy which will have wide appeal to many students of different backgrounds and interests. It is a course designed to help students question and reason and engage in thoughtful dialogue on many current issues. Students will learn not only the history of philosophy, but why the skills it teaches are indispensable to a thoughtful person in a modern world.

Copies of the courses are available in the Trustees' Reading Room.

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