



3365F (570)
CHILDHOOD EDUCATION POLICY
Fall 2026

Instructor: Dr. Kym Briggs
Email:

Course Information

Calendar Description:

An introduction to the primary debates, experiences, policies, and law confronting childhood and youth within educational institutions and programs in Canada.

Pre-requisite(s): Any course in Childhood and Youth Studies at the 2200-level

Anti-requisite(s):

Extra Information:

Course Weight: 0.50

Breadth: Category A

Subject Code: Childhood and Youth Studies

Notice: Unless you have either the requisites for this course (fulfilment of pre-requisites, no anti-requisite conflicts), or special permission from your Dean to enrol in it, you may be removed from this course and it will be deleted from your record. This decision may not be appealed. You will receive no adjustment to your fees in the event that you are dropped from a course for failing to have the necessary prerequisites.



CYS3365F (570)
Childhood, Education Policy
Fall 2026

Instructor: Dr. Kym Briggs

Course and Faculty Contact:

For Course Information (Day, Time and Location), please go to student.uwo.ca, login, select Academics then Fall 2026. For Faculty Contact information, please see the class OWL.

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An introduction to the primary debates, experiences, policies, and law confronting childhood and youth within educational institutions and programs in Canada.

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Course Overview:

This course intends to introduce students to the interconnected nature of children's experiences, how these experiences influence childhood, and the governing educational and legal policies that have an impact on childhood. This course will begin with the child at the centre and will extend to the many influencing factors affecting childhood in the present Canadian context.

Learning Outcomes:

By the end of this course, students will:

- Examine the role of the child in their learning, education, and multiple learning contexts and institutions interacting in the lives of children.
- Articulate and differentiate the intentions of education policy and law in children's lives in the present Canadian context.
- Combine, compare, and contrast knowledge of influencing factors that contribute to childhood such as: individuality, wellbeing, family, learning, education, community, law, and advocacy.
- Build a foundation of knowledge that examines the interrelationship between childhood, institutional educational policy, and law.
- Research and analyze learnings, theories, and concepts to examine real-world issues for children and families.
- Demonstrate enhanced analytical skills as well as oral and written communication.

Course Materials:

All required readings are detailed by lecture/topic in the course outline below.

- Digital readings will be made available in OWL for free . There is no required textbook.

Evaluation:

A note on AI: Intentional use of artificial intelligence or language generation or translation applications by students to summarize readings or complete assignment work for this course must be approved by the instructor and noted by the student in the submitted work itself. This mandate does not refer to aspects of AI programming embedded into applications such as Word, Chrome, etc. It applies to all intentional usage of AI as a 'co-reader' or 'co-writer'. Students must do their own reading and writing to construct their own voices as democratic citizens. They are not allowed to write text and feed it into a computer application to improve it or translate it. Asking an application to compose text and then changing words before submitting it as your own constitutes plagiarism. Use of Grammarly or similar applications is prohibited. Using plagiarism checkers to see if plagiarized text has been altered enough to avoid detection itself is a form of academic dishonesty. Students must compose text, choose words, construct logical flow, structure sentences and paragraphs using their own minds and in response to what they read, hear, and experience. When you borrow words or ideas from another person or from a machine, this must be placed in quotation marks and properly cited.

Assignment	Weight	Due Date
#1 – Engagement and Professional Participation	10%	Ongoing – Personal write-up due December 3, 2026
#2 - Truth and Reconciliation Calls to Action Plan	15%	October 8, 2026 by 11:59pm
#3 – Ontario Education Policy Group Presentation	25%	November 5,12,19, or 26
#4 – Ontario Education Policy Analysis Briefs	50% (10% each x5)	December 3, 2026 by 11:59pm

Assignment #1 – Engagement and Professional Participation

Ongoing – Personal Write-up Due December 3, 2026 by 11:59pm

Weight: 10%

Participation in this course is evaluated as a single overall grade. This approach recognizes that meaningful engagement can vary from week to week and allows students to demonstrate their contributions over the entire term rather than being penalized for occasional absences or less active weeks. Participation will be assessed using the Western participation rubric and assigned at the end of the term.

Students will complete a brief self-assessment reflecting on their participation throughout the course, using specific examples to support their evaluation.

High-quality participation demonstrates:

- Evidence of having completed and engaged with assigned readings and policy documents prior

to class.

- Thoughtful, relevant, and respectful contributions to discussions.
- Active listening and constructive engagement with classmates.
- Meaningful participation in group work and learning activities.
- A willingness to critically examine and discuss contemporary education policy issues from multiple perspectives.

Assignment #2 - Truth and Reconciliation Calls to Action Plan

Due: October 8, 2026 by 11:59pm

Mark: 15%

**You may work in pairs for this assignment

Based on the *Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada: Calls to Action* (2015), students will develop a practical implementation plan demonstrating how they could contribute to advancing one Call to Action (or a component of a Call to Action) within an educational setting.

The plan should include:

- Goal(s)
- Objectives
- Action steps
- Measurable outcomes
- Consideration of how the proposed actions align with or extend existing Ontario education policy.

The paper should be approximately two pages in length, double-spaced, using 12-point font. Any references should be cited using APA format. Students are expected to use respectful, strengths-based language and demonstrate an understanding of reconciliation as an ongoing responsibility within education.

Helpful resource: Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada. (2015). Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada: Calls to Action. Winnipeg, Manitoba. <https://nctr.ca/about/truth-and-reconciliation-commission-of-canada-calls-to-action/>

Assignment #3 – Ontario Education Policy Presentation

Due: November 5,12,19, or 26

Mark: 25%

Working in groups of two or three, students will critically analyze an Ontario education policy and examine its implications for children, youth, families, and educational practice.

Presentations should be approximately **20-30 minutes**, followed by **10 minutes of class engagement**, for a total of approximately **30-40 minutes**.

1. Policy Selection

Each group will select an Ontario education policy, Policy/Program Memorandum (PPM), legislative initiative, or provincial education framework that has significant implications for children and youth.

(use this site to help you select a policy: <https://www.ontario.ca/document/education-ontario-policy-and-program-direction>)

2. Research and Critical Analysis

Presentations should address:

- The background and purpose of the policy.
- The issue or problem the policy was intended to address.
- The historical and social context surrounding its development.
- The policy's strengths and intended benefits.
- Limitations, criticisms, and implementation challenges.
- Implications for equity, inclusion, and student well-being.
- Connections to current research and course readings.

Students are expected to support their analysis using scholarly literature, government documents, and relevant reports.

3. Policy Recommendations

Based on your analysis, develop two to three evidence-informed recommendations for strengthening the policy or improving its implementation.

Recommendations should:

- Be realistic and achievable within the Ontario education system.
- Be supported by scholarly literature and evidence.
- Clearly explain how the proposed changes would improve outcomes for children, youth, families, educators, or educational equity.

Students should demonstrate how their recommendations build upon the strengths of the existing policy while addressing identified gaps or limitations.

4. Presentation

Presentations should communicate findings in an engaging, professional, and organized manner.

5. Class Engagement

Groups will facilitate approximately 10 minutes of meaningful class engagement through discussion questions, case studies, activities, or other interactive learning strategies that encourage critical thinking about the policy.

Assignment #4 – Ontario education Policy Analysis Briefs

Due: December 3, 2026 by 11:59pm

Mark: 50% (10% each x5)

Throughout the semester, students will complete five Ontario Education Policy Analysis Briefs, each corresponding to a policy examined in class. These assignments are designed to develop students' ability to critically analyze education policy by connecting provincial policy documents with scholarly literature, class discussions, and contemporary issues affecting children and youth.

Each brief will focus on one of the assigned Ontario education policies discussed during the course.

The corresponding policies are:

- Week 2: *Ontario's Equity and Inclusive Education Strategy* (or PPM 119)
 - Ontario Ministry of Education. (2013, April 22). *Policy/program memorandum no. 119: Developing and implementing equity and inclusive education policies in Ontario schools*. Government of Ontario. <https://www.ontario.ca/document/education-ontario-policy-and-program-direction/policyprogram-memorandum-119>

- Week 4: *Ontario First Nation, Métis, and Inuit Education Policy Framework*
 - Ontario Ministry of Education. (2007). *Ontario First Nation, Métis, and Inuit education policy framework*. Government of Ontario. <https://www.ontario.ca/page/ontario-first-nation-metis-and-inuit-education-policy-framework-2007>
- Week 5: *Policy/Program Memorandum No. 169: Student Mental Health in Ontario*
 - Policy 169: [Policy/Program Memorandum 169 | Education in Ontario: policy and program direction | ontario.ca](#)
- Week 7: *Ontario Human Rights Commission: Policy on Preventing Discrimination Because of Gender Identity and Gender Expression*
 - <https://www.ohrc.on.ca/en/policy-preventing-discrimination-because-gender-identity-and-gender-expression>
- Week 8: *Ontario Human Rights Commission: Policy and Guidelines on Racism and Racial Discrimination*
 - <https://www.ohrc.on.ca/en/policy-and-guidelines-racism-and-racial-discrimination>

Each brief should be approximately 2 pages, double-spaced, and written in APA format. Students are expected to move beyond summarizing the policy and instead provide a thoughtful, evidence-informed analysis supported by course readings and scholarly literature.

Each Policy Analysis Brief should address the following:

- Policy Overview
Briefly describe the purpose of the policy and the educational issue it is intended to address.
- Policy Context
Explain why this policy was developed. Consider the historical, social, political, or educational context that contributed to its creation.
- Critical Analysis
Using course readings and scholarly literature, critically evaluate the policy.
 - Consider questions such as:
 - How effectively does the policy address the issue?
 - What assumptions does the policy make?
 - What are the policy's strengths?
 - What limitations or gaps exist?
 - Who benefits from the policy?
 - Are there individuals or groups whose needs may not be fully addressed?
- Implications for Children and Youth
Discuss the potential implications of the policy for children, youth, families, educators, and educational equity.
- Recommendations
Provide one or two evidence-informed recommendations that could strengthen the policy or improve its implementation.

Students are expected to integrate the assigned policy with course readings, demonstrate critical thinking, and support their analysis using APA-formatted citations.

All five Policy Analysis Briefs will be submitted together as a single Word document at the end of the semester.

COURSE SCHEDULE

Week 1

September 10 – Introduction to Education Policy

Readings:

Ontario. (1990). *Education Act, R.S.O. 1990, c. E.2*. <https://www.ontario.ca/laws/statute/90e02>

Cunliffe, A. (2004). On Becoming a Critically Reflexive Practitioner. *Journal of Management Education*, 28(4), 407-426.

Lee-Nichols, M. (2014). A Teaching Story: It Begins with Muffins for Moms: How Racist Practices Casually Creep into Classrooms. In *Six Lenses for Anti-Oppressive Education: Partial Stories, Improbable Conversations*, (2nd ed., p. 263-272). New York, NY: Peter Lang.

Week 2

September 17 - Anti-oppressive education and critical reflexivity

Complete Policy Analysis Brief

Readings:

Delpit, L. (2006). The Silenced Dialogue: Power and Pedagogy in Educating Other People's Children. In *Other People's Children: Cultural Conflict in the Classroom*, (p.22-57).

Ontario Ministry of Education. (2009). *Realizing the promise of diversity: Ontario's equity and inclusive education strategy*. Government of Ontario. [Quick Facts: Ontario's Equity and Inclusive Education Strategy](#)

Ontario Ministry of Education. (2013, April 22). *Policy/program memorandum no. 119: Developing and implementing equity and inclusive education policies in Ontario schools*. Government of Ontario. <https://www.ontario.ca/document/education-ontario-policy-and-program-direction/policyprogram-memorandum-119>

Week 3

September 24 – Community well-being, poverty, social class, and education

Readings:

Cloutier-Bordeleau, M. (2015). Considering Poverty: Reconstructing the Discourse of Socio-economic Status in Our Schools. In *Our Schools, Our Selves* 24(2). Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives.

Gorski, P. (2013). Chapter 2: Imagining Equitable Classrooms and Schools for Low-Income Youth. In *Reaching and Teaching Students in Poverty: Strategies for Erasing the Opportunity Gap* (p. 14-34). New York, NY: Teachers College Press.

The Colour of Poverty. (2007). The Racialization of Poverty. [PovertyFactSheets-aug07.pdf \(learningandviolence.net\)](#)

People for Education. (2017). *The Learning Opportunities Grant: How Ontario uses education funding to improve student achievement*. <https://peopleforeducation.ca/wp-content/uploads/2017/06/P4E-The-Learning-Opportunities-Grant-2017.pdf>

Week 4

October 1 – Colonization and education

**Complete policy analysis brief*

Mandatory Readings:

Obomsawin, O. (2013). Hi-Ho Mistahey! Canada: National Film Board of Canada. https://www.nfb.ca/film/hi-ho_mistahey_en/

Ontario Ministry of Education. (2007). *Ontario First Nation, Métis, and Inuit education policy framework*. Government of Ontario. <https://www.ontario.ca/page/ontario-first-nation-metis-and-inuit-education-policy-framework-2007>

Additional Readings:

Reimer, K (2010). What Other Canadian Kids Have: The Fight for a New School in Attawapiskat. *Native Studies Review*, 19(1).

Week 5

October 8 – Mental Health and Education

Truth and Reconciliation Calls to Action Plan **due October 8, 2026**

**Complete Policy Analysis Brief*

Mandatory Readings:

Mental Health Commission of Canada. Family Caregivers Advisory Committee, issuing body.

(2013). School-based mental health in Canada: a final report. Mental Health Commission of Canada. <https://mentalhealthcommission.ca/resource/school-based-mental-health-in-canada-a-final-report/>

Policy 169: [Policy/Program Memorandum 169 | Education in Ontario: policy and program direction | ontario.ca](#)

Week 6

October 15 – Reading Week – No Class

Week 7

October 22 – Queering education

**Complete policy analysis brief*

Mandatory Readings:

Ontario Human Rights Commission. (2014). *Policy on preventing discrimination because of gender identity and gender expression*. <https://www.ohrc.on.ca/en/policy-preventing-discrimination-because-gender-identity-and-gender-expression>

Pyne, J. (2014) Gender Independent Kids: A Paradigm Shift in Approaches to gender non-confirming children. *Canadian Journal of Human Sexuality*. 23(1),(p.1-18).

Rands, K. (2009). Considering Transgender People in Education: A Gender-Complex Approach. *Journal of Teacher Education*, 60(4), 419-431.

Additional Readings:

DePalma, R., Atkinson, E. (2006). The Sound of Silence. Talking About Sexual Orientation and Schooling. *Sex Education* 6(4), p. 333-349. [The sound of silence: talking about sexual orientation and schooling - Western University](#)

Week 8

October 29 – Race, culture and education

**Complete policy analysis brief*

Mandatory Readings:

Government of Ontario. (2017). *Ontario's anti-Black racism strategy*. <https://www.ontario.ca/page/ontarios-anti-black-racism-strategy>

Ontario Human Rights Commission: *Policy and Guidelines on Racism and Racial Discrimination* <https://www.ohrc.on.ca/en/policy-and-guidelines-racism-and-racial-discrimination>

McIntosh, P. (1990). White Privilege: Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack. *Independent School*, 90(2).

Additional Readings:

Milner, R. & Laughter, J. (2015). Good Intentions are Not Enough: Preparing Teachers to Centre Race and Poverty. *Urban review*, 47, 341-363.

Solomon, P., Portelli, J., Daniel, B-J., Campbell, A. (2005). The Discourse of Denial: How White Teacher Candidates Construct Race, Racism, and 'White Privilege'. In *Race, Ethnicity and Education*, 8(2), 147-169.

St. Denis, V., & Schick, C. (2003). What Makes Anti-Racist Pedagogy in Teacher Education Difficult? Three Popular Ideological Assumptions. *Alberta Journal of Educational Research*, 49(1).

Week 9

November 5 Presentations x2

Week 10

November 12 – Presentations x2

Week 11

November 19 – Presentations x2

Week 12

November 26 – Presentations x2

Week 13

December 3 – Closure and self-care while working in a professional practice

Participation write-up due December 3, 2026

Policy Brief Analysis due – December 3, 2026

Mandatory Readings:

Jennings, P. A., & Greenberg, M. T. (2009). The prosocial classroom: Teacher social and emotional competence in relation to student and classroom outcomes. *Review of Educational Research*, 79(1), 491–525. <https://doi.org/10.3102/0034654308325693>

**KING'S UNIVERSITY COLLEGE
GENERAL COURSE POLICIES
2026-27**

1. Academic Accommodations (Accessibility)

Accessibility Services works to ensure that academic programs are accessible to all students, and supports students who may have a condition related to, but not limited to, vision, hearing, mobility, different ways of learning, mental health, chronic illnesses, chronic pain, autism spectrum disorder, ADD/ADHD, and temporary conditions (beyond short-term academic consideration). Accessibility Services provides recommendations for accommodation based on medical documentation or psychological and cognitive assessment. The accommodation policy can be found here [Academic Accommodation for Students with Disabilities](#). Information on Accessibility Services at King's can be found [here](#).

2. Academic Consideration for Student Absences

Students must be approved to write a makeup exam or for an extension of the assignment deadline. If you need to miss an exam or the deadline for the assignment, please follow these instructions.

There are two ways to seek academic consideration:

(i) Academic consideration based on medical or compassionate grounds

If a student is unable to meet a course requirement due to substantial but temporary extenuating circumstances (medical or compassionate grounds), they should contact the Academic Advising Office. As a rule, documentation is required for academic consideration.

For academic consideration requests on medical grounds, the Student Medical Certificate (SMC) is the appropriate documentation. The SMC is available at <https://registrar.uwo.ca/academics/pdfs/student-medical-certificate.pdf>

- King's students: The Academic Advising Office website is located in DLH 104. The Academic Advising website is <https://mykings.ca/intranet/app/#/academics/academic-advising>.
- If your home faculty is Huron or at Western, please submit your documentation to your faculty's academic counselling office.
- Requests must be made as soon as possible and no later than 48 hours after the missed assessment.

You may submit requests for academic consideration through the **Student Absence Portal**, linked on this website: <https://mykings.ca/intranet/app/#/academics/academic-advising/academic-consideration-requests-and-student-absence-portal>

(ii) Academic consideration through an undocumented absence

Students are permitted one academic consideration request without supporting documentation per term per half-course (0.5) weight.

- Note that instructors may designate one assessment per half-course weight as requiring formal supporting documentation. Please refer to the course outline to confirm this assessment.
- If instructors have built flexibility into their assessments, this flexibility will already address consideration needs. (For example, if students need to submit X of Y assignments, this flexibility already provides consideration.)
- Undocumented absences can not be used as the basis for academic consideration for December or April exams.

For further information on the academic consideration policy, please see https://uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/academic_consideration_Sep24.pdf

c) Absences from Final Exams

If you miss the Final Exam, **contact your Academic Advising Office** as soon as you are able to do so. They will assess your eligibility to write the “Special Examination” (the name given by the University to a makeup Final Exam).

You may also be eligible to write the Special Exam if you are in a multiple exam situation (i.e., you are scheduled to write more than 2 exams in 23-hour period, or more than 3 exams in a 47-hour period).

If a student fails to write a scheduled Special Examination, the date of the next Special Examination (if granted) normally will be the scheduled date for the final exam the next time this course is offered. The maximum course load for that term will be reduced by the credit of the course(s) for which the final examination has been deferred. See the Academic Calendar for details (under [Special Examinations](#)).

d) Religious Accommodations

Students should consult the University’s list of recognized religious holidays, and should give notice in writing to the instructor and their Academic Advising Office if a course requirement will be affected by a religious holiday/observance. Notice must be given as early as possible, and no later than two weeks prior to an examination, and one week prior to a midterm test date. It is the responsibility of such students to inform themselves concerning the work done in classes from which they are absent and to take appropriate action.

3. Support Services

Accessibility, Counselling and Student Development at King’s University College:
<https://mykings.ca/intranet/app/#/student-supports-and-services/accessibility-services>

Students experiencing emotional or mental health distress can access services at King’s University College: <https://kings.uwo.ca/campus-life/student-supports/>

Good2talk is an online and phone resource for students, available 24/7, with services in English, Mandarin, and French: <https://good2talk.ca>, 1-866-925-5454

Western’s Mental Health Services site provides a complete list of options on how to obtain help: <https://www.uwo.ca/health/mental-health/index.html>

Academic Support Services at King's University College: <https://kings.uwo.ca/academics/academic-supports/>

4. Statement on Gender-Based Sexual Violence

King's and Western are committed to reducing incidents of gender-based sexual violence (GBSV) and providing compassionate support to anyone who is going through or has gone through these traumatic events. If you are experiencing or have experienced GBSV (either recently or in the past), you will find information about support services for survivors, including emergency contacts at the following website: [Mental Health and Wellness at King's](#).

You can reach supports at King's by emailing care@kings.uwo.ca or calling 519-930-4640 to reach a Social Worker who can offer help.

You can also reach Western's Gender-Based Violence & Survivor Support Case Manager by email (health@uwo.ca) or by calling 519-661-3568. Additional support services can be found <https://www.uwo.ca/health/gbsv/support/index.html>

5. Statement on Use of Electronic Devices

Use of Electronic Devices: Unless explicitly stated otherwise, you are not allowed to have a cell phone, or any other electronic device, with you during tests or examinations. Unauthorized possession of such a device during a test or examination constitutes an academic offence.

Use of Laptops, Tablets, and Smartphones in the Classroom: King's University College at Western University acknowledges the integration of new technologies and learning methods into the curriculum. The use of electronic devices such as laptop computers, tablets, or smartphones can contribute to student engagement and effective learning. At the same time, King's recognizes that instructors and students share jointly the responsibility to establish and maintain a respectful classroom environment conducive to learning.

The use of electronic devices by students during lectures, seminars, labs, etc., shall be for matters related to the course at hand only. Students found to be using electronic devices for purposes not directly related to the class may be subject to sanctions under the Student Code of Conduct; see https://kings.uwo.ca/sites/2025/assets/files/campus/Kings_Code_of_Student_Conduct.pdf

Inappropriate use of electronics (e.g., laptops, tablets, smartphones) during lectures, seminars, labs, etc., creates a significant disruption. As a consequence, instructors may choose to limit the use of electronic devices in these settings. In addition, in order to provide a safe classroom environment, students attending in-person class sessions are strongly advised to operate laptops with batteries rather than power cords.

6. Statement on Academic Offences

King's is committed to academic integrity. Scholastic offences are taken seriously and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence, is posted at https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/scholastic_offences.pdf

It is expected that students will submit work that is truly their own, completed without external assistance (human or artificial) except as explicitly permitted by the course instructor. **Check with you instructor to check which tools, including generative AI (ChatGPT, translation tools, grammar-checking tools) are permitted in each course.** Note that although some courses may permit the use of such tools, it does not mean use of such tools is permitted in other courses.

All required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to the commercial plagiarism detection software under license to the University for the detection of plagiarism. All papers submitted for such checking will be included as source documents in the reference database for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of papers subsequently submitted to the system; see <https://elearningtoolkit.uwo.ca/tools/Originality Reports - TurnItIn.html>.

Computer-marked multiple-choice tests and/or exams may be subject to submission for similarity review by software that will check for unusual coincidences in answer patterns that may indicate cheating.

7. Copyright of Course Material

Lectures and course materials, including PowerPoint presentations, tests, outlines, and similar materials are protected by copyright. Faculty members are the exclusive owner of copyright in those materials they create. Students may take notes and make copies for their own use. Students may not allow others to reproduce or distribute lecture notes and course materials publicly (whether or not a fee is charged) without the express written consent of a faculty member. Unauthorized sharing of class content is subject to academic discipline.

Similarly, students own copyright in their own original papers and exam essays. If a faculty member wishes to post a student's answers or papers on the course website, they should ask for the student's written permission.

8. Use of Recordings

Participants in this course are not permitted to record the sessions, except where recording is an approved accommodation and/or the participant has the prior written permission of the instructor. Unauthorized recording and/or sharing of class content is subject to academic discipline.

9. Policy on Attendance

Any student who, in the opinion of the instructor, is absent too frequently from class or laboratory periods in any course, will be reported to the Dean of the Faculty offering the course, after due warning has been given. On the recommendation of the department concerned, and with the permission of the Dean of that Faculty, the student will be debarred from taking the regular examination in the course.