Curriculum for Teachers: What it is and Why it Matters

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Late 20th Century American Curriculum

• The Context

• Two Options:
  – A.—Liberal curriculum for all
  – B.—Redefine. . . .
    » Curriculum
    » Teaching
    » Knowledge
    » Democracy
Curriculum for Teachers

Always has included three pieces:

- **General**
  - Courses in the various intellectual specialties (history, mathematics, literature, etc.)

- **Professional**
  - Courses in curriculum, teaching, and foundations of education

- **Experiential**
  - Practice teaching (laboratory school, student teaching, internship, etc.)

The question of curriculum for teachers is eternal. We must have good teachers.
Four Competing Visions

- traditionalists
- technicians
- romantics
- integrationists
## What should we teach future teachers?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Traditionalists</th>
<th>Technicians</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>♦ Let the normal schools/teachers colleges handle the task</td>
<td>♦ Prospective teachers should begin to study the science of education only after they have learned their intellectual specialty</td>
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<td>♦ Medicine, law, and engineering are legitimate professions; Teaching is not</td>
<td>♦ <strong>Strict separation</strong> of curriculum and teaching methods</td>
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<td>♦ Prospective teachers should earn a degree in an intellectual specialty and that’s it</td>
<td>♦ Prospective teachers must be “trained” in the science of instruction</td>
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<td>♦ Strict separation of liberal and professional curriculum</td>
<td>♦ The goal is to train prospective teachers to be efficient/effective at delivering information</td>
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<td>♦ Become an expert; then perhaps take a “bag of tricks” course</td>
<td>♦ Technicians must establish education as a science that stands separate from the intellectual specialties (engineering becomes the model)</td>
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<td>♦ “Show Up and teach”—No experiential needed</td>
<td>♦ Prospective teachers should take <strong>General</strong> Methods courses such as “Instructional Strategies, “Problem Solving Skills,” and “Differentiating Instruction.”</td>
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<td>♦ Teachers must have an intellectual specialty to transmit</td>
<td>♦ Pedagogy/Instruction is a value-neutral, mechanical technique of implementing scientific theories</td>
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<td>♦ Sadly enough, elementary teaching often viewed as “women’s work”</td>
<td>♦ The purpose of curriculum for teachers is to produce scientifically skilled, efficient, problem-solving teachers who contribute to economic productivity.</td>
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<td>♦ Education only truly begins at the secondary level when teachers can transmit an intellectual specialty such as mathematics, physics, or history</td>
<td>♦ Education is a business like any other modern enterprise</td>
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<td>♦ Pedagogy, at best, is merely an extension of one specific discipline or subject-matter field</td>
<td>♦ Behavioral psychology</td>
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<td>♦ Pedagogy is not necessarily about children.</td>
<td>♦ Systems Theory</td>
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<td>♦ Curriculum not given much thought due to intellectual specialization</td>
<td>E. L. Thorndike (1874—1949)</td>
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<tr>
<td>♦ The end of education is contemplation or the production of knowledge (knowledge for its own sake)—preserve liberal culture, no utility</td>
<td>W. W. Charters (1875—1952)</td>
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<tr>
<td>♦ Commitment to democracy and universal education?</td>
<td>Charles H. Judd (1873-1946)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>♦ Aristocratic Idealism and Class</td>
<td>John Franklin Bobbitt (1876—1956)</td>
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<tr>
<td>♦ The problem is that we get professors of history, philosophy, or mathematics—not teachers or professors of curriculum.</td>
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# What should we teach future teachers?

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<th><strong>Integrationists</strong></th>
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<td>♦ Curriculum should be determined by the developmental stages of children</td>
<td>♦ The teachers college model of curriculum for teachers</td>
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<td>♦ Prospective teachers should learn to adjust curriculum to meet the needs and interests of students</td>
<td>♦ Preparation in the intellectual specialties is essential, but insufficient for teaching in a public school classroom</td>
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<td>♦ Democratic education means giving a different curriculum to each child.</td>
<td>♦ Interdisciplinary curriculum for teachers is best</td>
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<td>♦ Prospective teachers should learn to think critically through problem-solving activities</td>
<td>♦ Core knowledge and curriculum</td>
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<td>♦ Kilpatrick’s “The Project Method”</td>
<td>♦ Democracy demands that teachers find ways to integrate liberal and professional curriculum.</td>
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<td>♦ Prospective teachers should learn to teach through projects and interdisciplinary, problem-based learning</td>
<td>♦ Democratic education means liberal curriculum for all through high-quality curriculum for teachers.</td>
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<tr>
<td>♦ Teachers should learn to be guides who direct natural growth, not subject-matter specialists who lecture</td>
<td>♦ Prospective teachers should take courses that help them learn how to integrate the needs and interests of students with subject matter.</td>
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<td>♦ The end of education is self-actualization; thus, teachers should self-actualize through guiding students and through helping them grow to their full potential</td>
<td>♦ Special methods courses (Teaching of History, Teaching of Mathematics, Teaching of English, etc.)</td>
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<td>♦ Democracy means “giving students freedom” to learn what they want to learn/what interests them</td>
<td>♦ Foundations: History of Education, Philosophy of Education, etc.</td>
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<td>♦ Intellectual subject-matter is much less important than process, growth, change, and problem-solving</td>
<td>♦ All prospective teachers should complete a practice teaching semester or year.</td>
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<td>♦ Pedagogy is the science of directing natural growth</td>
<td>♦ Pedagogy is both an extension of a particular subject and a moral practice that exists to serve the public interest.</td>
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<td>♦ Learning through trial and error—Tom Hanks in “Castaway”</td>
<td>♦ The end of curriculum is serving the public interest through deliberation.</td>
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<td>♦ Existentialism and “learning”</td>
<td>♦ Deliberation integrates contemplation and action; culminates in decision-making.</td>
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**Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1712—1778)**  
**G. Stanley Hall (1844—1924)**  
**John Dewey (1856—1952)**  
**William Heard Kilpatrick (1871—1965)**

**Edward Austin Sheldon (1823—1897)**
**David Felmley (1871—1930)**
**Isaac Kandel (1881—1965)**
**Joseph Schwab (1909—1988)**
Curriculum for Teachers

- Common Good
  - Moral
    - Faith
  - Intellectual
    - ~1850-1920
- Professional Schools
  - Moral
  - Technical Professionals
  - Intellectual
    - Scientific Professionals
  - Colleges of Arts & Sciences
    - Intellectual
    - ~1920-1960s/70s (?)
- Moral
  - Professional Schools
  - Intellectual
  - 2030?

~1850-1920

~1920-1960s/70s (?)
Competing Visions for Curriculum and the Teaching Profession

Technical

Integrationist

What

How

Why

What

How
How to rebuild curriculum and the teaching profession:

• Know what we are trying to do. Think seriously about purpose.
• Know our history.
• Respect ourselves.
• Have high intellectual and moral standards.
• Think deeply and seriously about curriculum.
• Work together as university faculty and K-12 faculty to argue for high quality curriculum for all young people.
• Communicate with the general public and serve the public interest.
• Speak out but be prudent.
• Recognize that curriculum and teaching rest on a tension between:
  – knowledge and practice
  – knowledge and action, and
  – intellectual and moral excellence.
• Many of our problems stem from our inability to negotiate these two dimensions of curriculum, teaching, and professionalism.
• Recognize that some members of our profession are part of the problem. Address that problem.
• Have an answer to the “Whose values?” question.
• Do not be afraid.