

## StFX-Master of Education Leadership Cohort in Mental Health Education (#2) Spring 2015-Summer 2017

The StFX Faculty of Education is proposing to offer a *Master of Education Leadership cohort with a focus in Mental Health Education* for qualified in-service teachers and administrators beginning in the spring of 2015. Mental health education in the Faculty of Education at StFX largely follows four pillars of mental health literacy:

- 1) To achieve and maintain positive mental health. At StFX this would include the study of topics such as social and emotional learning, resiliency, restorative practices and mindfulness in education.
- 2) To understand the signs and symptoms of mental distress and possible mental health disorders.\* At StFX this would include the study of topics such as mental health first aide, the crisis cycle, non-violent crisis intervention and trauma-informed practices.
- 3) To decrease stigma.
- 4) To increase help and health seeking efficacy.

Additionally, we are guided by social determinants of health research pointing to the powerful intersection of sociological conditions on mental health. We believe mental health education is part of a greater 'equity literacy' because of the ways in which race, class, and gender for example, are interwoven with mental health. The Disability Rights Movement's slogan "Nothing About Us Without Us" enlivens this idea, reminding us to remain open to the complex nature of mental health.

This program will advance the leadership capabilities of participants to understand and promote mental health education in public schools supporting the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development's belief that mental health education is a foundation for successful learning and living. Courses will be presented either face-to-face; online or in a blended format on weekends, evenings and in intensive summer school experiences. The courses in the summer of 2015 and 2016 will take place on campus in Antigonish and the remainder will be offered throughout the province.

\* This graduate degree program is for educators. As such the instructors in the program do not teach therapeutic/counselling approaches or the tools and assessments used for mental health diagnosis.

### Proposed program sequence and outline:

LOCATION	SPRING 2015	SUMMER 2015	FALL 2015	WINTER 2016	SPRING 2016	SUMMER 2016	FALL 2016	WINTER 2017	SPRING 2017	SUMMER 2017
Antigonish StFX Campus		534 505								
Online via Moodle/ Collaborate	521H		569A	567	561	573 569 B or C	569D	508	533	593

#### **1. EDUC 521H: Approaches to Mental Health Education (MH Literacy & SDOH)**

This course provides an exploration of research and approaches to school-based mental health education. Students will explore the balance between supporting mental problems, illness and stigma to the positive support of mental health and inclusion in schools.

#### **2. EDUC 534: Introduction to Educational Foundations**

This course provides graduate students with an opportunity to deepen their understanding and awareness of how issues of power and privilege have shaped their own and their students' lives. Educators will (re)think their pivotal role as leaders promoting mental health education alongside larger issues of equity and social justice.

### **3. EDUC 505: Introduction to Educational Research**

This course uses the school planning for improvement process as a vehicle to introduce approaches to educational research, particularly as it relates to mental health education. It also includes a basic introduction to graduate student writing and literature review methodology.

### **4. EDUC 569A: Restorative Practices**

The course will allow teachers and administrators to understand the principles of restorative approaches. This forward focused approach takes into account the context and causes of situations rather than focusing solely on specific incidents. This approach can foster a positive school climate.

### **5. EDUC 567: School Law-Legal Issues relating to Mental Health and Youth, Child & Family services**

This course provides an examination of legal issues in the field of mental health and youth, child and family services as they relate to school boards, administrators and teachers. Consideration will be given to recent legislation and court decisions related to the organization, policy and administration of school districts in Nova Scotia.

### **6. EDUC 561: Leadership and Administrative Theories**

This course is an introduction to theory, research and practice in educational administration. Emphasis is placed on the evolutionary nature of administrative theory and its role on the operation of the public school system. This course will have as a focus on how to provide students with theory and practice that can advance the inclusion of mental health education in public schools.

### **7. EDUC 573: Professional Development and Supervision (Positive Mental Health/Mental Health Disorders/Bullying)**

This course will provide participants with an understanding of the role of instructional leadership in promoting personal and staff professional development and learning around issues of mental health education within a professional learning community culture.

### **8. EDUC 569B: Mindfulness in Education or (569C: Trauma-Informed Practices)**

In this course students will explore and engage with practices and research related to mindfulness in education. Mindfulness has been interpreted as the ongoing practice of being awake and aware to what is inside and around us in the present moment.

### **9. EDUC 569D: Current Research in Health (Social-Emotional Learning/Resiliency)**

This course provides graduate students with an overview of the main components of Positive Mental Health in Schools, part of the larger work of Comprehensive School Health curriculum. School-wide approaches will be explored with an emphasis on Social-Emotional Learning and Resiliency.

### **10. EDUC 508: Critical Research Literacy**

This course examines how to critically read, interpret, and evaluate educational research. Graduate students will also have the opportunity to explore and understand the research literature in relation to mental health education. The questions raised in this course will form the basis of the final capping experience in the program.

### **11. EDUC 533: Dynamics of Change**

This course provides graduate students with a deep understanding of the personal, social, political, emotional, and historical complexities of educational change and assists them in examining their place as a change leader in relation to mental health education.

### **12. EDUC 593: Directed Study: Capping Experience**

This capping experience allows graduate students to work in small groups to develop a deepened understanding of an area of professional interest that has relevance to the advancement of mental health education in their school or school board.

## **Information and Admission Procedures**

Applications for this program will be accepted until February 15, 2015.

The application information can be found at <http://sites.stfx.ca/continuingeducation/master>. For additional StFX admission inquiries please contact [med@stfx.ca](mailto:med@stfx.ca). **\*Please note on the application that you are applying to the Master of Education in Leadership in Mental health education cohort.**