

## **B.Ed. Two Year Programme**

### **F.5: Knowledge, Disciplines and School Subjects**

Maximum Marks: 50

This compulsory course aims to introduce all the students to the basis on which knowledge is classified into disciplines and subjects. The syllabus has the following specific aims:

1. To enable students to analyze the structure of knowledge as reflected in disciplinary streams and subjects;
2. To enable students to notice the links between disciplines and school subjects
3. To examine the structure of the school curriculum from the primary to the secondary stages in terms of the underlying structure of knowledge;
4. To encourage students to reflect on their own education and notice how their interests and capacities have been shaped by the structure of curriculum and other external factors. This aim will be achieved with the help of a practicum.

#### **Unit I: Introduction**

Key question: ‘Why does knowledge need to be classified?’; Introduction to epistemology; Knowledge, curiosity and inquiry; Knowledge as a system: the role played by our concept of knowledge in shaping our teaching and learning practices.

Disciplinary streams: their historical origins and evolution; the problem of classifying them; levels of classification, e.g. ‘Science’ and ‘Arts’; ‘Humanities’ and ‘Social Science’;

#### **Unit 2: Streams and Subjects**

Nature of knowledge (i.e. ways of knowing and bodies of knowledge) placed under distinct disciplinary streams: Science, Social Science, Language, Mathematics; interrelationships among streams; overlaps and gaps in different kinds of classification; the idea of ‘subjects’ to be learnt at school; their distinct pedagogical demands at different stages of school education; the school time-table as a structuring device: its treatment of the relative importance of different streams and the subjects placed under them at different stages of education; Problem of classifying and accommodating certain areas of learning, e.g. arts, crafts, work, peace, etc. Implications of curricular divisions for learner-centred pedagogy: issues and challenges.

#### **Unit 3: Knowledge and Curriculum Policy**

Study of relevant parts and recommendations of major reports that have shaped curriculum policies in India since Independence (relevant parts of the following documents to be studied in order to examine the assumptions about knowledge underlying their recommendations):

Secondary Education Commission (Mudaliar Report)

Education Commission (Kothari Report)  
The Ten-Year School (Ishwar Bhai Patel Report)  
Learning without Burden (Yash Pal Report)  
National Curriculum Framework

Persistent debates in curriculum policy: integrated approach vs. subject-specific teaching; can values be taught?; academic vs. vocational subjects; etc.

#### **Unit IV: Knowledge in Syllabus and Textbooks**

Distinction and relation between 'Curriculum' and 'Syllabus'  
Relation between Syllabus and Textbooks; implications of 'prescribing' a textbook; importance of other sources and resources of knowledge; role of different agencies and their functions in shaping the syllabus: Boards of Examination, NCERT, etc; 'examination' as a system; impact of the examination system on socially popular concept of knowledge and the practices of teaching based on it;

#### **Unit V: Disciplinary Streams, Choices and Opportunities**

The idea of choice in the 10+2 system; factors affecting choice of subjects by students; Internal factors, (e.g. interest, teacher, etc.) vs. external factors (e.g. availability, family, market, etc.); interdisciplinary combinations and choices;

Social perceptions and stereotypes: why are certain subjects considered more difficult?; the impact of knowledge-related stereotypes on choices made by schools, parents and students; Knowledge and opportunities: employment and careers. Knowledge, status and power.

**Practicum:** Analysis of factors that have shaped personal trajectories of students in the context of disciplines and subject choices made in school and college, interest and capacities, leading to a reflective essay.

#### **Readings**

Apple, Michael: Ideology and Curriculum  
Dewey, John: How We Think  
Krishna, Daya: Gyan Meemansa.  
Kumar, Krishna: What is Worth Teaching?  
NCERT: National Focus Group Position Papers on the Teaching of Science; Social Science; Mathematics; Curriculum, Syllabus, Textbooks; Work and Education  
Piaget, Jean. Child and Reality  
Russell, Bertrand, 'Knowledge and Wisdom'  
Joseph Schwab: The Structure of Knowledge and the Curriculum  
Paulos, John Allen 1990 Innumeracy Mathematical Illiteracy and its Consequences  
Vintage Books