

# Introduction

The Communication Media curriculum is designed with modules to complete three 100 hour pure courses. Modules can also be selected to use in survey courses in middle level and secondary level. Each module contains a single learning outcome with a number of indicators showing the depth and breadth of the student learning required in each module. Middle level programs should focus on modules labelled as Introductory.

## Curriculum Features

Curricula in the Practical and Applied Arts (PAA) have several features unique to this area of study. The reasons for inclusion of these features in all PAA curricula are to encourage flexibility in school programming, to establish clearly transferable skills, and to ensure the practical emphasis of the program.

PAA curricula contain all courses in a single document whether it is one course as in Entrepreneurship or 5 courses as in Autobody. This feature allows schools and teachers the flexibility to choose modules supportive of their students' needs as well as utilizing the available facilities and equipment. The order and number of modules can vary between schools as long as the integrity of the discipline is maintained.

All PAA curricula are designed using modules. To aid teachers and schools in course planning each module has been designated as Introductory, Intermediate, or Advanced. Modules may also have prerequisites which must be completed by the student as the skills, knowledge, and understandings are cumulative. Core modules are the compulsory modules that must be covered in pure courses of study for developmental or safety reasons. Each module has a suggested time provided to aid teachers in the planning of their courses. Each module may take more or less than the suggested time depending on factors such as background knowledge of the students.

A third unique feature of PAA curricula is the inclusion of an optional Extended Study module in each course. The Extended Study module allows teachers to create their own outcome and indicators relevant to the purpose and areas of focus for the subject which will meet their students' needs. As innovations occur in the knowledge and technology of various areas of study, the Extended Study modules are one way in which teachers can ensure their programs stay current with industry practice.

Work Study modules contained in all PAA curricula encourage personalized learning and development of community relationships. Work Study is designed as a portion of a course to provide off-campus educational opportunities for individuals or small groups in a work setting. Planning and assessment are managed by the teacher while the learning opportunity is provided by an expert in the community. Practical skills developed in school are directly transferred to a work environment.

Another feature unique to the Practical and Applied Arts is the availability of module tracking within the provincial student data system. This service provided by the Ministry of Education allows teachers to enter completed modules into the Student Data System and create a record and printout for individual students of all the PAA modules experienced during their school career. This record can be provided to students in their report cards, for use in their portfolio, or inclusion on a résumé.

Transferable skills are desirable as an aspect of lifelong learning. Transferable skills developed in PAA are many and varied, from operating large stationary power equipment to utilizing video editing software. The practical nature of these transferable skills enriches students' lives as they transition into post-secondary life. In Canada two taxonomies of transferable work skills have been developed. Employability Skills have been developed by the Conference Board of Canada and Essential Skills have been identified by Human Resources and Service Development Canada. Students will be familiar with both of these taxonomies from their work in grade 8 Career Education.

More details on the above curriculum features are provided in the Practical and Applied Arts Handbook available on the Ministry of Education website.

## Core Curriculum

Core Curriculum is intended to provide all Saskatchewan students with an education that will serve them well

regardless of their choices after leaving school. Through its components and initiatives, Core Curriculum supports student achievement of the Goals of Education for Saskatchewan. For current information regarding Core Curriculum, please refer to *Core Curriculum: Principles, Time Allocations, and Credit Policy* on the Saskatchewan Ministry of Education website. For additional information related to the various components and initiatives of Core Curriculum, please refer to the Ministry website at [www.education.gov.sk.ca/policy](http://www.education.gov.sk.ca/policy) for policy and foundation documents including the following:

- *Understanding the Common Essential Learnings: A Handbook for Teachers* (1988)
- *Objectives for the Common Essential Learnings (CELs)* (1998)
- *Renewed Objectives for the Common Essential Learnings of Critical and Creative Thinking (CCT) and Personal and Social Development (PSD)* (2008)
- *The Adaptive Dimension in Core Curriculum* (1992)
- *Policy and Procedures for Locally-developed Courses of Study* (2004)
- *Connections: Policy and Guidelines for School Libraries in Saskatchewan* (2008)
- *Diverse Voices: Selecting Equitable Resources for Indian and Métis Education* (2005)
- *Gender Equity: Policies and Guidelines for Implementation* (1991)
- *Instructional Approaches: A Framework for Professional Practice* (1991)
- *Multicultural Education and Heritage Language Education Policies* (1994)
- *Classroom Curriculum Connections: A Teacher's Handbook for Personal-Professional Growth* (2001).

## Broad Areas of Learning

Three Broad Areas of Learning reflect Saskatchewan's Goals of Education. Practical and Applied Arts contributes to the Goals of Education through helping students achieve knowledge, skills, and attitudes related to these Broad Areas of Learning. The Broad Areas of Learning express the desired attributes for Saskatchewan's grade 12 graduates.

### Lifelong Learners

In the course of learning during Practical and Applied Arts classes, students will gain a positive sense of identity and efficacy through application of practical skills and knowledge. The Practical and Applied Arts curricula are closely related to careers found in Saskatchewan and therefore are directly connected to lifelong learning whether in a professional career or through hobbies and personal interests.

### Sense of Self, Community, and Place

To engage in the Practical and Applied Arts, students need not only to use knowledge and skills but also to interact with each other. Through the Practical and Applied Arts, students learn about themselves, others, and the world around them. They use their new knowledge and skills to explore who they are and who they might become. Practical and Applied Arts programming should vary by school to reflect the community at large. Community projects can play a key role in Practical and Applied Arts programming and connect the school more closely to the community.

### Engaged Citizens

Engaged citizens have empathy for those around them and contribute to the well-being of the community as a whole. Practical and Applied Arts students learn how new skills and abilities enable them to make a difference in their personal lives as well as in their family and community. Skills and abilities gained in Practical and Applied Arts classes build a sense of confidence which encourages students to participate effectively in their world.

# Cross-curricular Competencies

The Cross-curricular Competencies are four interrelated areas containing understandings, values, skills, and processes which are considered important for learning in all areas of study. In the Practical and Applied Arts the Cross-curricular Competencies are also related to lifelong learning through the sense of career development and transitions to post-secondary training, education, and work.

## Developing Thinking

Learners construct knowledge through application of prior experiences in their lives to the new contexts. Practical and Applied Arts not only present new contexts, but present them in real world terms. For example, students will solve problems, test hypotheses, design models and analyze products during Practical and Applied Arts classes.

## Developing Identity and Interdependence

Developing identity includes exploring career opportunities through the Practical and Applied Arts. As students gain in experience in various Practical and Applied Arts classes, they create a sense of efficacy to contribute not only to their well-being but also to those around them. The Practical and Applied Arts provide effective interaction between students, but also opportunities to contribute skills and abilities to the larger community.

## Developing Literacies

Literacies provide many ways to express a personal understanding of the world. Literacy in the world of Practical and Applied Arts can mean interpreting symbols on a welding diagram or creating a computer code for a interactive media website. The use of technology to communicate ideas and information is key to many of the Practical and Applied Arts.

## Developing Social Responsibility

Contributing positively to one's natural, social and constructed environments underlies the knowledge and skills developed through the Practical and Applied Arts. Individual interests and talents can be nurtured through the Practical and Applied Arts and directed toward contributions to the community. Projects including teamwork, consensus building and diversity enhance the development of social responsibility.

# Purpose and Areas of Focus for Communication Media

The purpose of Communication Media 10, 20, 30 is to provide experiences for students to inquire while developing understanding, skills, and abilities in audio, video, and interactive media production to communicate effectively.

Areas of Focus identify the key components of what students are expected to know, understand and be able to do upon completion of the learning in the Practical and Applied arts (PAA) curriculum. Because the PAA curricula generally contain more learning than one course (1 credit), the Areas of Focus are not meant to be fully attainable after 100 hours of learning. The Areas of Focus for Communication Media are to:

- Explore and experience fundamental concepts through the acquisition and improvement of technical skills including appropriate software, equipment, terminology, and teamwork.
- Create solutions to problems or challenges using a variety of production skills including project management.
- Identify communication issues and implications for self, society, and the environment, as well as plan projects considering sustainability.
- Identify career opportunities as well as skills, work habits, and training required to obtain and sustain work in communication media.

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- Understand and utilize the three stages of production

## Teaching Communication Media

The basis of inquiry and learning in the Communication Media courses is understanding and working with the relationship between the stages of preproduction, production and postproduction. The attention to detail during the preproduction stage where students develop their idea and plan its production will pay off later during the production stage because the equipment, people, and facilities will be in place. Although preproduction work in planning, “may not seem creative, it is what allows for creativity during production” (Digital Movie Making, p. 16). The course emphasis will shift from preproduction to production to postproduction as students gain skills and understanding while progressing through the suggested course configurations from Communication Media 10 to 20 to 30.

An important understanding for students is the concept of intellectual property including examples such as copyright, public domain and seeking permission. Teachers must be aware of the changing nature of intellectual property laws and practices in Canada to prevent students from infringing on the laws in this area. Student projects should follow the same standard as professional productions when using copyright music, still images, art, and video.

Equipment needed for the course can vary a great deal in terms of quantity and quality. Schools with adequate equipment will have students work in smaller groups without a need for booking equipment or sharing. Other schools will plan for sharing of roles, equipment and facilities. The quality of equipment should be the best available considering the school’s budget. Teachers will likely build up equipment and facility capacity over time and most equipment will perform well over many years if handled properly.

Many teachers use portfolios to allow students to showcase their accomplishments. More post-secondary institutions require portfolios and entrance interviews. A well developed portfolio can be a real benefit in both cases as well as for job interviews when entering the workforce either as a student or on a full time basis. Portfolios may be used as part of the course assessment, but in doing so teachers must take care to match the portfolio assessment criteria to the Communication Media outcomes.

## Teaching for Deep Understanding

For deep understanding, it is vital that students learn by constructing knowledge, with few ideas being provided directly by the teacher. As an example, basic camera operation is something which the teacher will likely demonstrate for students; however, first, the students could explore the ideas important for working with the camera around the school. Demonstrations by the teacher often form a significant portion of the instruction, but the students must have adequate practice time to construct their own understandings of adequately demonstrating the required skill.

It is important for teachers to analyze the outcomes in each module to identify what students need to know, understand, and be able to do. Teachers also need to consider opportunities for students to explain, apply, and transfer understanding to new situations. This reflection supports professional decision making and planning effective strategies to promote students’ deeper understanding of ideas.

Communication Media skills and knowledge are learned when students engage in deliberate activities planned with areas of focus. When students participate in classes where they are only told what to do, how to do it, and when to do it, they cannot make the strong connections necessary for learning to be meaningful, easily accessible, and transferable. The learning environment must be respectful of individuals and groups, fostering discussion and self-reflection, the asking of questions, the seeking of multiple answers, and the construction of meaning.

*What types of things might you hear or see in a Communication Media class that would indicate to you that students were developing a deep understanding?*

## Inquiry

Inquiry learning provides students with opportunities to build knowledge, abilities, and inquiring habits of mind that lead to deeper understanding of their world and human experience. The inquiry process focuses on the development of compelling questions, formulated by teachers and students, to motivate and guide inquiries into topics, problems, and issues related to Communication Media content and outcomes. Inquiry is more than a simple instructional method. It is a philosophical approach to teaching and learning, grounded in constructivist research and methods, which engages students in investigations that lead to understanding and skills within the discipline as well as knowledge that is applicable across disciplines. For example, understanding the science of light capture in a video camera will support understanding of properties of light in science.

*Inquiry is a philosophical stance rather than a set of strategies, activities, or a particular teaching method. As such, inquiry promotes intentional and thoughtful learning for teachers and children. (Mills & Donnelly, 2001, p. xviii)*

Inquiry builds on students' inherent sense of curiosity and wonder, drawing on their diverse backgrounds, interests, and experiences. The process provides opportunities for students to become active participants in a collaborative search for meaning and understanding. Students who are engaged in inquiry:

- construct deep knowledge and deep understanding rather than passively receiving it
- are directly involved and engaged in the discovery of new knowledge
- encounter alternative perspectives and conflicting ideas that transform prior knowledge and experience into deep understanding
- transfer new knowledge and skills to new circumstances (e.g., the workplace)
- take ownership and responsibility for their ongoing learning of curriculum content and skills.

(Adapted from Kuhlthau & Todd, 2008, p. 1)

Inquiry learning is not a step-by-step process, but rather a cyclical process, with parts of the process being revisited and rethought as a result of students' discoveries, insights, and construction of new knowledge. The following graphic shows the cyclical inquiry process.

\*\*\* Insert graphic\*\*\*

Inquiry prompts and motivates students to investigate topics within meaningful contexts. The inquiry process is not linear or lock-step, but is flexible and recursive. Experienced inquirers move back and forth through the cyclical process as new questions arise and as students become more comfortable with the process.

Well-formulated inquiry questions are broad in scope and rich in possibilities. They encourage students to explore, gather information, plan, analyze, interpret, synthesize, problem solve, take risks, create, conclude, document, reflect on learning, and develop new questions for further inquiry.

In Communication Media, inquiry encompasses creating solutions to challenges through practical application of knowledge and skills. This includes processes to get from what is known to discover what is unknown. When teachers show students how to solve a challenge and then assign additional challenges that are similar, the students are not constructing new knowledge through application, but merely practicing. Both are necessary elements of skill building in Communication Media, but one should not be confused with the other. If the path for getting to the end situation has already been determined, it is no longer problem solving. Students must understand this difference as well.

## **Creating Questions for Inquiry in Practical and Applied Arts**

Teachers and students can begin their inquiry at one or more entry points; however, the process may evolve into learning opportunities across disciplines, as reflective of the holistic nature of our lives. It is essential to develop questions evoked by students' interests and have potential for rich and deep learning. Compelling questions are used to initiate and guide the inquiry, and give students direction for discovering deep understandings about a topic or issue under study.

The process of constructing inquiry questions can help students to grasp the important disciplinary ideas situated at the core of a particular focus or context. These broad questions will lead to more specific questions that can provide a framework, purpose, and direction for the learning activities in a lesson or project, and help



students connect what they are learning to their experiences and life beyond school.

Effective questions in Practical and Applied Arts are the key to initiating and guiding students' investigations, critical thinking, problem solving, and reflection on their own learning. Questions such as:

- What is the best solution to creating a strong welding joint in this circumstance and for this purpose?
- Which elements of design will produce the desired effect in clothing creation?
- Which visual effects will be most effective in engaging my audience on a website?
- What community needs can be met by applying my skills in horticulture?

The above are only a very few examples of questions to move students' inquiry towards deeper understanding. Effective questioning is essential for teaching and student learning, and should be an integral part of planning. Questioning should also be used to encourage students to reflect on the inquiry process and on the documentation and assessment of their own learning.

*Effective questions:*

- *cause genuine and relevant inquiry into the important ideas and core content*
- *provide for thoughtful, lively discussion, sustained inquiry, and new understanding as well as more questions*
- *require students to consider alternatives, weigh evidence, support their ideas, and justify their answers*
- *stimulate vital, ongoing rethinking of key ideas, assumptions, and prior lessons*
- *spark meaningful connections with prior learning and personal experiences*
- *naturally recur, creating opportunities for transfer to other situations and subjects.*

*(Wiggins & McTighe, 2005, p. 110)*

Questions should invite students to explore concepts within a variety of contexts and for a variety of purposes. When questioning students, teachers should choose questions that:

- encourage students to make use of the knowledge and skills of the discipline.
- are open-ended, whether in answer or approach. There may be multiple answers or multiple approaches
- empower students to explore their curiosity and unravel their misconceptions.
- not only require the application of skills but encourage students to make connections and are applicable to new situation
- lead students to wonder more about a topic and to perhaps construct new questions themselves as they investigate this newly found interest.

(adapted from Schuster & Canavan Anderson, 2005, p. 3)

## **Reflection and Documentation of Inquiry**

An important part of any inquiry process is student reflection on their learning and the documentation needed to assess the learning and make it visible. Student documentation of the inquiry process in Practical and Applied Arts may take the form of reflective journals, notes, drafts, models, projects, works of art, photographs, or video footage. This documentation should illustrate the students' strategies and thinking processes that led to new insights and conclusions. Inquiry-based documentation can be a source of rich assessment materials through which teachers can gain a more in-depth look into their students' understandings. These types of documentation can be utilized in any Practical and Applied Arts course.

It is important students engage in the communication and representation of their progress in building skills and understandings. A wide variety of forms of communication and representation should be encouraged and, most importantly, have links made between them. In this way, student inquiry can develop and strengthen student understanding through self reflection.

## Module Overview Chart

Module Code	Modules	Suggested Times (hrs)
CMED01	Communication through Media (Core)	3-5
CMED02A	Legal and Ethical Issues (Core)	2-3
CMED02B	Legal and Ethical Issues (Core)	2-3
CMED02C	Legal and Ethical Issues (Core)	2-3
CMED03	Production Stages (Core)	3-5
CMED04	Career Opportunities (Core)	3-5
CMED05	Preproduction Processes (Core)	2-3
CMED06A	Video Production (Core)	10-20
CMED06B	Video Production (Core)	10-20
CMED07A	Audio Production (Core)	5-10
CMED07B	Audio Production (Core)	5-10
CMED08A	Interactive Media (Core)	10-20
CMED08B	Interactive Media (Core)	10-20
CMED09A	Project (Core)	20-30
CMED09B	Project (Core)	25-35
CMED09C	Project (Core)	50-85
CMED10	Innovative Technology and Software (Optional)	2-3
CMED11	Effectiveness of Communication (Optional)	2-3
CMED12A	Visual Effects (Optional)	3-5
CMED13	Audio Effects and Music (Optional)	3-5
CMED14	Animation (Optional)	10-20
CMED15	Scripting (Optional)	3-8
CMED16A	Work Study Preparation (Optional)	3-5
CMED16B	Work Study Preparation (Optional)	3-5
CMED17A	Work Study Placement (Optional)	10-50
CMED17B	Work Study Placement (Optional)	10-50
CMED18A	Work Study Follow-up (Optional)	2-4
CMED18B	Work Study Follow-up (Optional)	2-4
CMED99A	Extended Study (Optional)	10-25
CMED99B	Extended Study (Optional)	10-25
CMED99C	Extended Study (Optional)	10-25

## Suggested Course Configurations

Module Code	Communication Media 10	Suggested Time (hrs)
CMED01	Communication through Media (Core)	3-5
CMED02A	Legal and Ethical Issues (Core)	2-3
CMED03	Production Stages (Core)	3-5
CMED04	Career Opportunities (Core)	3-5
CMED05	Preproduction Processes (Core)	2-3

CMED06A	Video Production (Core)	10-20
CMED07A	Audio Production (Core)	5-10
CMED08A	Interactive Media (Core)	10-20
CMED09A	Project (Core)	20-30
CMED12A	Visual Effects (Optional)	3-5
CMED13	Audio Effects and Music (Optional)	3-5
CMED99A	Extended Study (Optional)	10-25
	Minimum	<b>100</b>

Module Code	Communication Media 20	Suggested Time (hrs)
CMED02B	Legal and Ethical Issues (Core)	2-3
CMED06B	Video Production (Core)	10-20
CMED07B	Audio Production (Core)	5-10
CMED08B	Interactive Media (Core)	10-20
CMED09B	Project (Core)	25-35
CMED10	Innovative Technology and Software (Optional)	2-3
CMED11	Effectiveness of Communication (Optional)	2-3
CMED14	Animation (Optional)	10-20
CMED16A	Work Study Preparation (Optional)	3-5
CMED17A	Work Study Placement (Optional)	10-50
CMED18A	Work Study Follow-up (Optional)	2-4
CMED99B	Extended Study (Optional)	10-25
	Minimum	<b>100</b>

Module Code	Communication Media 30	Suggested Time (hrs)
CMED02C	Legal and Ethical Issues (Core)	2-3
CMED09C	Project (Core)	50-85
CMED15	Scripting (Optional)	3-8
CMED16B	Work Study Preparation (Optional)	3-5
CMED17B	Work Study Placement (Optional)	10-50
CMED18B	Work Study Follow-up (Optional)	2-4
CMED99C	Extended Study (Optional)	10-25
	Minimum	<b>100</b>