



SEMINAR SERIES

2017 • 2018 | DEPARTMENT OF CURRICULUM & PEDAGOGY

UNDERSTANDING CURRICULUM & PEDAGOGY IN A TURBULENT NEO-LIBERALIST WORLD

What is Open School?

Lars Knudsen, Associate Professor | Aarhus University, Denmark

▶ **November 24** | Scarfe 310 | 12:30 - 2:00 p.m.

The recent school reform in Denmark (2013) included what was called the 'open school program'. The basic idea was to make all schools and all teachers cooperate with the local community such as museums, businesses, associations, clubs etc. to make teaching more relevant to students and to integrate the schools better in society. These forms of corporations are not new and the benefits to the students outcome are well known, but it has mostly been organized by teachers who by their own initiative wanted to move their teaching out of school. The new school reform has now changed that by making partnerships compulsory and allowing non teacher educated persons be responsible for teaching too. But the increase in numbers of people and institutions that are now more or less involved in open school has also led to a confusion of; what is it? I therefore embarked on this basic question and have now completed a two year qualitative fieldwork of observations, interviews and collecting documents (including policy papers) of 55 open school sessions. Different patterns have come to show. There are at least four different and competing interpretations among the participants: 1) Open school is about Bildung: Student's broad personal and social experiences and development (i.e Danish Ministry of Culture). 2) Open school is about learning: All activities in school can and must be transformed into transparent learning goals (i.e. Danish Ministry of Education). 3) Open school is about competences: To experience authentic milieus outside school enhances students abilities to relate doing and knowing (i.e. Danish association of Municipalities). 4) Open school is creativity: To experience the depths and varieties of nature, arts and culture calls for students to express themselves (i.e. observed and interviewed teaching artists). I view these different interpretations as strategies to overcome a basic paradox in open school that occurs in open school in numerous ways: In Greek school means 'free from production'. The open school program has been joined school and (in a broad sense) production together and left three major questions: How is the open school program 1) organized, 2) financed and pedagogically conceptualized?

Lars Emmerik Damgaard Knudsen (1976) is MA in philosophy of Education, Ph.D. and associate professor at Aarhus University, Dept. of Education, Denmark.

Info research and activities:

[http://pure.au.dk/portal/da/persons/lars-emmerik-damgaard-knudsen\(58428e66-a1e2-4e7d-8c17-48e9f9a19505\).html](http://pure.au.dk/portal/da/persons/lars-emmerik-damgaard-knudsen(58428e66-a1e2-4e7d-8c17-48e9f9a19505).html)

Research unit on Open School program:

<http://edu.au.dk/forskning/forskningsenheder/aaben-skole/>

* Light refreshments will be served at 12:00 p.m. | Lecture will commence at 12:30 p.m.

edcp.educ.ubc.ca



THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA
Faculty of Education
Department of Curriculum & Pedagogy