Education 386: Curriculum and Knowing in the Physical and Natural Sciences

- ENERGY IN THE SCIENCES AND IN DAILY LIFE -

Sackler Sciences Center, room 212
June 21-June 30, 2006, 8:30 a.m. - 1:30 p.m.
Course Description

The Summer Institute on Curriculum and Knowing in the Sciences for 2006 is built on the concept of energy and its central role in the processes in nature and in our everyday lives in the technological world that humans have constructed. Teacher-participants will experience hands-on activities that exemplify and clarify the scientific ideas and place them in the broader context of the public school curriculum. Through discussions with presenters and other participants, the learning process will be explored, and curriculum ideas for all grade levels will be developed.

We have scheduled a mixture of on-campus activities, field study, discussions, and team projects. Each participant will be engaged as a learner/scientist as we study real-world systems and learn how generalizations about our observations can be powerful guides to understanding much of the “big picture” of change and continuity in the world around us. We will, especially, investigate the enormous appetite our civilization has developed for energy, with all of the benefits and problems that this brings to us. Finally, we will look at possibilities for the future, both on the macro scale (can we reduce the pollution that seems to accompany our current energy usage and avoid the related, on-coming global warming that is already being glimpsed?) and the micro scale (how can we bring some of these ideas into our own classrooms?).

Course requirements

1) Attend and participate in all sessions

2) Write a daily journal about what you learned and how you learned it – ideas from everyone's journals will be collected and discussed throughout the institute.

3) Research, plan, and present a classroom activity or unit based on ideas stimulated by the Institute – initial thoughts will be worked on during the later days of the Institute; the activity or unit should be developed over the summer and presented in your classroom in the fall. A written presentation of your curriculum activities is due in October, 2006. This report is required in order to get credit for the course.

Reference texts
