
International

Physical Education Teacher Education in Canada

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Canada places a high premium on education. Many people assume that Canada's educational system is the same as their American neighbors because a majority of the Canadian population lives in close proximity to the American border. Although there are many similarities between the educational systems of both countries, there are some subtle yet important differences. This article explains elements of the Canadian educational system. It addresses three goals: (1) to provide a global perspective of physical education teacher education (PETE) programs in Canada; (2) to outline the basics of PETE programs in the province of Québec, where our university is situated; and (3) to describe the unique nature of the McGill University

and number of universities. Consecutive B.Ed. (PE) programs vary in length from 8 to 24 months following completion of a bachelor's degree, which may or may not be related to physical education.

A modification of this pattern occurs when students follow 3 years of general studies with 1 or 2 years of education courses under the same program. In these cases students may receive dual degrees, such as B.Ed./B.Sc. or B.Ed./B.A. Concurrent or integrated degrees, which blend education theory and experiences with other academic pursuits throughout a 4- to 5-year program, are less common. All PETE programs in Québec are concurrent in design and 4 years in length, leading to a B.Ed. (Physical Education and Health).

In all provinces except Québec, graduates of PETE programs are certified to teach at a

Throughout most of Canada, secondary physical education specialists must also be certified to teach a classroom subject, which demands that part of the teacher preparation program be devoted to this content and pedagogy. Graduates of Québec PETE programs are certified only for K-11 physical education, and most programs other than McGill's do not have the flexibility for students to acquire an extensive concentration in an additional academic area.

Of necessity, 1-year consecutive PETE programs may limit physical education pedagogy to a single academic course and minimal practical experience, perhaps with no time allotted to physical education, even at the secondary level.

Concurrent and longer consecutive programs generally provide more opportunities for in-depth perusal of theory, involvement