EDUA 1590 Facilitating Adult Education

Syllabus

Course description
The course explores the complexity of the teaching-learning process in the education of adults. You will be encouraged to identify and define the assumptions, values and beliefs that underlie your decisions as a facilitator. You will also analyze the application and implications of education principles in the design, delivery and evaluation of adult learning opportunities.

University of Manitoba Undergraduate Calendar course description:
A study of theoretical and practical aspects of facilitation in adult education.

Course overview
This course is designed to encourage you to identify and define the assumptions, beliefs, and values that underlie your decisions in facilitating adult learning. You will explore adult education principles and begin to apply them to the design and delivery of face-to-face and distance education. You will also analyze the implications of their application. Critical thinking, reflection, and informed decision making will be emphasized throughout.

Course outcomes
By the end of this course you should be able to:

• Describe the philosophy and principles of adult education;
• Evaluate and integrate key philosophies, theories and concepts in the development and facilitation of adult education;
• Integrate adult learning theory, knowledge of learners' cultures, and other theoretical frameworks to set a climate and create an environment conducive to learning;
• Describe and evaluate an adult learning process from personal experiences;
• Incorporate the potential learning from experience in facilitating adult education;
• Reflect critically on your own practice and facilitate critical reflection in the facilitation of adult learning;
• Make appropriate decisions regarding the facilitation of adult learning based on your knowledge of issues related to distributed learning;
• Identify factors that affect how adults learn and the environments that are conducive to adult learning;
• Incorporate relevant, meaningful learning experiences in facilitating adult education; and
• Explore and identify ethical issues in adult education and in facilitating adult learning.
Guiding assumptions

The author of this course was guided by six guiding assumptions in the development of this course:

**Assumption 1: Facilitating adult learning versus facilitating adult education**

The process of facilitating adult education is complex and integrally connected to how, why, where, when and what adults learn. As such, it is our belief that the phrase “facilitating adult learning” rather than “facilitating adult education” more accurately reflects our approach to the process. We feel that facilitating adult learning should be learner centred as well as content and context based. By this we mean the facilitator must be cognizant of the characteristics of the learners, the context in which the learning is taking place, and the content of the materials to be disseminated. Moreover, since facilitation is not static within any given learning situation, the facilitator must also be aware of and embrace change. For instance, any one variable — learner, context or content — may cause the learning situation to shift resulting in any number of combinations and permutations. The role of facilitator requires an ability to responsively and responsibly encourage the learning process.

**Assumption 2: Facilitators and students are co-learners**

Learners are central to our approach to adult education. It is our opinion that their beliefs, values, assumptions and experiences must be acknowledged and regarded as contributing factors to the learning process. Input from learners is worthy of critical reflection and inclusion.

As well, we believe that education is a collective experience; facilitators are learners too and must be open and willing to share new ideas and experiences.

**Assumption 3: Facilitating adult learning is more than just good instructional design**

Although we acknowledge that instructional strategies and techniques are critical to ensure effective learning situations, we believe that their choice and implementation must be considered within the context of the broader understanding of adult learning and education and overall philosophy shaping the process.

**Assumption 4: Facilitators must develop a broad knowledge base**

We believe that facilitators must acquire a broad knowledge base regarding the philosophical foundations of adult education. They must analyze the contexts of the development of the several philosophical paradigms and identify how they have informed the practice of adult education throughout history to present day. From this study and through critical reflection, facilitators will discover how their own personal philosophy, values, beliefs, and decision-making practices about education and learning have been influenced, molded, and developed throughout their lives. They will find that they may identify with one philosophical paradigm more strongly than another. However, we believe that adult education research and practice do not always clearly rest within one philosophical paradigm or another, but more likely two or more at any given time, depending upon the context of the learning situation. Philosophical paradigms should be interpreted as “frameworks” for research and practice, not overarching rules.
Assumption 5: Facilitators must make informed and appropriate choices

Even though we have stated that our personal approach to facilitating adult learning is “learner-centred,” often the facilitator is not in a position to address learners’ needs to the level that could enhance learning to the fullest extent. To help explain, an example of this situation may be drawn from industry training where rules, requirements and standards of accomplishment are strictly regulated and little attention is given to learner needs versus their accomplishment of specific skills and the grading of such. In this type of situation, the facilitator may be most comparable to a teacher as content expert in a formal classroom where lecture-style format along with practicum experience is most likely used. This approach may not fit with your personal philosophy of adult education, but the context may dictate an alternative approach. At the other end of the spectrum, adult education can be a process of self-direction where the facilitator encourages, guides and prompts the learner and assists with “learning to learn” but gives no formal direction. Again, this approach is appropriate within certain contexts and not others.

We are familiar with and have experienced each of these examples of the facilitator/learning process as well as a variety of other facilitated learning situations along the continuum. Our mutual conclusion and thus the assumption that underlies our approach to facilitating adult learning is that learning situations differ for a variety of valid reasons. Thus it is appropriate that sometimes a facilitator acts as a partner in the learning process and at other times as a content expert. More often, the role of the facilitator is varied throughout the learning context.

Assumption 6: Facilitators must practice ethical decision making

It is important to note that it is virtually impossible to be all things to all people. Facilitators each have their own talents, skills, experiences and philosophical leanings, which affect their relationships with and understanding of adults in the learning context. The same can be said of adult learners as they engage in a facilitated learning situation. However, we believe that the facilitator is the individual who holds the position of influence and power and, because of this, must always interact with learners in a conscientious and ethical manner. Ethical practice and decision-making is something that we regard very seriously and we will address this issue in more detail in the course materials.

Course materials

Required

Bookstore

The following required materials are available for purchase from the University of Manitoba Bookstore. Please order your materials immediately, if you have not already done so. See your Distance and Online Education Student Handbook for instructions on how to order your materials.

- Textbook
  You will also be directed to a number of online articles.

Required hardware and software

- High speed access to the Internet
• Computer with speakers
• Computer headset with attached microphone. Please ensure that your headset has the attached microphone. You can purchase these anywhere computer hardware is sold, for about $30.00.
• Microsoft WORD, PowerPoint, Excel
• You will require Real Player to play videos. Download it free from Google

Distance and Online Education (DE) Student Resources

In your course website there are links for the following:
• Contact Distance and Online Education Staff
• Distance and Online Student Handbook
• Distance and Online Education Website

Course organization

The course is comprised of 5 Units:

Unit 1: Introduction
Adult Learning: The Theory

The field of adult education is varied and diverse. This unit will acquaint you with some of the more theoretical concepts that influence adult learning techniques and practice. Facilitating adult learning is informed by the theories related to the learning styles, cultural differences, and reasons for learning, and barriers to learning of adults. Also examined in this unit will be what is meant by the term facilitation when it applies to adult learning.

Unit 2: Creating a Learning Environment and Critical Thinking

Facilitating learning is subject to a number of external influences. One of these is creating the right kind of learning environment. This unit will address the various components that need to be considered when trying to establish the right environment. The discussion will include information related to how the physical environment, learner support, group process, and building trust and inclusions aids in the learning environment.

It seems that nearly every course that is linked to adult education includes critical thinking in the content. Critical thinking is regarded as everything from improving the workplace where “job-related” creative thinking is encouraged to educating for freedom from oppression. For John Dewey, critical thinking is essential to learning because it is an active process versus accepting the ideas and information from someone else. The four readings required in this unit have been chosen to provide you with an overview of critical thinking. The topics covered include the following:

• an introduction to the meaning of critical thinking;
• the adult educator's role and responsibility as a facilitator of critical thinking; and
• strategies for modeling and facilitating critical thinking.
Unit 3: Facilitation and Instruction

Not one facilitating style is considered the best for all situations. For adults to learn effectively, the facilitating strategies used must meet the learners’ needs or their preferred learning styles. As adults become more familiar with a learning program and its content, their learning behaviours also tend to change. When this happens, the strategies employed in facilitation need to change appropriately. Adult educators will find that each style will be appropriate for some learners and some learning situations. Any given strategy will be acceptable in a specific setting and related to specific content.

Facilitating adult learning requires an integration of adult learning, philosophy, principles, and practices with the practice of instruction. When choosing instructional strategies, the instructor must accommodate a whole group of learners who come with a diverse range of learning styles, abilities, cultures, and experience. This unit looks at how learning cycles and students’ own learning styles affect their ability to learn.

Those who facilitate learning are required to develop effective communication skills. This is not just limited to the ability to speak in front of a group of individuals. Those in charge of facilitating must consider other elements of the communication process. This unit will acquaint the learners with developing questioning techniques, improving listening skills, observing non verbal communication, enhancing small group interaction and dealing with conflict in the communication process.

Unit 4: Experiential Learning and Developing Learning Activities

The experiential learning approach is based on the premise that life contexts and experiences are central to learning in adults; people learn best when learning takes place within their concrete life experiences. Facilitators who use this approach in their teaching make use of the learners’ personal experiences and students’ reflections of those experiences rather than lectures and theory as a means of generating understanding, knowledge, and skills. This unit presents various components and elements of experiential learning and some suggestions for implementing experiential learning strategies and techniques.

For adult educators to be successful, they need to be able to choose and implement the appropriate learning activities. They have to consider a number of factors when choosing a learning activity or teaching technique.

This unit will also address how to apply adult learning philosophy, principles, and practices in their development of learning activities. There will also be some discussion on how to effectively implement learning activities to achieve the desired results.

Unit 5: Distributed Learning and Ethics

Facilitators of adult learning may someday have to facilitate learning activities that are delivered through distributed learning rather than face to face. Facilitating these types of learning events requires the use of technology and the application of different strategies and techniques. You will discuss the appropriate decisions that facilitators should be able to make based on their knowledge of issues related to distributed learning. However, the content presented in this unit is only a brief introduction and by no means exhaustive on this topic. If you want to expand your knowledge and understanding of distributed learning, consider other learning opportunities that are offered by the various post-secondary institutions on this subject matter.
It is essential that facilitators integrate the principles of ethics into their instructional techniques. This will expose the learners to a better understanding of what is meant by ethics when facilitating adult learning.

**Unit activities**

While you are free to approach your study in whatever manner meets your study needs, here are some suggestions that might help you organize your study.

- Read the unit overview, which will provide you with some focus and direction.
- Read the unit commentary. The unit commentary is intended to create a framework for your study of this unit. Throughout, you are directed to some key points in your required readings.
- Read the required readings.
- Pay attention to the questions posed throughout the unit commentary and consider writing down your thoughts in a learning log or journal (writing out your thoughts facilitates learning better than just thinking about a question).
- Participate in the online weekly discussion.

**Course Overview:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Units</th>
<th>Recommended Readings</th>
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Chapter 1: Assumptions About Learning  
Chapter 2: Assumptions About Learners  
| Thinking                                      | California Academic Press.  
|                                               | Chapter 10: Environment and Context in Learning |
|                                               | Retrieved February 9, 2005 from Ministry of Education, Wellington, New Zealand web site at  
|                                               | Sisco, B. (1991) Setting the climate for effective teaching and learning (Article Reprint)  

| Unit 3: Facilitation and Instruction         | Howell, C. Facilitating Responsibility for Learning in Adult Community College Students  
|                                               |  [http://jan.ucc.nau.edu/~coesyl-p/principle4-article2.pdf](http://jan.ucc.nau.edu/~coesyl-p/principle4-article2.pdf) |
|                                               |  [http://www.ericdigests.org/pre-929/working.htm](http://www.ericdigests.org/pre-929/working.htm) |
|                                               | Irmsher, K. *Communication Skills*  
|                                               | Lieb, S. Principles of Adult Learning  
|                                               | Chapter 3: Cycles in Learning  
|                                               | Chapter 4: Styles in Learning  
|                                               | Chapter 11: Strategies and Styles in Facilitation |
|                                               | Tips for Enhancing Online Discussion. Teaching, Learning, and Technology  
<p>|                                               |  <a href="http://www.brown.edu/about/administration/sheridan-center/teaching-learning/course-design/learning-technology/designing-online-discussions-key-questions">http://www.brown.edu/about/administration/sheridan-center/teaching-learning/course-design/learning-technology/designing-online-discussions-key-questions</a> |</p>
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<tr>
<th>Unit 4: Experiential Learning and Developing Learning Activities</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Andersen, L., Boud, D., Cohen, R. Experience Based Learning</td>
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<td><a href="http://www.learningandteaching.info/learning/experience.htm">http://www.learningandteaching.info/learning/experience.htm</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Carnegie Mellon University (2002). Developing different types of learning activities</td>
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<tr>
<td>Experience based learning</td>
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<td><a href="http://serc.carleton.edu/introgeo/enviroprojects/what.html">http://serc.carleton.edu/introgeo/enviroprojects/what.html</a></td>
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<td><a href="http://library.educationworld.net/a1/a1-6.html">http://library.educationworld.net/a1/a1-6.html</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Kelly, C. The Theory of Experiential Learning and ESL</td>
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<td><a href="http://iteslj.org/Articles/Kelly-Experiential/">http://iteslj.org/Articles/Kelly-Experiential/</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Kolb, D. Experiential learning.</td>
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<td><a href="http://www.texascollaborative.org/teaching_module.htm">http://www.texascollaborative.org/teaching_module.htm</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What is Experiential Learning?</td>
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<tr>
<td>(select “What is Experiential Learning” under the heading EL Overviews).</td>
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<tr>
<th>Unit 5: Distributed Learning and Ethics</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Baley, Charles. Leadership and Ethics: Grounded Theory</td>
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<td><a href="https://scholarworks.iupui.edu/bitstream/handle/1805/240/Baley.pdf?sequence=1">https://scholarworks.iupui.edu/bitstream/handle/1805/240/Baley.pdf?sequence=1</a></td>
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<td><a href="http://www.sagepub.com/bjohnsonstudy/articles/Gordon.pdf">http://www.sagepub.com/bjohnsonstudy/articles/Gordon.pdf</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Carr-Chellman, Davin. Re-reading Ethics for Adult education</td>
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Evaluation and grading

You should acquaint yourself with the University’s policy on plagiarism, cheating, and examination impersonation as detailed in the General Academic Regulations and Policy section of the University of Manitoba Undergraduate Calendar. Note: These policies are also located in your Distance and Online Education Student Handbook or you may refer to Student Affairs at http://www.umanitoba.ca/student.
Distribution of marks

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Deadlines</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Assignment 1</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>Week 5</td>
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<tr>
<td>Assignment 2 (Facilitate an online discussion)</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>TBA</td>
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<td>Assignment 3</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>Week 13</td>
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<tr>
<td>Online Participation</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>Throughout the course</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>100%</strong></td>
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Grading scale

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<tr>
<th>Letter grade</th>
<th>Percentage range</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A+</td>
<td>95 - 100</td>
<td>Exceptional</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>90 - 94</td>
<td>Excellent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>85 - 89</td>
<td>Very good</td>
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<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>80 - 84</td>
<td>Good</td>
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<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>75 - 79</td>
<td>Satisfactory</td>
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<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>70 - 74</td>
<td>Adequate</td>
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<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>60 - 69</td>
<td>Marginal</td>
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<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>0 - 59</td>
<td>Failure</td>
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Please note: All final grades are subject to departmental review.

Assignments

You are required to complete three written assignments, to participate in an online weekly discussion forum, and to facilitate an online discussion. The final written assignment (Assignment 3) will act as a capstone. This will be a major paper in which you will be expected to draw concepts from the entire course content in its development. You should be able to draw on your own personal experiences in the facilitation process or be able to create your own facilitation situation when answering the questions posed in the assignments.

**Note:** If the assignment due date falls during the Mid-term Break in February, it will be due on the Monday following the Mid-term Break. If you are unable to submit an assignment on time, contact your instructor well in advance of the due date, for we cannot guarantee that the instructor will accept late assignments. Review the guidelines on assignment due dates in the Distance and Online Education Student Handbook.

Online discussion and facilitation

Online discussions are a critical part of your course learning experience and evaluation. Here you will dialogue with your peers and the instructor to negotiate meaning and to construct your own personal knowledge. Discussions are meant to be a student forum. The instructor will moderate the discussions by posting questions, reading your responses, and responding to selected postings.

Participation provides you with opportunities to engage in a thoughtful, informed discussion with others in the class. It also provides evidence of reading, critical thinking, relating the concepts to your own experience, and striving to further your understanding of facilitating adult learning.

Discussion participation is worth 15% of your final grade and your mark will be based on regular participation in the conferences, quality of contribution in terms of thoughtfulness and critical thinking.
As part of the expectations for this course, you will also be required to take a turn facilitating a weekly online discussion. This will provide you with an opportunity to practice facilitation skills in an online environment. Your instructor will assess how well you facilitated the weekly discussion for which you were responsible. In addition, you will be required to submit to your instructor a written component in which you will write a personal critique of your performance and what you learned from the exercise.

If you have connectivity issues or work demands that make normal participation challenging, you have the opportunity to contact the instructor and make alternate arrangements to participate. For example, if you have a week when you know you cannot participate in instructor led discussions, you can negotiate to critique an article and post it (as long as it relates to the discussion at hand).

**Assignment and Rubrics**
Detailed information about assignments and grading rubrics can be found in the content section of the course site.

**Informing of Grades**
Instructors will make every effort to return grades in a prompt manner. Instructors have the discretion to deduct marks for failing to meet the requirements as specified by the assignment details, grading rubrics, course outline and/or any other specifications relevant to completion of the assignment.

**Sexual Harassment and Violation of Human Rights**
- The University of Manitoba endeavors at all times to provide an environment that is supportive of the fair treatment of all members of the University community and is conducive to relationships based on mutual respect, cooperation and understanding.
- The University does not condone behavior that is likely to undermine the dignity, self-esteem or productivity of any staff member or student.
- The University must not and will not condone any unreasonable discrimination based on, inter alia, racial, ethnic or national origin, age, sex, sexual orientation, ancestry, disability, religious belief or political belief, and any coercive or harassing behavior that violates not only the human rights of the victim but also the fundamental human rights and values of the University, including the value it places on high standards of personal and professional integrity and responsibility.

Violations of academic integrity including plagiarism, cheating, vandalism, sexual harassment and human rights are serious offenses and may lead to a range of disciplinary measures up to, and including, dismissal or expulsion.

**Plagiarism, cheating, and examination impersonation**
You should acquaint yourself with the University’s policy on plagiarism, cheating, and examination impersonation as detailed in the General Academic Regulations and Policy section of the University of Manitoba Undergraduate Calendar. Note: These policies are also located in your Distance and Online Education Student Handbook or you may refer to Student Affairs at http://www.umanitoba.ca/student.
Acknowledgments

Content specialists: Lois Morin, MA, BA
Program Consultant
Adult Learning and Literacy
Manitoba Advanced Education and
Literacy

Web developer: Distance and Online Education
University of Manitoba

Lois Morin has over twenty years experience in adult education. She is a Program Consultant at Adult Learning and Literacy, Manitoba Advanced Education and Literacy. Lois has presented at national and international conferences on adult education and RPL/PLAR. She has developed and delivered numerous workshops on topics such as adult education, RPL/PLAR, outcome based education, portfolio development, flexible assessment, and advising tools.
An award-winning, nationally recognized program for those involved with the instruction and training of adults, and the administration of adult education.

Offered face-to-face or by distance delivery since 1990 by a partnership of Western Canadian Universities:

- University of Manitoba
- University of Saskatchewan
- University of Alberta
- University of Victoria

The CACE Program is a dynamic professional development program with an emphasis on the application of theory and knowledge into skilled practice. Four core courses and 100 contact hours of elective workshops or courses are required for the Certificate. In the CACE Program, you can expect interactive learning, broad and varied perspectives on adult education, classmates with a diversity of experience and extremely knowledgeable instructors who model best practices in adult education and training.

Choose from courses offered:
- Evenings
- Weekends
- On-site or distance
- Week-long in summer

CACE Courses as Degree Credit
The four core courses in the CACE program are cross-listed as both certificate courses in Continuing Education and as undergraduate courses in the Faculty of Education at the University of Manitoba. These four courses may count as credit towards the complementary course requirements in the Bachelor of Education and Post Baccalaureate Diploma (PBDE) offered through the Faculty of Education.

The completed CACE Program may also be considered as 15 credit hours towards the fourth year required for admittance to a Masters of Education degree program in the Faculty of Education for individuals who only have a three-year undergraduate degree.

To take any of the four CACE core courses as university credit courses you must register through the Aurora Student (at umanitoba.ca) using the degree course numbers that follow:

- EDUA 1560  Adult Learning and Development
- EDUA 1570  Foundations of Adult Education
- EDUA 1580  Program Planning in Adult Education
- EDUA 1590  Facilitating Adult Education

Visit the Faculty of Education website (umanitoba.ca/faculties/education) for admission requirements in the Bachelor of Education and PBDE Programs.

Sandra Stechisen, Program Administrator
474-6685 or Toll-free: 1-888-216-7011 ext. 6685
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umanitoba.ca/extended/coned/cace