

Course
Citizens' Rights and Responsibilities
SST-2101-2
Secondary Cycle One



“More freedom means more responsibility.”

Victor Hugo

Presentation of the Course *Citizens' Rights and Responsibilities*

The course *Citizens' Rights and Responsibilities* is designed to help adult learners deal competently with real-life situations involving the exercise of their rights and responsibilities.

It encourages adult learners to take a stand on a social or economic issue. It introduces them to the function of citizens' rights and responsibilities in constructing a fair and just society.

By the end of the course, adult learners recognize their rights and responsibilities as citizens with respect to others and to society, in matters of health, education and housing.

Dealing With the Real-Life Situations

Dealing effectively with real-life situations is based on actions. These actions are grouped into categories and make use of a set of resources that include operational competencies and essential knowledge. During the learning process, adults are expected to construct knowledge related to these resources in order to be able to deal appropriately with their real-life situations.

The class of situations, categories of actions, operational competencies and essential knowledge constitute the compulsory elements of the course. These elements are explained in detail under their respective headings.



Class of Situations Addressed by the Course

This course addresses a single class of situations: *Socioeconomic issues*.

The situations in this class are everyday social and economic situations. In them, adults must exercise their rights, assume their rights as citizens and consider socioeconomic issues that could affect the quality of their community or society as a whole.

Such situations include finding a place to live, going back to school and using health care services. They also arise when an economic

situation affects living conditions, for example when a company moves elsewhere. Events, civic duties, social assistance, an aging parent and income tax are also contexts that require access to public services. Finally, social activities place adults in situations in which they must use public goods and resources, public transportation for example.

Class of Situations	Examples of Real-Life Situations
Socioeconomic issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Going back to school, entering the job market ▪ Strike ▪ Participating in human rights associations (e.g. health, education, housing) ▪ Looking for an apartment ▪ Using public resources (water, roads) ▪ Waste management ▪ Social assistance ▪ Illness ▪ Homelessness ▪ Observance of fiscal obligations ▪ Divorce ▪ Intergenerational difficulties ▪ Diminishing abilities

Categories of Actions

The *categories of actions* are groups of actions that are appropriate for dealing with the real-life situations addressed in the course. *Examples of actions* are provided to illustrate the scope of the category in a variety of contexts.

Categories of Actions	Examples of Actions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Developing a representation of the situation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Thinks about his/her situation or observes the community ▪ Identifies wants, needs or problems ▪ Considers a particular social situation ▪ Identifies a case of discrimination ▪ Identifies incidents of failure to respect citizens' rights ▪ Identifies a right related to access to health care, education or housing ▪ Takes a stand on an issue ▪ Recognizes the effectiveness of concerted action in having his/her rights respected
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Determining actions to take 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Considers his/her responsibility as a citizen with respect to a given situation ▪ Looks for information to validate his/her rights ▪ Identifies resources and services ▪ Relies on past experience involving the defence or promotion of a right ▪ Determines possible solutions or recourse to have his/her right to housing or public services respected ▪ Lists human rights associations ▪ Names resource people who provide information about responsibilities ▪ Uses a public good or service responsibly ▪ Understands the contribution of groups and associations to help exercise a right ▪ Seeks cooperation in groups

Categories of Actions	Examples of Actions
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Shows commitment to society through acts of solidarity▪ Adopts responsible social behaviour▪ Makes connections between rights, responsibilities and quality of life in the community▪ Recognizes the importance of a public good or service for community living

Compulsory Elements and End-of-Course Outcomes

The compulsory elements are those that the teacher must absolutely take into account when designing learning situations.

Class of Situations

Socioeconomic issues

Categories of Actions

- Developing a representation of the situation
- Determining actions to take

Operational Competencies

Exercises critical and ethical judgment

- Considers the overall situation objectively
- Assesses the scope and appropriateness of the rights and responsibilities in question
- Takes the common good into account in his/her choices
- Takes a stand based on an assessment, disregarding stereotypes

Cooperates

- Recognizes the social advantages of the actions to take
- Develops solutions based on respect for democratic rules and principles
- Gives and takes constructive criticism

Essential Knowledge

- Social contract
- Democratic values related to the respect of rights and responsibilities
- Instances of lack of respect for rights and responsibilities
- Public goods and services

The end-of-course outcomes describe how adults make use of the compulsory elements to deal with the real-life situations addressed in the course.

End-of-Course Outcomes

In order to deal with the class of situations *Socioeconomic issues*, adult learners develop a representation of a socioeconomic issue related to a real-life situation and determine the action to take in the case of failure to respect the rights and responsibilities identified.

Adult learners who develop a representation of a socioeconomic issue consider the overall issue objectively. They identify instances of respect and lack of respect for citizens' rights and responsibilities that characterize the issue. They evaluate the scope and appropriateness of these rights and responsibilities with respect to the public goods and services in question. They refer to the different dimensions of the social contract to describe it and take a stand based on an assessment that disregards stereotypes.

To determine action to be taken, adult learners interact with peers, give and take constructive criticism, and develop solutions consistent with democratic rules and principles and the common good. They recognize the advantages for society and the actions to take, in particular the role of helping and cooperative agencies. They take a stand based on an assessment that disregards stereotypes.

Evaluation Criteria

- Develops an objective representation of the situation
- Determines appropriate actions to take

Operational Competencies

The contribution of each operational competency is described in terms of the actions that are appropriate for dealing with the real-life situations in this course. These operational competencies are addressed in other courses and therefore all of the courses taken together contribute to their development.

In this course, only the following operational competencies are addressed: *Exercises critical and ethical judgment* and *Cooperates*.

Contribution of the Operational Competency *Exercises critical and ethical judgment*

The operational competency *Exercises critical and ethical judgment* is fundamental because it enables adult learners to develop a skill central to citizenship: critical thinking. Adult learners use critical thinking skills in dealing with complex situations in which they must make choices and take action that has an impact on society. This competency enables them to develop a representation of a situation related to a socioeconomic issue, continue their reflection on their role and actions and ensure the consistency of their actions.

In the case of lack of respect for rights and responsibilities, adult learners consider the overall situation objectively. They evaluate the scope and appropriateness of the rights and responsibilities in question. They take the common good into account in their choice of actions. They take a stand based on an assessment that disregards stereotypes, prejudices and intuitive convictions about social actions to take to preserve the rights of their fellow citizens and to assume their responsibilities.

Contribution of the Operational Competency *Cooperates*

The operational competency *Cooperates* is the ability to join one or more people in dealing with a situation. This competency is essential for the development of solutions to social problems.

Adult learners recognize the advantages for society of actions to be taken with regard to the respect or lack of respect for citizens' rights and responsibilities; they develop solutions consistent with democratic rules and principles. Throughout the process, they give and take constructive criticism.

They envision cooperative activities to solve problematic socioeconomic conditions. Their actions cause them to evaluate the impact of collective actions on the use of public goods and services and to establish the importance of democratic values associated with the respect of rights and responsibilities, a rationale for the social contract binding all citizens.

Essential Knowledge

Social contract

- Rights and freedoms: historical references
- Concept of right to education, health, housing, safety
- Individual and social responsibilities
- Role of the State
 - economic and social functions
 - distribution of wealth
- Helping and cooperative organizations
 - roles
 - scope of action

Democratic values related to the respect of rights and responsibilities

- Solidarity
- Equality
- Justice

Instances of lack of respect for rights and responsibilities

- Injustice
- Discrimination
- Segregation

Public goods and services

- Concepts of public and private goods and services
- Responsible use

Attitudes

The following attitudes are provided as suggestions only. The development of these attitudes can help adults to become more competent in dealing with the real-life situations in this course.

Responsibility	Solidarity
Actions related to socioeconomic issues involve the recognition of rights, as well as of the responsibilities of each citizen. Quality of life, justice and equality are preserved insofar as everyone assumes his or her responsibilities with respect to others.	Solidarity is a common expression of responsibility, which itself is indispensable. Whether in defending rights or improving living conditions, a society and its members evolve thanks to solidarity.

Complementary Resources

The following resources are provided as suggestions only and consist of references that may be consulted in learning situations.

Social Resources	Material Resources
<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Popular and community groups▪ Advocacy groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Québec and Canadian charters of rights and freedoms▪ Government documents on rent control and consumer protection

Contribution of the Subject Areas

The contribution of other subject areas, in particular knowledge related to Languages and to Mathematics, Science and Technology, is also useful for dealing with the real-life situations in this course. The elements identified for each subject area are not compulsory and do not constitute prerequisites.

Subject Area: Languages

Program of Study: *English, Language of Instruction*

Course (Presecondary): *Engagement and Involvement*

- Categories of actions related to the class of situations *Using language to fulfill civic and social duties in the community*

Course (Secondary): *Rights and Responsibilities*

- Categories of actions related to the class of situations *Using language to exercise rights and responsibilities*

Subject Area: Mathematics, Science and Technology

Program of study: *Mathematics*

- Interpreting graphs and statistics related to socioeconomic issues

Program of Study: *Computer Science*

- Searching the Internet (or consulting the appropriate electronic media) for information about a political, social or economic issue
- Using word processing software

Andragogical Context

The course *Citizens' Rights and Responsibilities* proposes real-life situations in which adults face injustice or discrimination. Adult learners consider their rights and responsibilities and analyze socioeconomic issues. Real-life situations (e.g. finding an apartment) and learning contexts related to everyday life (e.g. using public goods and services) enable them to consider their rights and responsibilities in specific circumstances. With the teacher's help, they determine their needs and evaluate the importance of exercising their rights and assuming their responsibilities. They discover resources, groups and agencies in their community that can provide help. Thus they become aware of the importance of networks and develop a sense of cooperation. They define the limits of their rights, identify the benefits of assuming their responsibilities and consider the scope of their actions. They become more independent in finding solutions and develop their critical and ethical judgment, in particular with respect to the importance of public services for society.

Case studies, teamwork (however limited) and brainstorming activities on the situation help them define and understand the issue and develop their critical thinking skills. Discussions must focus on the development of solutions that benefit all of society. Their analysis must be as objective as possible and the situation should not conflict with the adult learners' personal lives. The goal of the course is to define a socioeconomic issue and deal with it from the perspective of rights and responsibilities rather than personal interest. Adults learners' research will be guided by the teacher to ensure that they gain as broad an understanding as possible of the issue.

The teacher will use excerpts of the Québec and Canadian charters of rights and freedoms that adult learners can understand. Adult learners themselves can obtain copies of these documents. Some agencies also produce books and leaflets that can be very useful in the learning process.

Learning Situation

The learning situation that follows is provided as an example to show teachers how the principles of the education reform can be applied in the classroom.

It is authentic in the sense that it addresses a real-life situation (taken from the class of situations in the course) that adults may find themselves in. It is sufficiently open and comprehensive to allow adult learners to explore several important aspects related to dealing with this real-life situation.

The examples of actions presented in the course help the teacher to identify those actions that an adult would take to deal with the real-life situation. The teacher can then refer to these examples in order to develop pertinent learning activities.

The learning situation is organized in terms of the three steps of the teaching-learning process, which are as follows:

- planning learning
- actual learning
- integrating and reinvesting learning

These steps highlight the principles of the education reform insofar as they encourage adults to be active, to reflect on their learning and to interact with their peers when the learning context is suitable. They include learning activities and may also include evaluation activities intended to support adults in the learning process.

These activities help learners to construct knowledge related to the compulsory elements of the course that are targeted by the learning situation concerned: one or more categories of actions, essential knowledge and the actions of the operational competencies associated with the categories of actions.

The example provided also refers to certain teaching strategies—pedagogical methods and techniques—that can be selected according to the learners, the context and the learning environment. Certain learning strategies may also be suggested, as well as a variety of material and social resources.

Example of a Learning Situation

Renting an Apartment

In their different social roles, adults are exposed to socioeconomic issues that can have a direct effect on their everyday lives. They may, for example, be evicted from their apartment, suffer a work accident or even be affected by events in the lives of the people around them. Finding an apartment is the situation chosen for the course *Citizens' Rights and Responsibilities*. The learning situation must get them to consider the individual and social responsibilities related to the right to housing. They will be called upon to use the operational competencies *Exercises critical and ethical judgment* and *Cooperates*.

The learning situation begins with a crucial question: Do you have a right to housing? A class discussion of opinions and experiences is followed by a lecture on the related provisions of the charters of rights and freedoms.

In the following activity, adult learners identify instances of lack of respect for this right in their personal experience or in newspaper articles provided by the teacher or the class. After drawing up a list, each learner chooses one and, using a fact sheet provided by the teacher, explains how the situation is discriminatory and how it is related to the rights enshrined in the charters.

The next activity involves a meeting with an agency involved with the issue, an advocacy group or a community group. The speaker presents a case and proposes possible solutions. The idea is to identify the problem, take a critical look at it and learn about different types of intervention.

Then, in pairs, the adult learners share their problems, determine where they can get help and identify appropriate actions in the face of the instances of lack of respect, and their role and importance in this type of situation. They analyze possible actions to improve the situation and each one takes a stand and defends his or her point of view. They consider the measures needed to remedy the injustice, discuss possible solutions and evaluate their approach.

To end the learning situation, each pair of learners gives an oral or written presentation of their analysis of the situation, as well as their choice of measures based on cooperation. The teacher keeps a compilation of the cases presented to help new students or to create new case studies.

Elements of the Course Addressed by the Learning Situation

Class of Situations	
Socioeconomic issues	
Learning Situation	
Renting an Apartment	
Categories of Actions	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Developing a representation of the situation Determining actions to take 	
Operational Competencies	Essential Knowledge
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Exercises critical and ethical judgment Cooperates 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Social contract Democratic values related to the respect of rights and responsibilities Instances of lack of respect for rights and responsibilities
Complementary Resources	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Québec and Canadian charters of rights and freedoms 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Government documents on rent control and consumer protection



