

Philosophy of Education

Educational Studies 330

Spring 2017

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Office Hours: MW 2:30-4:00 and by appointment.

Course Purpose - Opening Glimpses

"...you will need a vision that is truly your own – one that is deep and tenacious and that lies close to the core of who you believe yourself to be, what you value in life, and where you see yourself going..."

Jon Kabat-Zinn

"We move mountains by first moving ourselves, and the way we educate makes all the difference in the world. The choice is ours. We make the difference. It is we who decide to live, or not to live, our visions. We are the creators of the world and realities we live in. We are the ones who must choose the path of our learning."

Gregory Cajete

Why study philosophies of learning and life?

in the process of struggling to question, explore, analyze, understand, compose, express, enliven and enact an inspirational vision, deeply significant and surprising things can happen.....

we learn and teach together because although the process requires each of us to be intensely and personally engaged, we cannot compose and enact such visions alone, or at a distance.....

this is our task, to help each other to envision, and then to live, what really matters.....

Course Process

Throughout the term we will use a *social* approach to inquiry—an approach based on well-grounded assumptions that deep learning is *relational*, *exploratory*, and *responsible*.

Social inquiry is relational. Learning is not only cumulative, but also connective. It is deepened by through relationships that integrate cognitive, emotional, intuitive, aesthetic, ethical, and kinesthetic ways of knowing. Learning is extended by creating connections that cross boundaries. It is best accomplished through interpersonal relationships that are engaging and egalitarian. In such relationships the roles and responsibilities of 'teacher' and 'learner' are continually exchanged.

Social inquiry is exploratory. Deep learning occurs in response to the discovery of new, often surprising conceptual patterns that provide a sense of possibility and direction, even in the face of complexity and uncertainty. Educational interactions are conversational. Knowledge is advanced through open, non-judgmental questioning and response. The goal is to sustain, complicate, and extend shared consideration rather than to move as quickly as possible toward closure. Curiosity, risk-taking, and experimentation are always in play.

Social inquiry is responsible. To learn for one's own sake, to derive personal meaning and develop skill in self-expression, is necessary but not sufficient. Our knowledge is challenged and enriched as we strive to understand, and then to respond with respect and creativity to the needs and contributions of others. We are transformed as we work to connect our learning with broader civic aspirations and principled social action.

Two attributes of social inquiry are important to note here. First, because effective learning requires active participation and cooperative exchange, *regular attendance is essential and therefore required* (80% for successful course completion). Second, because deep learning is both radically social and highly personal, *self- and social reflection* and *self- and peer evaluation* play fundamental roles in this teaching/learning process.

Course Components

Conversational Reading

Reading is fundamentally a social act. It carries a strong potential not only to affect the course of our personal lives, but also to enhance the quality of our collective experience. Although most often perceived and experienced as an individual learning process, we will emphasize reading as part of an on-going conversation with others.

There are two types of reading for this course:

- 1) 'Framework' readings provide an overview of broad philosophic systems relevant to education. Our primary source will be *New Perspectives on Philosophy and Education*, by Gerald Gutek.
- 2) 'Interpretive' readings are selected to reflect a wide range of contemporary and historical voices and viewpoints on significant educational issues. These are collected in *Philosophical Documents in Education*, edited by R. Reed and T. Johnson, *Ethical Visions of Education* edited by D. Hansen, and *The Sacred Tree*, J. Bopp, M. Bopp, Brown & Lane.

For each reading, you are encouraged to begin by attending to aspects of your personal knowledge, values, feelings, and experiences most strongly affected by the texts. Through active participation in a variety of forms of class conversations, you will also have opportunities to acknowledge and constructively respond to issues that resonate most strongly with others.

Course Forum

In response to course readings and conversations you will be asked to complete a series of *concise reflective contributions* in response to each *Forum* scheduled on Moodle. Your contributions should be developed in response to the social inquiry prompt: "What does the author say that is not only meaningful to me, but also important to share with others and relevant to broader educational and civic aspirations?"

Peer Teaching

Once during the semester you will be grouped with other students and asked to provide pedagogical leadership by *deepening understanding and extending class conversation* on one set of assigned readings. Please consider this to be one of your most important contributions to the course.

Reflective Exams

Drawing from the conversational reading activities engaged in relation to the primary course texts, you will complete two reflective exams. Essay questions will provide opportunities for you to clarify, organize, and express your developing understanding and interpretation of focal philosophic perspectives that shape current educational discourse, theory, policy, and practice.

Philosophic Composition

We will use this assignment to challenge and support each other's efforts to articulate a coherent and compelling philosophy of education, and to reflect on its implications for current educational theory and practice. Compositions should include three elements: **(I)** identification, explanation, and justification of an integrative set of philosophic priorities, **(II)** consideration of ways in which such priorities might be reflected in processes of teaching and learning, and **(III)** symbolic representation—a poetic, literary, visual, musical, and/or other creative exemplification that reinforces themes central to the philosophic vision.

Design Project

Drawing from each other's emerging philosophic visions, small groups will complete a design project linking complementary philosophic principles with significant educational policy and practice concerns. Design projects will include both a *descriptive summary* and a *creative enactment* reflecting key concepts, values, and strategies responsive to the challenges confronting contemporary educational systems.

Evaluation

This course is structured to encourage all students to demonstrate a high quality of performance. Self, peer, and faculty evaluation are incorporated. Late assignments will not be evaluated unless arrangements are made with the instructor or peer reviewers in advance. Final grades are assigned upon completion of *all course components* and based upon the following guidelines:

Peer Teaching	10%
Design Project	10%
Course Forum	20%
Reflective Exams	30%
Philosophic Composition	30%

Course Overview

Introduction

Week One **1/23-27**

Introductions
Conceptual Framework
Course Forum/Peer Teaching
Hansen: Introduction
Gutek: Chapters 1, 7, 12

Education for Academic Excellence and Economic Proficiency

Week Two **1/30-2/3**
Gutek: Chapters on Idealism, Realism

Week Three **2/6-10**
Gutek: Chapters on Conservatism, Nationalism, Globalization

Peer Teaching Session I: (2/10)
Reed & Johnson: Socrates & Plato, Aristotle
Hansen: W.E.B Du Bois

Education for Personal Fulfillment and Social Reform

Week Four **2/13-17**
Humanistic Perspectives
Gutek: Chapters on Liberalism and Existentialism

Peer Teaching Session II: (2/17)
Reed & Johnson: Rousseau, Noddings, Lipman/Matthews/Eagan

Week Five **2/20-24**
Pragmatic Perspectives
Gutek: Chapters on Pragmatism and Progressivism

Peer Teaching Session III: (2/24)
Reed & Johnson: Dewey
Hansen: Dewey, Addams

Week Six **2/27-3/3**
Reflective Exam I (3/3)
Midterm Forum Weeks 1-5 Due (3/3)

Week Seven **3/6-10**
Liberationist Perspectives
Gutek: Chapters on Social Reconstructionism and Critical Theory
Schutzman: "The Political Therapy of Augusto Boal" (Moodle)

Peer Teaching Session IV: (3/8)
Reed & Johnson: Freire, Greene
Hansen: Freire

Spring Break 3/11-19

Education for Social and Environmental Sustainability

Week Eight **3/20-24**

Holistic Perspectives
John Miller: "The Holistic Curriculum" (Moodle)
Ron Miller: "The Holistic Paradigm in Education" (Moodle)
Bopp et al: The Sacred Tree

Philosophic Visions Workshop
Preliminary Philosophic Principles Due (3/24)

Week Nine **3/27-3/31**

Education in Times of Crisis

Hansen: Tsunesabaro Makiguchi,

Sulak: "The Wisdom of Sustainability" (Moodle)

Gough: "From Epistemology to Ecopolitics" (Moodle)

Week Ten **4/3-7**

Peer Teaching Session V: (4/5)

Reed & Johnson: Palmer

Hansen: Montessori, Steiner, Tagore

Philosophic Visions Concept Map Due & Elaborated Philosophic Principles Due (4/3)

Design Project – Introduction and Negotiations (4/3)

Special Visit with Professor Larry Hickman

Internationally known Dewey Scholar – April 6-7

Reflective Exam II (4/7)

Final Forum Weeks 6-10 Due (4/7)

Week Eleven **4/10-14**

Design Project Preparation

Week Twelve **4/17-21**

Design Project Preparation

Philosophic Vision Drafts Due (4/21)

Philosophic Vision Conferences (4/21-25)

Week Thirteen **4/24-28**

Design Project Presentations

Week Fourteen **5/1**

Overview of Philosophic Visions (5/1)

Philosophic Visions Due (5/1)

