**ED 1560: Philosophy of Education, Educational Thought and Practice**

Th. 4-6:20pm, Wilson Hall 204

Course website: <https://brown.instructure.com/courses/202417>

*A copy of this syllabus, assignment explanations, readings, and helpful resources can be found on the course website.  All students are encouraged to access the website at their earliest convenience and bring any difficulties to the attention of the instructor.*

**COURSE DESCRIPTION, PHILOSOPHY, and STRUCTURE**

The main purposes of this course are three-fold:   
1) The course is designed as a constructivist endeavor, which presumes that through social practices–our interactions with each other, our experiences and observations in school settings, and engaging with the course texts–we will build knowledge individually and collectively.  In other words, using a social constructivist framework presumes knowledge is located and built relationally. We will seek to tap, refine, and articulate knowledge primarily through an iterative, on-going, inquiry-based collaboration. It is also intended to be ***praxis-oriented***, in that it requires us to challenge and affirm knowledge in the world.

2) It aims to *acquaint* students with different philosophies of education (classical, progressive, critical, radical, feminist, multicultural), yet does not try to "cover" the vast, complex and diverse field of inquiry that constitutes what is called philosophy of education (an impossible task).   
  
3) Through our explorations and analysis of texts, field experiences as well as through various inquiries into current schooling models of interest, students will develop their own beliefs about their emerging philosophies of education and an understanding and awareness of the possibilities of education for students and society.

**Central Questions**

As a constructivist, praxis-oriented course, our investigations will not be guided by asserted truth statements, but by questions essential to the philosophy of education such as the following: 

*What is a philosophy of education? Why bother to have one?*

*How can a particular philosophy claim legitimate authority? For or from whom?*

*What implications should one’s philosophy have for praxis — for action in the world?*

*What exactly is "education"? "teaching”? "learning”?*

*Who is to be taught? Why them? What are they to be taught? Why that?*

*How are they to be taught? Why in that manner?*

*How should educators confront, negotiate, and use human difference?*

*In what ways is education political?*

*Whose knowledge, experience, and authority matters? How? For what?*

*What is a school? A teacher? A student? A lesson? Content? A skill?*

*What is a good school? Teacher? Student? Education? What is a bad one? How can one tell?*

**Course Goals**

Using a multifaceted, rigorous, approach toward reading, writing, on-line conversation, and classroom discussion, we will endeavor to:

* learn about certain individuals’ philosophies of education
* tap, refine, and articulate knowledge primarily through an iterative, on-going, inquiry-based collaboration, with attention to providing clear, informed and consistent reasoning in the presentation of arguments, ideas, and questions
* develop praxis-oriented practices through concrete means such as:
  + analyses regarding how particular philosophies are enacted in our world
  + challenging and affirming knowledge in the world
  + making analytical connections between social theory/philosophy, policies and practices.
* articulate our own philosophies of education (which we'll call ***philosophical frameworks***);

**Required Texts**

Alridge, D.P. (2008). *The Educational Thought of W.E.B. DuBois.* New York : Teachers College Press.

Dewey, John. *Democracy and Education: An introduction to the philosophy of education,*

Freire, Paulo. (2000). *Pedagogy of the Oppressed, New York : Continuum.*

Hansen, David(Ed). (2007). *Ethical Visions of Education: Philosophies in Practice,  Teachers College Press.*

Carini, Paula and Himley, Margaret, *(2010). Jenny's story: taking the long view of the child, prospect's philosophy in action,*Teachers College Press.

**PLEASE NOTE:** Books will be on reserve in the library through OCRA (ROCK, unless otherwise noted). *Additional readings online for download through course canvas website (see weekly requirements/calendar for readings).*

**AN OVERVIEW OF ASSIGNMENTS**

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| --- | --- | --- |
| **Assignment & Short Description** | **Due Date** | **% of grade/ Evaluation Tool** |
| **Participation & Communication:** As is outlined in the "Course Assumptions and Expectations" section, this course takes participation, communication, and collaboration as practices that improve with critical engagement and metacognition. Though readings, writing, reflecting, offering and receiving feedback on our personal course participation goals, we will pay attention to participation as a practice—how we invite others in, how we reflect on our own patterns, and how we push others out.  A requirement for participation includes several written components: individual goals, peer feedback, and midterm course critique, course in class and email discussion participation. | On-going. | 20% /self-evaluation using rubric criteria |
| **Course Email Discussion List:** This discussion list will enable us to talk about assignments, readings, and lectures outside of class. You must write at least one message each week.  I will assess your contributions as part of your “Participation” grade. | Weekly-no more than 1x/week | Part of participation |
| **Writing Assignment #1: 9 short “Think Pieces”**   * The structure meant as a tool for analyzing a text quickly, yet thoughtfully.  You will then bring your focused grappling of the ideas a discussion via this paper. * Develop a practice for teasing out key ideas in a format that is shorter and less time-consuming than a full-fledged paper. * Develop your practice of bridging theory and practice, in other words developing what Friere and others termed "praxis". | Weekly: *every week there are assigned readings* | Complete/incomplete  **15%**  **(Final selection of 3**) with self-reflection addressing rubric criteria) |
| **School Site Observation, Analysis, & Presentation:** During the second half of the course, you will create a document analysis and observation protocol as a tool for visiting a school and researching the school’s materials.  You will use this tool as a way to do focused observation to explore and critically consider how the school seems to be defining, enacting, and making explicit (and implicit) a particular philosophy (or philosophies). We will consider these schools together through the lens of our readings and through your presentation of your exploration, observation and analysis. This project will help you in defining your questions and final project. | 3/15 | 15% |
| **Glossary:** You will use the course texts to define 8 concepts.  Definitions should be about 75 words long.  Each will be (more or less) a contested concept, thus your definition will be your interpretation of the concept. You will want to use (and cite) example of its use. | 3/22 | 10% |
| **Writing Assignment #2/Midterm ESSAY:** you will address three essential questions: one from the syllabus, one from the class list we'll establish, and one from your own list of questions. | 3/7 | 20% |
| **Writing Assignment #3/ Final Praxis Project & Presentation:** You will select a problem, establish a philosophical framework for defining and addressing that problem, propose a concrete response to that problem, and reflect upon the efficacy and limitations of that response with specificity, precision, and honesty.  This assignment can be done collaboratively or individually.  There will be workshop time in class to get feedback on the paper portion of the project and a final presentation day for presenting your project. | 5/3: Presentations  5/10: upload final paper | 20% |

**Course Assumptions and Expectations**

My approach to this course is grounded in two main assumptions. First, I understand dialogue (though talk, but also through range of written formats) as essential to meaning making. As such my instructional style emphasizes critical thinking through dialogue--between us, in connection to the readings, field observations and lived experience. This course is not designed in a lecture format, but primarily through small group and some larger group facilitated discussion, aimed to foster critical reading, writing, and communicative practices. Through these processes, we will be building a small, fragile community, I expect everyone to treat everyone else in it with respect and appreciation for both similarities and differences.

Second, our growth is possible to the extent we create an environment where we feel accountable to one another and can express ourselves authentically, with generosity, honestly, respectfully, humility, love and respect. Our deliberate attempts to share our thinking and listen to others along these same lines (our fellow course members and text authors) will contribute to such an environment. The diversity we bring to this classroom—interest and identity oriented, cultural, experiential, and disciplinary -- will often result in divergent perspectives, ideas, and concerns, and is, in fact, as vital to this course. We will regularly discuss sensitive and important issues concerning experience, identity, academic performance, gender, race, ethnicity, sexuality, ability, and class in a direct and open manner.

* **Be generous** with yourself and with others. Revisit your participation goals, the guidelines for group discussion I’ve outlined, and participation information I’ve provided if you are struggling in this area.
* **Stay in communication with me**--Please take responsibility to bring issues forward as they arise for you.  If you are a student with a disability and you need disability-related classroom accommodations, please support yourself by checking with me as soon as possible (see accommodations outlined below).
* **Come to each seminar session and arrive on time.** If you must miss a seminar session due to an emergency (illness or family emergency), notify me before class. It is also your responsibility to contact another class member to obtain notes, assignments, announcements, etc. if you are late to class.
* **Be fully present in class, ready to participate thoughtfully with readings, thorough notes on readings, and other related assignments in fresh your mind (and in your hands!)**. Bringing your full, rested, authentic and inquisitive self to class is critical to developing trust and meaningful dialogue.  It’s my belief that all will thrive in this class to the extent each of us engages with one another with generosity, curiosity, openness and sincerity.  Rather than relying on what Brazilian educator Paolo Friere calls “the banking model of education,” where ideas are deposited into student heads, I ask that you join in constructing a learning environment that is interactive, energetic, supportive, challenging, and always respectful.  The questions and issues raised in this course will have many “right” answers and solutions. All will involve thinking and struggling inside and often outside of this class.
* **Reading:** Because we will construct knowledge together based on our shared experience of the texts, reading well is critical to this course. In this course, we will not practice the habits of slash-and-burn reading, in which students are rewarded for dismissing an author's argument for its inevitable flaws; that sort of reading is rarely constructive, and it almost always reflects a lack of care. Rather, you will be asked to read constructively, to identify aspects of the reading that you find compelling, curious, or useful. You should come prepared for class by having carefully read the texts for the day, taken notes on your impressions and questions, written any assignments, and considered topics for discussion.
* **Please see me--** make use of office hours and e-mail if you are having concerns about your ability to function well in this class. If you have a problem with an assignment, a classmate, course content, classroom structure or schedule, do not wait until the last minute or until the end of the course to bring the issue forward. **If you are consistently struggling...** to complete work or if you would simply like assistance with your writing beyond having a peer proofread your work, please visit the Writing Center, seek help from classmates and friends, and/or visit the me during office hours.
* ***Raise Questions!!*** I am sure you will have questions. Please raise them with me and other students. I am always willing to listen to your ideas. The questions and issues raised in this course will have many “right” answers and solutions. All will involve thinking and struggling inside and often outside of this class.
* **Writing:** The writing for the course emphasizes regular short assignments (think pieces, in class and on-line reflections, participation reflection and feedback, the creation of a course glossary, a midterm essay exam, and a final collaborative written project.

**Mundane assignment requirements:**

* + All written work must be turned in electronically to me through “assignments” on the course website: <https://brown.instructure.com/courses/202417/assignments#assignment_454905>
* Assignments should be named with your name (can be first with last initial + the name of the assignment (e.g., Jennifer\_L- Think Piece #1) and uploaded onto canvas prior to class starting each week or by specific due date.
* Bring a hard copy of writing to class for discussion *when noted on the specific assignment rubric*.
* Handwritten and late papers will receive an NC. Completing assignments on time allows you to think about, build upon insights, questions, new ideas through seminar and on-line discussion.
* All assignment criteria will be communicated through a rubric. It may be helpful for you to have someone else read/listen to your paper prior to turning it in. The writing center is an excellent resource for this purpose.

**Class, Reading, and Assignment Schedule**

**Week 1, 1/26: Course overview and introduction to syllabus, and first assignments**

**Week 2, 2/2/12:** **Critically Engagement Across Difference**

**READING:**

* Allen, D. S. (2004).  *Talking to Strangers: Anxieties of Citizenship since Brown v. Board of Education .*
* Sensoy, O. & DiAngelo, R. (2011). *Is Everyone Really Equal?*, p. 1-26
* Amirault, C. (2003)."Discussing Discussion."
* McIntosh, P. “Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack”
* Alcoff, L.M. (1998). “What Should White People Do?”

**DUE:**

* Participation Goals
* Think Piece #1

**Week 3, 2/9/12: Framing Philosophy, Framing Education**

**READING:**

* Kumashiro, K. (2008). *The Seduction of common sense*
* Mayo, C. (2011).“Philosophy is Bent”
* Butler, J. (2004). “Can the ‘Other’ of Philosophy Speak?”
* Alcoff, L.M. (1992). “The Problem of Speaking for Others”
* Applebaum, B. (2009)”Is Teaching for Social Justice a Liberal Bias?

**DUE:** Think Piece #2

**Week 4, 2/16/12: Foundational Perspectives on Education’s Aims**

**READING:**

* Plato, *The Republic* (excerpt)
* John Locke, “Some Thoughts Concerning Education” (both in course packet).
* Hansen, D. (2007). **“**Ideas, Action, and Ethical Vision in Education,” p. 1-18 and “John Dewey on Education and the Quality of Life,” p.21-34, in *Ethical Visions of Education: Philosophies in Practice.*
* John Dewey, *Democracy and Education*, chapters 1-5, 7-10, 13, 18, 22.

**DUE:** Think Piece #3

**Week 5, 2/23/12: Foundational Perspectives on Education’s Aims**

**READING:**

* Paulo Freire, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*.
* Fishman, S.M. and McCarthy, L., “Paulo Friere’s Politics and Pedagogy,” p.35-45, in *Ethical Visions of Education: Philosophies in Practice*

**DUE:** Think Piece #4

**Week 6, 3/1/12: Educational Aims, Historical Contingency & The Current Historical Moment**

**READING:**

* Alridge, D.P. (2008). *The Educational Thought of W.E.B. DuBois*
* Obama, B. (May 28, 2008) "What's Possible for Our Children" (Speech delivered while campaigning for the Presidency)
* *Choose 1 chapter from the following:*
  + Anderson, R.“W.E.B. DuBois and an Education for Democracy,” p.46-61, in *Ethical Visions of Education: Philosophies in Practice.*
  + Macedo, D. “Our Common Culture: A Poisonous Pedagogy”
  + Ladson-Billings, G. "Who Will Survive America? Pedagogy as Cultural Preservation"
  + Fairclough, A. “The Costs of *Brown:* Black Teachers and School Integration”
  + Andrade, J.M. (2009).“Note to Educators: Hope Required When Growing Roses in Concrete.”

**DUE:**

* Think Piece #5
* Participation feedback to group members
* Participation Self-Evaluation

**Week 7, 3/8/12: Historical & Political Contexts & Educational Responses**

**READING:**

* Hall, K. et al., (2010). Part 1, “Reggio Emilia and Loris Malaguzzi: Socio-cultural context and intellectual biography,” p. 7-29; Ch. 2: “Principals into Practice,” p. 33-63; Part 3, The Relevance of Reggio Emilia,” p. 147-165.
* *Choose 1 chapter from:*
  + *Ethical Visions of Education: Philosophies in Practice, Part III: “Unleashing Human Growth and Potential,”* ch. 7-10, p. 111-171. (on Montessori, Tagore, Steiner, and Schweitzer).

*OR*

* + Chapter 3: “History, Ideas, and Philosophy: An interview with Lella Gandini,” 49-97.

**DUE:**

* Midterm Essay
* Midterm course critique

**Week 8, 3/15/12: *Knowledge Construction and Representations of Justice, Goodness, and Caring in Teaching and Learning: Feminist and Queer Theories***

**READING:**

* Thompson, A. (2003). Caring in Context-Four Feminist Theories on Gender and Education
* Grumet, M “*Bitter Milk: Women and Teaching”*
* Gomez, D.S. (2007). “Women's Place-pedagogy,” p. 313-333, in *The Study of Philosophy of Education*
* Kumashiro, K. “Anti-oppressive education”
* Fine, M. “Sexuality, Schooling and Adolescent Females: The Missing Discourse of Desire,”
* Ellsworth, E. (1989). Why doesn’t this feel empowering? Working through the repressive myths of critical pedagogy. *Harvard Educational Review,* *59*(3), 297-324.

**DUE:**

* Class observation protocol, document analysis matrix, and small group information sharing session
* Think Piece #6

**Week 9, 3/22/12*: Week 9, Knowledge Construction and Representations of Justice, Goodness, and Caring in Teaching and Learning: Critical Theories: Race, Power and Progressive Pedagogy***

**READING:**

* Magaziner, I. et al, *Draft of a working paper for education at Brown University* (excerpts in course packet).
* Delpit, L. (1988). The silenced dialogue: Power and pedagogy in educating other people's children. *Harvard Educational Review*, *58*, 280-298.
* Popkewitz, T. (1998) excerpts from *Struggling for the Soul: The Politics of Schooling and the Construction of the Teacher.*

Choose 1 of the following:

* Jones, C.E. & Gayles, J. (2008), “The World is a Child’s Classroom: An Analysis of the Black Panther Party’s Oakland Community School” in *Teach Freedom: Education for Liberation in the African American Tradition.* Payne, C. M., Strickland, C. S., (Eds.) New York: Teachers College Press.
* Giles, H.C. (2008).“Freedom is a Constant Struggle: The Story of the Bushwick School for Social Justice” in *Teach Freedom: Education for Liberation in the African American Tradition.*
* Gaztambide-Fernández, R. A. (2009), The Best of the Best: Becoming Elite at an American Boarding School, Chapter 7: “The 5 E’s,”
* Elenes, C. A. “Reclaiming the Borderlands: Chicana/o Identity, Difference and Critical Pedagogy”

**DUE:**

* + Post final topic ideas
  + Post course glossary
  + Think Piece #7

**3/29/12:** **NO CLASS-SPRING BREAK**

**Week 10, 4/5/12: Possibilities**

**READING:**

* Green, M. (2011). In *Humanizing Education.*
* Hansen, D. (2007), *Ethical Visions of Education: Philosophies in Practice, chapters 4-6, p. 65-110.*
* Carini, Paula and Himley, Margaret, *(2010). Jenny's story: taking the long view of the child, prospect's philosophy in action*.

**DUE:**

* Think Piece #8

**DUE:** Post final praxis topic idea and groups.

**Week 11, 4/12/12: Possibilities**

***TBA***

**Week 12, 4/19/12: No Class: Work on final project presentations & paper**

**Week 13, 4/26/12:  Synthesizing and Sharing**

Final Praxis Project Writing Workshop

**DUE:** Final 3 Think Piece Reflection

**Week 14, 5/3/12: Synthesizing and Sharing**

**DUE:** Final Praxis Project Presentations

**Week 15, 5/9/12:** **Final Paper due, no class.**