

Fall 2005

EDPL 612

PHILOSOPHY OF EDUCATION

Time: Tuesday, 7:00 pm – 9:45 pm
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COURSE DESCRIPTION AND OBJECTIVES

The main purpose of this course is to inquire and reflect upon issues that have deep significance for our lives as human beings, students and educators. One goal of this course is to strive for an understanding of historically significant ideologies and their application to problems of teaching and education. However, the primary focus of this course will be on cultivating a desire and commitment to engage in philosophical thinking. In this way, the course seeks to foster an appreciation for the power of philosophical methods of analysis as a way of thinking that can help us determine how best to live. The course also hopes to help students taking the first step toward an integration of Western and Eastern philosophical perspectives.

We are all living a life that is hectic. We seldom have time to sit down and think about things that are beyond our immediate concern. But oftentimes, fundamental questions come up in our mind despite that we do not give them systematic analysis. As a human being, everyday we face problems that concern our existence and purpose of life.

Philosophy was once considered a field comprising the highest level of human knowledge. Today, it may still be true, for philosophy touches on our universe views, worldviews, our views on life and nature, and our ways of understanding ourselves and knowing the world. Philosophy once laid down the foundation for a diverse field of studies including physics, medicine, cosmology, chemistry, math, geography, etc. Only in the past few hundred years are many of the above-mentioned fields separated from the major concerns of philosophy. Why is philosophy so encompassing? Because it concerns the foundation of our being and existence.

Philosophers ask these questions: Who we are? Is there a higher existence that determines our existence? What is the relationship between nature and human beings? What is the meaning of life? Are our senses reliable in telling us about the truth of the universe? How do we get to know about the world? What is the relationship between the mind and the body? They further ask these questions: What is happiness? What is virtue? What is the relationship between individuals and the collective? How can we organize a society and an economy that promote the common good? What methods should we employ to find out truth from false statements? Can we ever hope to find out the truth of our existence?

Philosophy of education is a reflection of the above questions. Educators and in fact, many concerned citizens ask these questions: What kind of education do we want for our children? What is the purpose of education? What role does education play for an individual and for a society? What should we teach in school? How should we teach? What kind of citizens do we want our students to become? What are the roles of teachers? How can we understand students better? Using a more critical view, philosophers of education ask: What underlies the agenda of educational reforms in different periods of time? What is actually taught in school? Who controls the production and distribution of knowledge? Is education helping to reproduce social and economic inequalities? What approaches should be adopted to improve teaching and learning so that equality of educational opportunity is achieved regardless of race, class, gender, ethnicity, etc?

As we move into the 21st century, we also want to ponder on the role of science and technology, the new alternative approaches to solving complex problems facing humanity, problems such as war and conflicts, environmental destruction, social inequalities and injustices, and we must start thinking about constructing a new philosophy and epistemology which would us to educate our younger generation holistically, and turn education into a great endeavor for promoting international understanding and cultivating love and compassion for all.

Course objectives are:

1. To foster for each student an awareness of how and why philosophy matters to education and schooling as to all human activities.
2. To examine and clarify our most deeply held philosophical assumptions underlying a range of practical concerns related to education and schooling.
3. To subject these assumptions to critical analysis in the light of meaningful alternatives.
4. To enable each student to reflect on and develop the basis for her/his own coherent philosophy of education -- one rooted in the purposes and projects he/she values most as a human being.

II. REQUIRED TEXT

H. Ozmon and S. Craver. (2003). *Philosophical Foundations of Education* (Seventh Edition). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Merrill Prentice Hall. ISBN: 0-13-042399-8.

Cooney, William, et al. (1993). *From Plato to Piaget*. Lanham: New York. ISBN: 0-8191-9010.

Mitchell, Stephen. (2000). *Bhagavad Gita*. New York: Harmony Books.

The Diamond Sutra: <http://www.ship.edu/~cgboeree/diamondsutra.html>

Lao Tsu, (1999). *Tao Te Ching*. Harper Collin. Stephen Mitchell (Translator). ISBN: 0060955430.

Lau, D. C. (1992). *Confucius: The Analects*. Hong Kong: The Chinese University Press. ISBN: 962-201-980-3. OR: <http://mars.superlink.net/~fsu/analect1.html>

Dewey, John. (1938). *Experience and Education*. New York: MacMillan.

Freire, Paulo. (2000). *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*. Continuum. ISBN: 0826412769

Ramon Gallegos Nava. (2001). *Holistic Education: Pedagogy of Universal Love*. Bandon, VT: Psychology Press. ISBN: 1-885580-10-X.

* Additional readings will be provided by the instructor.

III. METHODS AND FORMAT

This course will be based on a combination of lecture, discussions and small group activities focused on response to course reading materials. In general, the professor will provide an introductory lecture on each topic and the readings. This will be followed by discussions or small group activities designed to solidify and expand our grasp of the central concepts and arguments of the readings and their application to our lives as educators. Throughout the course you will be encouraged to apply the ideas of the course to your own concerns, lives and aspirations.

ASSIGNMENTS AND GRADING

1. Participation	20%
2. Summaries and Critiques	20%
3. Book Review	20%
4. Final paper	40%

All grades assigned will reflect the Department Grading Guidelines.

DESCRIPTION OF ASSIGNMENTS

1. Participation and attendance (20%)

Students are expected to attend each class. Moreover, physical presence is only one requirement for achieving the full grade for class participation. Nor is participation only a matter of speaking in class. It involves listening to others carefully and attentively, following the discussion, and participation in class activities.

2. Summaries/Critiques (20%)

Write a 2-3 page summaries/critiques of the main ideas of the readings of each class. Raise questions that relate the source to an educational issue and/or reflect on your personal thoughts and feelings about the educational ideologies. Students are to hand in the summaries after each class and the summaries will be placed in file for final evaluation at the end of the semester.

3. Book Review (20%)

Write a book review or a review on 3-4 articles and present it to the class. You can find a work that focuses on current educational reform, or one discussing a certain philosophy or one that reflects on philosophical issues. Summarize and synthesize the most important ideas in the book, and critique the merits and weakness of the book in terms of substance and writing. 3-4 pages. Students should follow the review pattern used by reputable scholarly journals, giving the full bibliographic details of the authors' name, title and subtitle of the book, place and date of publication, publisher, number of pages. **Due: Nov. 15.**

4. Final Paper (40%)

Write a research paper on a topic appropriate to the subject matter of the course. It should be clearly written and well-organized. Students can choose forms of writing that most suit their topic and most inspire them. Details will be discussed in class. 12-15 pages. Double-spaced. **Paper is due Dec. 13.**

HONOR CODE

All students are expected to abide by the code of academic integrity throughout this course. Academic dishonesty, including cheating, fabrication, and plagiarism will not be tolerated and will be reported to the Student Honor Council. The full text of the code is available on the web at: http://www.inform.umd.edu/CampusInfo/Departments/JPO/code_acinteg.html.

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

A student with a documented disability or any other special needs who wishes to discuss academic accommodations should contact the instructor as soon as possible.

RELIGIOUS OBSERVANCES

Students will not be penalized because of observances of their religious beliefs. Whenever possible, students will be given reasonable time to make up any academic assignment that is missed due to participation in a religious observance. It is the student's responsibility to inform the instructor of any intended absences for religious observances in advance. Notice should be provided as soon as possible, but no later than the end of the schedule adjustment period. Prior notification is especially important in connection with final examinations, since failure to reschedule a final examination before the conclusion of the final examination period may result in loss of credits during the semester.

SCHEDULE FOR READINGS AND CLASS DISCUSSIONS

- Sept 6** **Introduction**
- Sept 13** **Idealism and Education**
Ozmon and Craver, Chapter 1
Cooney et al., Chapter 1-2.
- Sept 20** **Realism, Behaviorism and Education**
Ozmon and Craver, Chapters 2 & 6
Cooney et al., Chapter 4. 13, 14, 15.
- Sept 27** **World Religions and Philosophy: Christianity, Islamic Religion, Buddhism and Hinduism**
Ozmon and Craver, Chapter 3
Mitchell, Stephen. (2000). *Bhagavad Gita*. New York: Harmony Books.
The Diamond Sutra: <http://www.ship.edu/~cgboeree/diamondsutra.html>
- Oct. 4** **Eastern Philosophy and Education: Taoism, Confucianism**
Lao Tsu: *Tao Te Ching*
Lau. *Confucius: The Analects*.
Cooney et al., Chapter 3.
- Oct. 11** **Pragmatism and Education**
Ozmon and Craver, Chapter 4;
John Dewey: *Experience and Education*
Cooney et al., Chapter 5, 6, 7, 8, 10, 11.
- Oct. 18** **Reconstructionism, Marxism, and Education**
Ozmon and Craver, Chapter 5 and 9.
Freire. *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*.
Cooney et al., Chapter 9.
- Oct 25** **Existentialism, Phenomenology and Analytic Philosophy**
Ozmon and Craver, Chapter 7, 8

Van Manen, M. (1990). *Researching lived experience: Human science for an action sensitive pedagogy*. State University of New York. Pp.

Wittgenstein: Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus:
<http://www.kfs.org/~jonathan/witt/ten.html>

Nov 1 **No class, professor in conference**

Nov. 8 **Presentation of book reviews (Book review due on Nov. 15)**
Nov. 15:

Nov. 22 **Postmodernism and feminism**

Ozmon and Craver, Chapter 10.

“The postmodern mind.” From Tarnas, Richard (1991). *The passion of the Western mind*. New York: Ballantine, pp. 395-413.

Martin, Jane R. (1981). Sophie and Emile: A case study of sex bias in the history of educational thought. *Harvard Educational Review*, 51:3, pp. 357-372.

Greene, Maxine. “Sex equity as a philosophical problem.”

Witt, Charlotte> (1996). How feminism is re-writing the philosophical canon.
Http: www.uh.edu/~cfreelan/SWIP/Witt.html.

Nov. 29 **Education for the Future**

Nava. *Holistic Education: Pedagogy of Universal Love*.
Cooney et al., Chapter 12.

Dec. 6 **Presentation of Final Papers**