



SYLLABUS

PHIL 407: PHILOSOPHY OF EDUCATION

WINTER 2018, 4 CREDITS, JANUARY 9 - MARCH 15

CRN: 22141

INSTRUCTOR INFORMATION

Name: [David E. Meens, Ph.D.](#)

Office Location: Susan Campbell Hall, Room 247

Office hours: Tuesdays and Thursdays by appointment

You can reach me at 970-640-6180 or at dmeens@uoregon.edu

COURSE INFORMATION

This course introduces students to philosophical issues of education and schooling. The course explores the major philosophical contributions to educational practice in the Western intellectual tradition, particularly within the United States. We will examine questions of the function and purposes of schooling, diversity and equity, and contemporary issues of educational policy and practice. Along with surveying major historical contributions and perennial questions, we will consider the relationship of educational to democratic theory, and questions of practical ethics related to teaching and learning.

LEARNING GOALS

We will build on the following 5 primary learning goals throughout the term:

1. To introduce students to the educational thought of influential philosophers and related “schools” in the “Western”/Euro-American tradition
2. To examine arguments regarding the nature of education and the purposes of schools within society, especially concerning the relationship between democracy and education.
3. To discuss the issues of equity and inequity in education, and to examine the relationship between educational opportunity and categories of social difference

4. To articulate and defend one's own well-considered views on key contemporary issues in educational policy and practice, especially on ethical questions related to teaching and learning/the life of the classroom and matters of policy that create and shape such contexts

TEXTBOOKS AND MATERIALS

Noddings, N. (2012, 3rd edition). *Philosophy of Education*. Boulder, CO: Westview Press.

Levinson, M., & Fay, J. (2016). *Dilemmas of Educational Ethics: Cases and Commentaries*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard Education Press.

Other materials required (articles, book excerpts, films) will be available in digital format on Canvas. Some of these are drawn from key texts that you may already own. If not, you may consider purchasing these for your personal library:

Dewey, J. (1997). *Democracy in Education: An Introduction to the Philosophy of Education*. Free Press.

Freire, P. (2000). *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (30th Anniversary edition). New York: Continuum Publishing Company.

Gutmann, A. (1997). *Democratic Education* (2nd edition). Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Plato (2016). *The Republic*. Trans. Allan Bloom. New York: Basic Books.

Rousseau, J.-J. (1979) *Emile, or On Education*. Trans. Allan Bloom. New York: Basic Books.

ASSIGNMENTS

All written assignments are to be submitted electronically via Canvas. They should be formatted as follows:

- Microsoft Word document (.doc or .docx format)
- Times New Roman, 12-point font, 2.0 spacing
- 1" margins (check your specs under "layout" or "format -> paragraph")
- APA, MLA, or Chicago format (consistency is the key)
- Free of mechanical/grammatical errors
- Provide references
- Name file: your last name_ the name of the assignment.
For instance: Jones_EthicalCaseCommentary.doc

PARTICIPATION (1 POINT PER CLASS = 2 PER WEEK = 20 POINTS TOTAL)

This assignment connects to all of our learning goals. The class is designed as a participatory learning experience. It is often said of an educational experience that you get out what you put in; less often noted is the fact that our learning benefits in proportion to the efforts of our classmates as well as our own. Some will be more comfortable speaking aloud in our medium- to large-sized group, others may prefer small group discussion, or reflection and analysis through individual writing exercises. Nevertheless, your authentic engagement is an essential contribution to the quality of your colleagues/fellow learners' learning as well as your own.

Accordingly, we will work together to develop a classroom community and environment that allows everyone to participate fully. Everyone will begin the semester with the full 20 points; points will be deducted for behavior that persistently and significantly undermines full participation of oneself or others. You will be informed in the instance that a behavior leads to a deduction of one or more points.

ANALYSIS & POSITION PAPERS (50 POINTS)

This assignment connects especially to learning goals 2, 3 and 4. It has two parts:

1. Initial Analysis Paper: The Believing/Doubting Game (20 points). This shorter paper (3-5 pages) is due by 11:59 PM on Monday, February 5. In it, you should analyze one or more of the major traditions in Euro-American philosophy of education (Elitist/Technocratic Rationalism; Romantic Naturalism; Democratic Pragmatism; Critical Transformationism; Feminist Care Theory), drawing upon what Peter Elbow terms the "Believing" and "Doubting Games."
2. Final Analysis and Position Paper (30 points). This longer paper (6-10 pages) is due by 11:59 PM on Monday, March 18. In it, you should articulate a summarizes the learning and growth that you have achieved during the semester, building upon your Initial Analysis Paper and your Ethical Case Commentary.

ETHICAL CASE COMMENTARY (30 POINTS)

This assignment connects especially to learning goals 3 and 4.

It requires that you write one brief (2-3 page) commentary on an case involving a dilemma of education practice or policy. These commentaries, modeled after the ones we will read in class, offer a thoughtful response to the dilemma posed in a case, drawn from class, news media sources, or your own experience. Your response should focus and clarify some of the central issues of the question, as you understand them, and develop a response to the dilemma that draws on reason and evidence. How would you respond, and according to what principles, aims or ideals?

COURSE CALENDAR

WEEK 1: COURSE INTRODUCTION

TUESDAY, JANUARY 9: WHAT IS EDUCATION? OUR SUBJECT MATTER

Read (in class): Burger and Levison, "Stolen Trust, Abbreviated"

THURSDAY, JANUARY 11: WHAT IS PHILOSOPHY? OUR METHOD

Read (before class): ["The Unintended Consequences of Taking a Hard Line on School Discipline"](#) (*New York Times*; video embedded at top of the story); Kailey Burger and Meira Levinson, ["Stolen Trust: Cell Phone Theft in a Zero-Tolerance High School"](#) and [six commentaries](#) (pages 73-105; pick two of the six commentaries); Elbow, [Writing without Teachers](#), Appendix Essay (pages 145-190)

WEEK 2: PLATO'S ELITIST/TECHNOCRATIC RATIONALISM

TUESDAY, JANUARY 16: PLATO ON THE STATE AND EDUCATION

Read (before class): Noddings, [Philosophy of Education, Chapter 1](#) (excerpt, pages 4-14); Plato, *The Republic*, books II ([PDF](#)), III ([PDF](#)) and IV ([PDF](#))

Assignment due: [First Meeting Reflection Questions](#)

THURSDAY, JANUARY 18: PLATO'S CRITIQUE OF DEMOCRACY

Read (before class): Gutmann, [Democratic Education, Chapter 1](#) (pages 19-47); Plato, *The Republic*, books V ([PDF](#)), VI ([PDF](#)) and VII ([PDF](#))

WEEK 3: ROUSSEAU'S ROMANTIC NATURALISM

TUESDAY, JANUARY 23

Read (before class): Noddings, Chapter 1 (excerpts, pages 14-22); Rousseau, [Emile, Book I](#) (excerpts, pages 37-48) and [Book II](#) (excerpts, pages 77-101)

THURSDAY, JANUARY 25

Read (before class) Neuhouser, "Jean-Jacques Rousseau and the origins of autonomy" (pages 478-493); Shuffelton, "Rousseau's imaginary friend: Childhood, play, and

suspicion of the imagination in *Emile*. (pages 305-321; Louv, *Last Child In the Woods* (pages 1-14)

WEEK 4: DEWEY'S DEMOCRATIC PRAGMATISM

TUESDAY, JANUARY 30

Read (before class): Noddings, Chapter 2 (pages 23-40); Dewey, *School and Society*

View (in class): *School, Episode 2: As American as Public School* (excerpts)

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 1

Read (before class): Dewey, *Education and Experience*; Gutmann, [Democratic Education, Introduction](#) (pages 3-18); Jaggard, "Democratic Education"

Assignment due: Paper #1: Believing/Doubting Game. Submit via Canvas by 11:59 PM on Monday, February 5.

WEEK 5: SO WHAT? INTERLUDE

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 6: ETHICAL ISSUES IN THE CLASSROOM

Read (before class): Levinson et al., chapters TBD

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 8: POLITICAL ISSUES IN THE CLASSROOM

Read (before class): Hess & McAvoy, *The political classroom: Evidence and ethics in democratic education*, chapters 1-5 (pages 1-108); McAvoy & Hess, Classroom deliberation in an era of political polarization (pages 14-47)

WEEK 6: FREIRE'S CRITICAL TRANSFORMATIONISM

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 13

Read (before class): Freire, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, Chapters TBD; Noddings, Chapter 4 (pages 58-77)

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 15

Read (before class): Freire, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, Chapters TBD

View (before class): *Precious Knowledge*

WEEK 7: NODDINGS' FEMINIST CARE THEORY

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 20

Read (before class): TBD

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 22

Read (before class): Sadker, Sadker and Zittleman, [Still Failing at Fairness, Ch. 1](#) (pages 5-28); Friend, "Choices, not Closets: Heterosexism and Homophobia in Schools" (S&SR, pp. 432-450)

WEEK 8: ISSUES IN POLICY AND PRACTICE - EDUCATION AS A PUBLIC VS. PRIVATE GOOD

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 27

Required readings: Berliner, Glass & Associates, [50 Myths and Lies that Threaten America's Public Schools: The Real Crisis in Education, Ch. 1](#) (pages 1-9); Labaree, ["Public Goods, Private Goods: The American Struggle Over Educational Goals"](#) (pay attention especially to pp. 39-59 and 70-74, but read the entire article)

THURSDAY, MARCH 1

Required readings: [Charter Schools: Last Week Tonight with John Oliver \(HBO\)](#); additional readings TBD

Assignment due: Ethical Case Commentary, by 11:59 PM on Monday, March 5 via Canvas

WEEK 9: ISSUES IN POLICY AND PRACTICE - EQUALITY OF EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITY

TUESDAY, MARCH 6

Required readings: Ken Howe, ["Equality of Educational Opportunity and the Criterion of Equal Educational Worth"](#) (pages 329-337); Delpit, ["The Silenced Dialogue"](#) (pages 280-298)

THURSDAY, MARCH 8

Required readings: Kenji Yoshino, [Covering](#) (pp. ix-27); Additional readings TBD

WEEK 10: COURSE SUMMARY AND COMPLETION

TUESDAY, MARCH 13

Required readings: Collins, *Another Kind of Public Education*, Chapter 1

THURSDAY, MARCH 15

Required readings: Review

Assignment: Final Analysis Paper, Due by 11:59 PM on Monday, March 18

ADDITIONAL/BONUS READINGS

Link: [Add'l/Bonus Readings](#)

DEPARTMENT OF PHILOSOPHY AND UNIVERSITY POLICIES

DIVERSITY

It is the policy of the University of Oregon to support and value diversity. To do so requires that we:

- respect the dignity and essential worth of all individuals.
- promote a culture of respect throughout the University community.
- respect the privacy, property, and freedom of others.
- reject bigotry, discrimination, violence, or intimidation of any kind.
- practice personal and academic integrity and expect it from others.
- promote the diversity of opinions, ideas and backgrounds which is the lifeblood of the university.

DOCUMENTED DISABILITY

Appropriate accommodations will be provided for students with documented disabilities. If you have a documented disability and require accommodation, arrange to meet with the course instructor within the first two weeks of the term. The documentation of your disability must come in writing from the Accessible Education Center in the Office of Academic Advising and Student Services. Disabilities may include (but are not limited to) neurological impairment, orthopedic impairment, traumatic brain injury, visual impairment, chronic medical conditions, emotional/psychological disabilities, hearing impairment, and learning disabilities. For more information on Accessible Education Center, please see <http://aec.uoregon.edu>

MANDATORY REPORTING

UO employees, including faculty, staff, and GTFs, are mandatory reporters of child abuse and prohibited discrimination. This statement is to advise you that that your disclosure of information about child abuse or prohibited discrimination to a UO employee may trigger the UO employee's duty to report that information to the designated authorities. Please refer to the following links for detailed information about mandatory reporting:

<https://hr.uoregon.edu/policies-leaves/general-information/mandatory-reporting-child-abuse-and-neglect/presidents-message>

<http://around.uoregon.edu/mandatoryreporting>

ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT POLICY

All students are subject to the regulations stipulated in the UO Student Conduct Code (<http://conduct.uoregon.edu>). This code represents a compilation of important regulations, policies, and procedures pertaining to student life. It is intended to inform students of their rights and responsibilities during their association with this institution, and to provide general guidance for enforcing those regulations and policies essential to the educational and research missions of the University.

Additional Policy on academic honesty

Because you will be pulling together ideas and information from a range of different kinds of sources (including both popular press, the internet and scholarly journals) it is going to be very important that you summarize the main ideas in your own words, and attribute correctly any direct quotes or significant ideas from anyone else. Here is what the UO policy on academic dishonesty has to say about plagiarism on the Teaching Effectiveness Program's website:

"Plagiarism is the inclusion of someone else's product, words, ideas, or data as one's own work. When a student submits work for credit that includes the product, words, ideas, or data of others, the source must be acknowledged by the use of complete, accurate, and specific references, such as footnotes. Expectations may vary slightly by discipline. By placing one's name on work submitted for credit, the student certifies the originality of all work not otherwise identified by appropriate acknowledgements. On written assignments, if verbatim statements are included, the statements must be enclosed by quotation marks or set off from regular text as indented extracts.

A student will avoid being charged with plagiarism if there is an acknowledgement of indebtedness. Indebtedness must be acknowledged whenever:

1. One quotes another person's actual words or replicates all or part of another's product;
2. One uses another person's ideas, opinions, work, data, or theories, even if they are completely paraphrased in one's own words;
3. One borrows facts, statistics, or other illustrative materials--unless the information is common knowledge.

Unauthorized collaboration with others on papers or projects can inadvertently lead to a charge of plagiarism. If in doubt, consult the instructor or seek assistance from the staff of the Teaching and Learning Center (68 PLC, 346-3226). In addition, it is plagiarism to submit as your own any academic exercise (for example, written work, printing, computer program, art or design work, musical composition, and choreography) prepared totally or in part by another. Plagiarism also includes submitting work in which portions were substantially produced by someone acting as a tutor or editor.

CONFLICT RESOLUTION

Several options, both informal and formal, are available to resolve conflicts for students who believe they have been subjected to or have witnessed bias, unfairness, or other improper treatment.

It is important to exhaust the administrative remedies available to you including discussing the conflict with the specific individual, contacting the Department Head.

- Outside the Department, you can contact:
- **UO Bias Response Team: 346-1139** or <http://bias.uoregon.edu/whatbrt.htm>
- **Conflict Resolution Services 346 -0617** or <http://studentlife.uoregon.edu/SupportandEducation/ConflictResolutionServices/tabid/134/Default.aspx>
- **Affirmative action and Equal Opportunity: 346-3123** or <http://aaeo.uoregon.edu/>

IN CASE OF INCLEMENT WEATHER

In the event the University operates on a curtailed schedule or closes, UO media relations will notify the Eugene-Springfield area radio and television stations as quickly as possible. In addition, a notice regarding the university's schedule will be posted on the UO main home page (in the "News" section) at <http://www.uoregon.edu>. Additional information is available at <http://hr.uoregon.edu/policy/weather.html>.

If an individual class must be canceled due to inclement weather, illness, or other reason, a notice will be posted on Blackboard or via email. During periods of inclement weather, please check Blackboard

and your email rather than contact department personnel. Due to unsafe travel conditions, departmental staff may be limited and unable to handle the volume of calls from you and others.