

ELPS 302 --- Philosophy of Education
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Course Description

This course satisfies either of two requirements in Loyola's core curriculum: Knowledge Area – Philosophical Knowledge; Values Area – Understanding Diversity in the United States or the World.

Why do this course in Rome? Basically, the activity of philosophy is the attempt to deepen our understanding by reflecting on those things that are closest to us, which for this course are the experiences of teaching, learning, and being schooled. We do not, though, have to start this reflection without any help whatever. Others have thought about what happens in teaching or how it is that people can learn or how an individual is changed through being schooled. In fact, our cultural past includes beliefs about human excellence, the fundamental values of life, and how the interests of an individual respond to or come in conflict with the interests of the community. These past beliefs are recorded in many ways, certainly in the writings of important philosophers such as Plato, Aristotle, and Rousseau, but also in the way people have arranged their lives and built public monuments. Embedded, for example, in the Roman Colosseum and the games which took place there are beliefs about how life is lived and how death should be experienced. Rome is filled with places such as this where the beliefs and values of our cultural past are made visible in the artifacts of the past that endure into the present. What does it mean to teach, learn, and be schooled in Western culture? Through a careful examination of Rome, the cultural context of that question can be discerned. That cultural past certainly does not completely determine the way we answer this question, but it does provide material from which we shape our answer.

There is another reason why this course is enhanced by taking it in Rome. Schooling influences our personal identity, either by supporting its particularity or absorbing it into some larger group. Diversity, then, is either promoted or diminished by schooling. Through its history, Rome has been two things at the same time, a place where many types of people lived as “foreigners” and a place where many different peoples learned to share common beliefs. Rome, in that sense, can be considered a crucible for the centuries-long interplay between the values of diversity and those of universalism.

Course Methodology

The course is taught in two different settings: a classroom at the Loyola's Rome Center and at sites in the city of Rome. For the work in the classroom, passages will assigned from the writings of philosophers who have provided particularly important discussions of the questions surrounding the activities of teaching, learning, and schooling. Rome, on the other hand, serves as a magnificent visual aid for discovering the qualities of the Western mind as those are disclosed in the Eternal City's art, architecture, monuments, and public spaces. The course, then, uses two texts, one that is purchased and the other which we learn to read by walking through Rome.

Course Requirements

Students will be expected to:

Prepare in advance the readings assigned for classes conducted at the Rome Center.

Participate in discussions both in classes conducted at the Rome Center and those conducted on site in Rome.

Keep a reflective journal in which assigned readings, site visits, and cultural experiences are discussed.

Prepare a commentary on assigned paragraphs from *The Handbook* by Epictetus.

Required Textbooks

Madonna M. Murphy, *The History and Philosophy of Education*, Pearson Prentice Hall, 2006
Epictetus, *The Handbook*

Grading Policy

The final grade will be computed in the following way:

Reflective journal	70%
Participation in class discussions	20%
Commentary on Epictetus	10%

Tentative Class Schedule

Day	Time	Location	Topics	Assigned Reading
Monday May 19	1:30 – 2:30 PM	Rome Center	Introduction to philosophy of education and the study of Rome.	
	3:00 – 6:30 PM	Roman Forum	Schooling and the fundamental values of society.	
Tuesday May 20	10:00 – 11:30 AM	Rome Center	The educational thought of Plato.	Murphy: pp. 34-37
	1:00 – 5:00 PM	Vatican Museum, Sistine Chapel	Plato and the organization of knowledge.	
Wednesday May 21	10:00 – 11:30 AM	Rome Center	The educational thought of Cicero and Quintilian.	Murphy, pp. 57-58, 62-65
	3:00 – 6:00 PM	Colosseum	Spectacle and the meaning of human existence.	
Thursday May 22	10:00-11:30 AM	Rome Center	The educational thought of Augustine.	Murphy, pp. 83-85
	2:00 – 5:00 PM	Santa Sabina San Clemente	Cultural hegemony and cultural absorption.	
Friday May 23	8:30 – 11:30	St. Peter's Basilica	Significance of ones time and place.	
	1:00 PM	Reflective journals due.		
Monday May 26	10:00 – 11:30	Rome Center	The educational thought of Aristotle	Murphy, pp. 42-46
	2:00 – 6:00 PM	Campidoglio Piazza Minerva Pantheon Campo de' Fiori	Diverse contexts for human action and excellence.	
Tuesday May 27	8:30 – 11:30 AM	Trevi Fountain	Culture and the construction of meaning.	
	3:00 – 5:00 PM	Rome Center	The educational thought of Rousseau and W.E.B. Dubois	Murphy, pp. 175-177, 315-317
Wednesday May 28	2:00 – 3:30 PM	Rome Center	The educational thought of John Dewey.	Murphy, pp. 333-335
Thursday May 29	8:30 – 10:30 AM	Tiber Island	Understanding how the world really works.	
	10:30 – 12:30	Jewish Ghetto	Creating the "Other."	
	2:00 PM	Reflective journals due.		