

**ELPS 302-003**  
**Philosophy of Education**  
Spring 2011  
Mondays 7:00-9:30pm  
Dumbach Hall, Room 118

**Instructor:** Allison Blosser  
**Office Hours:** By appointment only  
**Email:** ablosser@luc.edu

**Course Description**

According to Loyola, this course is the “study of major philosophical theories about educational practice, especially as these relate to pedagogical practice, curriculum development, and the response of schools to particular individual, community, and societal interests.” More specifically, this course will introduce you to both classical and contemporary philosophies of education. We will engage questions concerning the goals of education, discipline in education, educational equality, ethical responsibilities and justice in education, methods of teaching, and who has the right to determine the content of education. We will use various philosophies to analyze contemporary educational issues and practices. The class will be primarily discussion oriented.

The outcome Loyola desires for the course is that, “the student will become adept at identifying philosophical issues embedded in current educational practice and controversies, especially as these relate to promoting the values of a democratic society, accommodating the interests of the society and particular groups within it, and the realization of social justice.” In addition, you will be able to turn a critical eye on the philosophical underpinnings of the educational policies and practices that have shaped and continue to shape your experiences as a student and potentially, as a teacher. You will be able to offer a concise and well reasoned argument supporting or refuting philosophical ideas concerning teaching, learning, and schooling. Finally, you will be able to clearly articulate and support your own philosophy of education.

**Conceptual Framework**

The School of Education’s conceptual framework, “**Professionalism in Service of Social Justice**,” guides this course as the course enables students to understand the implications of their professional decisions in terms of social justice. Additionally, the course emphasizes the following two conceptual framework standards, which will be specifically assessed in the final paper:

***CF3: Candidates demonstrate an understanding of issues of social justice and inequity.*** Through readings and class discussion, particularly those on critical pedagogy and multiculturalism, students will engage questions of equity and justice in schools. They will be able to recognize oppressive practices in schools and brainstorm

alternative practices and models that promote equity and justice. The final paper requires students to discuss the implications of their personal philosophies of education in terms of equity and justice.

**CF8: Candidates apply ethical principles in professional decision-making.**

Through course readings, class discussion, and the midterm exam, students will evaluate the ethics underlying various educational practices. For the final paper, students must ultimately decide what they believe about education and discuss the implications of their beliefs. A student may use his/her personal philosophy of education as part of a job application and/or as a tool to help him/her develop as a teacher or student.

**Required Text**

Cahn, S. M. (Ed.). (1997). *Classic and Contemporary Readings in the Philosophy of Education*. New York, NY: The McGraw-Hill Companies, Inc.

(Available at Loyola University Bookstore, Lake Shore Campus)

**Grading**

A	94-100	B+	87-89	C+	77-79	D+	67-69
A-	90-93	B	84-86	C	74-76	D	64-66
		B-	80-83	C-	70-73	F	63 and below

Participation	15%
Paper 1	15%
Midterm	20%
Paper 2	20%
Final Presentation	5%
Final Paper	25%

**Participation**

Participation does not mean simply showing up for class. Rather, participation entails actively listening, taking notes, and taking part in class discussion and activities. It also means that you come to class having carefully read the assigned texts and with **printed copies of the readings** as you will often be asked to refer to them in class. You must do the assigned reading in order to be successful in this class, as every assignment demands an understanding of the discussed philosophies. This should also be an incentive not to miss class.

Likewise, laptops should only be used for taking notes, accessing the course's Blackboard page, and occasionally (when prompted) searching the web for material related to class discussion. Activities such as checking facebook, reading email, and playing games are disrespectful to me and your classmates because they are

distracting. Texting and/or talking on your phone during class are also disrespectful actions. **Engaging in any of these activities will result in a lowered participation grade.** Break is the only appropriate time to engage in these activities.

During the week of the midterm exam, you will receive a class participation grade worth 5% of your grade. You will receive your second class participation grade, worth 10% of your grade, at the semester's end. I give more weight to the second participation grade so that you have a chance to really improve your participation after you receive your first score. Also, the activities planned for the end of the course especially require active participation in order to be successful.

### **Attendance**

I encourage students to attend every class as you will miss information critical to your midterm and assignments should you not attend. Should you need to miss class, though, know that you can miss one class or two halves of class without penalty or need of documentation. But take care not to miss the midterm exam or final presentation as there will be no opportunities to make up these assignments. Each time you come to class late or leave class early will count as missing half a class. Each absence beyond your allotted one absence (or two halves of class) will result in your **final grade being lowered four points**. The only way to avoid penalty for additional absences is to present documentation from Loyola's Office of Student Life that your absence is officially excused. When you know in advance you will be missing class, please let me know so that I can plan ahead. If you miss class, also know I will not provide you with the missed notes. You should get them from a classmate.

### **Paper Policy**

You must submit **printed copies of papers** to me at the beginning of class on the due dates specified in the syllabus (except the final paper, which should be submitted to Blackboard by 9:30pm on May 2). Papers will be considered late if they are turned in after 7:15pm. Likewise, if you do not attend class on a date a paper is due, you must email the paper to me by 7:15pm, or it will be considered late. For each day a paper is late, the paper grade will be lowered five points, up to but not exceeding 50 points on the tenth day beyond the due date and thereafter. Please note that the final paper will **not** be accepted after the due date.

In addition, papers should be double spaced, have one-inch margins, and be written in 12pt, Times New Roman Font. They should also adhere to APA format in terms of parenthetical citations and references. I encourage all students to visit Loyola's Writing Center for help with their papers. For hours and information on how to schedule an appointment, visit the Writing Center website at <http://www.luc.edu/writing/index.shtml>.

## **Technology**

You need to be able to access Blackboard and your Loyola email account for this class as these forums will be my primary means of communication with you. If you email me and do not receive a response with 48 hours, assume I did not receive your email and try resending it.

## **Diversity**

Through whole class and small group discussions, you will interact with people whose backgrounds and educational philosophies differ from your own, helping to prepare you for the diverse range of educators you will encounter as teachers and/or students. In addition, you will gain an understanding of multicultural approaches to education, which promote the recognition and appreciation of difference. We will often discuss topics that are sensitive and controversial, and there are bound to be people with whom you disagree. Therefore, it is imperative you take care to treat each other respectfully. Disrespectful language or actions toward others will not be tolerated.

## **Academic Honesty**

According to Loyola's School of Education (2010), "Academic honesty is an expression of interpersonal justice, responsibility and care, applicable to Loyola University faculty, students, and staff, which demands that the pursuit of knowledge in the university community be carried out with sincerity and integrity. A violation of academic honesty occurs when the nature or source of academic work is misrepresented. This occurs in incidents such as, but not limited to, claiming work as one's own when it is not (e.g., plagiarism and cheating on tests) and/or falsifying data." Cheating is defined as, "The possession, receipt, use or solicitation of unauthorized materials, information, notes, study aids or other devices in any academic exercise. This definition includes unauthorized communication of information before, during and after an academic exercise." And plagiarism "occurs in written work and in oral/visual presentations in which the writer presents materials as his/her own that have originated with someone else. These materials include information, data, ideas, conclusions, words, sentence structures, images, movies, sounds, and music. Neglecting to include quotation marks or accurate documentation with these materials is plagiarism as surely as knowingly copying another person's writing and submitting it as one's own." And these actions "appl[y] to all types of sources, including print sources, sources from electronic databases, from the Internet, and from other media." It is also a violation of academic integrity to turn in the same paper or portions of the same paper for two Loyola courses. All instances of academic dishonesty will be handled on a case by case basis, but the minimal consequence will be a failing grade on the assignment for which the incident occurred. If you are having trouble understanding any of the philosophies or assignments, please schedule a time to meet with me rather than turn only to the internet for interpretations. Please see the School of Education's policies on Academic Integrity if you have questions or concerns as to what constitutes dishonesty: [http://www.luc.edu/education/academics\\_policies\\_integrity.shtml](http://www.luc.edu/education/academics_policies_integrity.shtml). For additional

academic policies and procedures, please refer to:  
[http://www.luc.edu/education/academics\\_policies\\_main.shtml](http://www.luc.edu/education/academics_policies_main.shtml).

### **Accessibility**

Loyola (2010) acknowledges that, “Students who have disabilities which they believe entitle them to accommodations under the Americans with Disabilities Act should register with the Services for Students with Disabilities (SSWD) office. To request accommodations, students must schedule an appointment with an SSWD coordinator. Students should contact SSWD at least four weeks before their first semester or term at Loyola. Returning students should schedule an appointment within the first two weeks of the semester or term. The University policy on accommodations and participation in courses is available at: <http://www.luc.edu/sswd/>.” If you need any special accommodations, please follow the aforementioned steps and inform me as early in the semester as possible. I ensure that any information you share with me regarding your accommodations and disability will be held confidential.

### **Harrassment**

According to Loyola (2010),

It is unacceptable and a violation of university policy to harass, discriminate against or abuse any person because of his or her race, color, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, disability, religion, age or any other characteristic protected by applicable law. Such behavior threatens to destroy the environment of tolerance and mutual respect that must prevail for this university to fulfill its educational and health care mission. For this reason, every incident of harassment, discrimination or abuse undermines the aspirations and attacks the ideals of our community. The university qualifies these incidents as incidents of bias.

In order to uphold our mission of being Chicago's Jesuit Catholic University-- a diverse community seeking God in all things and working to expand knowledge in the service of humanity through learning, justice and faith, any incident(s) of bias must be reported and appropriately addressed. Therefore, the Bias Response (BR) Team was created to assist members of the Loyola University Chicago community in bringing incidents of bias to the attention of the university. If you believe you are subject to such bias, you should notify the Bias Response Team at this link: <http://webapps.luc.edu/biasreporting/>.

## **Schedule**

(Readings are due on the date on which they are scheduled. Also, please read all selections in the order listed.)

- January 24 Course Introduction
- January 31 Required Reading:  
Plato, *The Meno* (pp. 5-31)  
*The Virtues Project*, Explore this website:  
<http://www.virtuesproject.com/education.html>
- February 7 Required Reading:  
Plato, *The Republic* (pp. 39-63 and 84-109)
- February 14 **PAPER 1 DUE**  
Required Reading:  
Aristotle, *Nichomachean Ethics* (pp. 111-131)  
*Politics* (pp. 137-143)
- February 21 Required Reading:  
Locke, *Some Thoughts Concerning Education* (pp. 144-161)  
Kant, *Thoughts on Education* (pp. 197-222)
- February 28 **MIDTERM EXAM**
- March 7 No class meeting: Spring Break
- March 14 Required Reading:  
Rousseau, *Emile* (pp. 162-196)  
Neill, *Summerhill* (pp. 368-376)  
Goldman, *The Baby Ivies*, Available:  
<http://www.nytimes.com/2003/01/12/education/the-baby-ivies.html?scp=1&sq=baby%20ivies&st=cse>
- March 21 Required Reading:  
Dewey, *The Child and the Curriculum* (pp. 276-288)  
*Democracy and Education* (pp. 309-317)  
*Experience and Education* (pp. 330-343)
- March 28 Required Readings:  
Whitehead, *The Aims of Education and Other Essays* (pp. 261-273)  
Freire, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (pp. 460-470)  
Noddings, *Caring* (pp. 471-476)
- April 4 **PAPER 2 DUE**  
Required Reading:

Gutmann, *Democratic Education* (pp. 411-434)  
*No Notice to Parents in Diversity Classes*, Available:  
[http://www.wnd.com/news/article.asp?ARTICLE\\_ID=46514](http://www.wnd.com/news/article.asp?ARTICLE_ID=46514)  
*Teacher Reads 2<sup>nd</sup> graders Story about Gay Wedding*, Available:  
[http://www.wnd.com/news/article.asp?ARTICLE\\_ID=49813](http://www.wnd.com/news/article.asp?ARTICLE_ID=49813)  
Unruh, *Judge Orders Gay Agenda Taught to Christian Children*, Available:  
<http://www.wnd.com/?pageId=40339>  
Pavelski, *The Homeschool Movement's German Lesson*, Available:  
<http://www.american.com/archive/2010/october/the-homeschool-movements-german-lesson>

- April 11      Required Readings:  
Taylor, *The Politics of Recognition* (pp. 25- 73), Posted on Blackboard
- April 18      **DRAFT OF FINAL PAPER DUE- BRING COPY TO CLASS TO WORKSHOP**  
Required Reading:  
Searle, *Traditionalists and Their Challengers* (pp. 536-545)  
Deresiewicz, *The Disadvantages of an Elite Education*, Available:  
<http://www.theamericanscholar.org/the-disadvantages-of-an-elite-education/>
- April 25      **FINAL PRESENTATIONS**
- May 2        **FINAL PAPER DUE BY 9:30pm**  
No Class Meeting

## Assignments

### Paper 1

Due Date: February 14

Length: 2-3 pages

For this paper, you will need to select one argument made by Plato and agree or disagree with it. Think of this paper as a persuasive essay in which your goal is to convince me to accept your position on Plato's argument. The key to this paper is that you support your position. Supporting evidence may come from personal experience, your textbook, or other sources. Just be sure that all sources are properly cited. Note that excellent persuasive essays often consider the opposing position and refute it.

I will be looking to see that you understand Plato's argument, that your argument is well supported, that your argument is concise and coherent, and that the paper is grammatically sound.

## **Midterm**

Date of Exam: February 28

You will receive (via Blackboard) a study guide for the midterm at least one week before the exam.

## **Paper 2**

Due Date: April 4  
Length: 3-4 pages

For this paper, you need to watch one of the films listed below. You should select two or three scenes from the film, briefly summarize the scenes, and explain how the scenes exemplify one or more of the philosophies we've discussed. In other words, your paper should argue how the film engages various philosophies of education. Be sure to properly cite the film and philosophers in text and in your reference list. The scenes you select need not reflect philosophers' theories in their entirety— it is perfectly acceptable if you select parts of philosophers' arguments.

I will be looking to see that your film is thoughtfully analyzed and that your application of philosophies is well reasoned. The argument should also be concise (not too much summary) and coherent, and the paper should be grammatically sound.

Films:

*Freedom Writers*  
*Dangerous Minds*  
*Stand and Deliver*  
*The Emperor's Club*  
*Lean on Me*  
*Dead Poets Society*  
*Finding Forrester*  
*To Sir with Love*

## **Final Presentation**

Due Date: April 25  
Length: 5 minutes

For this presentation, you will briefly present your personal philosophy of education, being sure to note the philosophers who most influence it. Feel free to be creative with your presentation format. You may create a Power Point, worksheets, etc., but you will be limited to five minutes so that everyone has time to present.

I will be looking to see that your personal philosophy is well reasoned and the philosophers' arguments are accurately applied to your proposal. Creativity will also be taken into consideration.

### **Final Paper**

Due Date: May 2, via Blackboard

*This is a two-part final paper.*

The first part should be 5-7 pages, double spaced. This paper is your personal philosophy of education. You must refer to at least three of the philosophers whose works we read in class and discuss the implications of your personal philosophy, particularly in term of justice and equity. As with the other papers, it is perfectly acceptable that you draw from parts of philosophers' arguments.

The second part of the paper is a 1-page, single-spaced abstract of your philosophy of education that does not include direct quotations. In other words, the abstract should communicate the main points and reasoning of your longer philosophy without relying on the words of philosophers. So, the abstract may include a description of how a teacher or school might apply/actualize your philosophy. For those of you who are going to be teachers, this document should be one you could present to future employers.

This assignment incorporates two of the School of Education's Conceptual Framework Standards:

**CF3: *Candidates demonstrate an understanding of issues of social justice and inequity.*** This assignment requires students to discuss the implications of their personal philosophies of education in terms of justice and equity.

**CF8: *Candidates apply ethical principles in professional decision-making.*** For this assignment, students must ultimately decide what they believe about education and discuss the implications of their beliefs. A student may use his/her personal philosophy of education as part of a job application and/or as a tool to help him/her develop as a teacher or student.

Thus, I will be looking to see that you understand the philosophies to which you refer and that they are meaningfully applied to your personal philosophy. I will also be looking to see that you have a well-reasoned discussion of the implications of your philosophy, particularly in terms of justice and equity. Your personal philosophy should also be concise and coherent. Your abstract should adequately encapsulate the essence of your longer philosophy. Concision is particularly important in the abstract. Both pieces should be grammatically sound.