

Washburn University
Syllabus & Course of Study
ED 494 – Philosophy of Education

Fall, 2006

Dr. G. Daniel Harden
Carnegie 107

Office Hours: T-Th 9:30-10:30 a.m. and 2:15-3:00 p.m.

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(Students are encouraged to use the home phone number if there is any difficulty in making contact otherwise. No apologies are necessary.)

<http://www.washburn.edu/cas/education/dharden>

Reflection: Rational reflection is the major thrust of this course. Readings will be reflected upon both in structured papers that are required, the review/essays based on selections from the bibliography, and the personal educational *Credo* that each student will develop.

Diversity: Intellectual diversity is a major component of this class. It is required that students compare various philosophies and worldviews in terms of diverse historical and social contexts.

Technology: The class also discusses some of the intellectual implications of the digital and technological revolution from diverse perspectives, such as Neil Postman and Clifford Stohl, Walter Ong, and Marshall McLuhan.

Course description:

This seminar provides a historical and contemporary analysis of various philosophical perspectives concerning the purposes and processes of education. It traces the development of the major schools of educational thought in an effort to help students clarify their own educational thinking. The relationship between philosophical assumptions and contemporary practice will be emphasized. This approach is consistent with the *Reflective Teacher Theory Model* that has been adopted by the Washburn Department of Education. A major reason for offering this course is to help teachers better understand their own assumptions and to constantly revisit them and reflect upon them.

General Objectives:

1. To help the students understand the historical context in which educational idealism, essentialism, perennialism, Marxism and existentialism developed.
2. To understand the philosophical assumptions and reasoning fundamental to the various schools of educational thought to the extent that they can be analytically studied and compared.
3. To understand the worldview associated with each educational philosophy and draw rational contemporary educational and social implications from them as they would affect the child.
4. To explore the nature of knowledge as understood by each of the philosophical schools under study and relate them to current educational practice.
5. To understand the relationship between philosophy and ideology in today's world, and the nature of both internal and external ideological pressures in education.
6. To help each student refine his/her own thinking and philosophy of education, develop an understanding of the rational implications of that process in terms of the social and cognitive affect on children and articulate a personal educational credo.
7. To help each student examine the extent of his/her commitment to educational in light of some rationally articulated philosophy as it would relate to the social and educational development of children.

Responsibilities:

Consistent with the rationale and general objectives of this course you will be responsible for three types of assignments:

Out of class

1. Readings in assigned texts and handouts.
2. A paper, eight to ten pages in length, concerning either
 - a. A brief intellectual-philosophical biography of a noted educational thinker; or
 - b. A comparative treatment of the philosophical dimension of some current educational problem or topic.

Although this is a short paper, it is expected to be in correct form and at an appropriate intellectual level. Attention should be given to the implications of your topic as they relate to children, schools, and how children are viewed in a philosophical or sociological sense.

An opportunity will be provided for class members to give PowerPoint presentations based on their research topics.

3. Periodic short papers (2 or 3 pages) related to personal reflection over the readings or class handouts.
4. To receive a “B” in this course it is necessary to independently read one book from the course bibliography and write a review/essay of the book which will follow the general form below. To receive an “A” in the course it is necessary to do the same thing with two books. Because some of the books on the bibliography lend themselves more to such review/essays than others, you might discuss your selection with Dr. Harden.

Reviews must include:

- a. identification of major themes;
 - b. analysis of arguments and persuasive strategies; and
 - c. evaluation of overall effectiveness and utility of the book.
5. A personal credo, not to exceed three pages, which will identify basic assumptions and the outline of their application to the field of education in the contemporary world.

Classroom

1. Informal and formal lectures.
2. Participation in class discussions.
3. Short written responses to assigned readings.
4. Discussions of research projects and/or review/essays.

Evaluation (approximations only)

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| 1. Paper – biographical or comparative | 15% |
| 2. Statements of educational philosophy (credo) | 15% |
| 3. Class contributions | 20% |
| 4. Review/essays | 20% |
| 5. Short response papers | 10% |

6. Quizzes, examinations, final

20%

Texts:

Murphy, Madonna M., The History and Philosophy of Education: Voices of Educational Pioneers. Columbus: Pearson/Merrill Prentice Hall 2006.

Dewey, John. Experience & Education. New York: Touchstone, 1938.

Edmondson, Henry T. III. John Dewey and the Decline of American Education: How the partron saint of schools has corrupted teaching and learning. Wilmington: ISI Books, 2006. v

Schedule of Topics

Week

- 1 Purpose of philosophical study in education – some vocabulary, etc.
2. Education in the Early Cultures - Chapter 1
3. Education in Ancient Greece – Chapter 2 -
4. Roman Educational Contributions – Chapter 3
5. Christian Education – Chapter 4
6. Medieval Educational Contributions – Chapter 5.
7. Education in the Renaissance and the Reformation – Chapter 6
8. New Educational ideas in the Enlightenment – Chapter 7
9. Education in the New World – Chapter 8
10. Developing an American Educational System – Chapter 9
11. Traditionalism and Progressivism in Education - Dewey v. Bagley
12. The politics of traditionalism and progressivism – Gnosticism once again? George Counts and World Revolution, sort of. Eric Voegelin speaks on *The New Science of Politics*.
13. Traditionalism and Progressivism – an update on the wars.
14. Seminar Roundtable
15. Seminar Roundtable
16. Final

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