

## Introduction to the Philosophy of Education

Yale Summer Session 2016

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Office Hours: TBD

### Course Description

This course explores three areas that are central to the Philosophy of Education. In the first part of the course, we will investigate the *aims of education*. What is an education *for*? What are some of the challenges that individual candidate aims might pose? How do we adjudicate among competing aims? In the second part of the course, we will turn to the question of *how to educate*. What is critical thinking and how can we develop it? Should learning culminate in the acquisition of knowledge or the development of understanding? What disciplines does the well-educated person need to learn? Finally, we will address a constellation of questions related to *education, authority, and rights*. Who should have the authority to make pedagogical decisions: teachers, parents, students, the state? Do special interest groups (e.g. religious or ethnic minorities) have the right to educational exemptions (if so, under what circumstances)? These questions will be considered from both historical and contemporary perspectives, through careful readings of works by some of the field's most influential contributors (including, but not limited to, Plato, Rousseau, Dewey, Freire, and Du Bois).

### Course Goals, Assignments, and Evaluation

This course is designed to

- foster critical engagement with some of the key issues and thinkers in the Philosophy of Education;
- increase competencies in reading philosophical texts;
- increase competencies in writing philosophical texts;
- hone the skills necessary for engaging in productive philosophical discussion.

Students will develop these skills through the completion of written assignments and through participation in in-class exercises, presentations, and discussion. Graded components of the course:

- Reading and discussion responses: 3 x 10% each = 30%
- Mid-term essay: 20%
- Final essay: 30%
- Participation (including attendance, discussion, in-class exercises, and brief presentations): 20%

Because of the condensed nature of the summer session courses, attendance is mandatory. Failure to attend every seminar meeting will impact your participation grade and (ultimately) your final class grade.

### Academic Integrity

Philosophy Department Statement: The strength of the university depends on academic and personal integrity. One of the most severe violations of academic integrity is plagiarism, which is the use of someone else's work, words, or ideas as if they were your own. Thus, if you use a source for a paper, you must acknowledge it. There is no reason to hide the fact that you have relied on others, for the very idea of writing in a university is to trace your participation in a conversation of scholars. Showing how your ideas derive from and comment on the ideas of others is one of the high achievements of mature academic writing. It would be a mistake to downplay this achievement in an attempt to suggest greater originality. What counts as a source and requires citation is a delicate matter. Some things are clear. For instance, anything derived from readings (including

those found on-line), either from the syllabus or outside sources, must be cited. What is not clear is whether ideas presented in lecture, discussed in section, or derived from conversations with faculty, TFs, or other students must be cited. If you are unsure, consult with your instructor or TF. In general, it is better to err on the side of caution and cite sources too much rather than too little. Penalties for plagiarism are severe. Students caught plagiarizing can be subject to lowered or failing grades, as well as suspension or expulsion from the University. For more information, please consult Yale’s Academic Integrity Policy or the following webpage: <http://ctl.yale.edu/writing/wr-instructor-resources/addressing-academic-integrity-and-plagiarism>.

**Schedule of Readings and Assignments** (*subject to revision*)

Seminar	Topic	Readings	Assignments
1	<b>Introduction</b>	[Orientation to the field and our project]	
2	<b>Aims of education:</b> natural and social development	[1] selections from Rousseau’s <i>Emile</i> , bk. 1 [2] R.S. Peters, “Education as Socialization”	reading response: 1-2 pp.
3	<b>Aims of education:</b> political education (1)	[1] Dewey, <i>Democracy and Education</i> (chs. 8 and 9) [2] Gutmann, “Democracy and Democratic Education”	discussion response: 1-2 pp.
4	<b>Aims of education:</b> political education (2)	[1] Appiah, “Culture, Subculture, Multiculturalism” [2] Freire, <i>Pedagogy of the Oppressed</i> , chs. 1 and 2 (pedagogy as a means to liberation)	reading or discussion response: 1-2 pp.
5	<b>Aims of education:</b> moral education	[1] Noddings, ch. 8 [2] Annas, <i>Intelligent Virtue</i> (selections) [3] Curren, “Motivational Aspects of Moral Learning and Progress”	
6	<b>Stepping back:</b> synthesizing diverse aims, the practice of teaching	[1] Film: <i>Dead Poets Society</i> [2] Scheffler, “Is Education a Discipline?”	mid-term essay: 3-4 pp.
7	<b>How do we educate?</b> critical reasoning cultivating knowledge vs. cultivating understanding	[1] Passmore, “On Teaching to be Critical” [2] selections from Plato’s <i>Meno</i> [3] Elgin, “Education and the Advancement of Understanding”	

8	<b>How do we educate?</b> curriculum decisions	[1] Aristotle, <i>Politics</i> , chs. 7 and 8 [2] Du Bois, <i>The Souls of Black Folk</i> , chs. 3 and 6	[final essay workshops]
9	<b>Education, authority, and rights:</b> experts and pedagogical decisions	[1] Strike, “Is Teaching a Profession?” [2] Reich, “Educational Authority and the Interests of Children”	[final essay workshops]
10	<b>Education, authority, and rights:</b> education and group rights	[1] Halstead, “Schooling and Cultural Maintenance for Religious Minorities in the Liberal State” [2] Okin, “‘Mistresses of their own Destiny’: Group Rights, Gender, and Realistic Rights of Exit”	final essay: 6-7 pp.