COURSE SYLLABUS

Division: Theoretical and Behavioral Foundations

Program Area: Educational History and Philosophy

Course Number: EHP7600

Course Title: Philosophy of Education

Section Number: 001 (#15424)

Term/Year: Fall 2017

Course Location 0068 MANO

Day: Tuesday    Time: 4:30-6:10

Course Credits: 2 credit Hours

Instructor: Dr. Monte Piliawsky.

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Office Hours: 4:00-5:15 Monday; 3:00-4:15 Tuesday; 3:30-4:45 Wednesday. My secretary, Lei Juan Stewart-Walker, can be reached at 313-577-1613 or ab2628@wayne.edu.

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To know what we want in education, we must know what we want in general, we must derive our theory of education from our philosophy of life.
--T.S. Eliot

Education, then, beyond all other devices of human origin, is the great equalizer of the conditions of men, the balance-wheel of the social machine...[I] t prevents being poor.
--Horace Mann

The schools as presently constituted serve the interests of a society content to define education as a means of indoctrination and a way of teaching people to know their place. We have one set of schools for the children of the elite, another for the children less fortunately born....Serious reform of the public schools would beg too many questions about racial prejudices and the class system, the division of the nation's spoils.
--Lewis Lapham

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

The purpose of this course is to examine the historical development and practice of major philosophies of American education, from 1800 to the present. The assigned readings and personal reflections will help you to amplify your own educational philosophy as a guide to becoming an effective teacher and an active citizen, well-informed to evaluate contemporary educational issues.

COURSE OBJECTIVES:

1. The course focuses on educational philosophy. Should the fundamental purpose of education be vocational—to make a living, or liberal arts—the art of living? Each person holds some sort of educational philosophy, which, as the above epigram by T.S. Eliot suggests, usually reflects an underlying personal philosophy or set of values and attitudes. We derive our values and attitudes, in turn, from the agents of socialization. The major socializing forces that mold our values are family, school, church, peers, and the media.

Clearly, the educational system exerts enormous influence in both (1) molding the social and political values of each new generation of students, and (2) channeling the country's youth into a finely graded occupational system. In short, schools play a major role in determining what people think and what they do, the nature of their jobs and the quality of their life.

2. A basic organizing principle for this course is the ongoing conflict between private goals (individual liberty) and public goals (social control and sorting) for education. Private citizens view education and the concomitant development of their intellectual skills and a conduit for achieving liberty, self-reliance, and upward mobility. The above Horace Mann epigram expresses this approach to life which may be viewed as a liberal philosophy, with the goal of liberating individuals to achieve their maximum human potential.

However, government—state legislatures and local school boards—determine the actual practice of public education. Government may be controlled by business elites who possess a
distinctly different agenda for education than does the citizenry. Preferring an educational system that produces docile and obedient workers, corporate leaders may view schooling as a process to maintain and legitimize the status quo of the social order. This perspective, expressed in the above epigram by Lapham, may be viewed as a conservative philosophy.

American public schools remain, the phrase of historian David Nasaw, "contested" institutions, with citizens and the corporate sector attempting to influence educational policy. This philosophical and political struggle determines whether education promotes EQUALITY OF OPPORTUNITY through democratic empowerment of individuals or, instead, REPRODUCES EXISTING SOCIAL CLASS DIVISIONS.

3. In order to understand the contemporary political struggle for control of America's educational institutions, we will study the historical development of U.S. public schools, from the colonial period to the present-day. This history will show that the current battles reflect similar past conflicts.

Take the example of today's so-called "culture wars" about Eurocentric education versus multiculturalism. The nineteenth-century development of public schools was intended to ensure the domination of Anglo-American values which were being challenged by German and Irish immigration and subsequently by Native-Americans, and African-Americans. Similarly, in the twentieth century, the culture wars have been characterized by the Americanization program in the early part of the century, the civil rights movements in mid-century, and multiculturalism and the bilingual education versus English Language Only battles of today.

In studying educational pedagogy, we will discover a series of struggles between TRADITIONALISTS like Noah Webster, Joseph Lancaster, William James, G. Stanley Hall, Edward Thorndike, B.F. Skinner, and their PROGRESSIVE counterparts, including Jean-Jacques Rousseau, Johann Pestalozzi, Friedrich Froebel, John Dewey, Jean Piaget, A.S. Neil, and Paulo Freire.

These philosophical differences are played out in today's public policy debates between supporters of the ascendant CONSERVATIVE agenda--accountability, high-stakes testing, standardized curriculum aligned to tests, and "choice" such as charter schools and vouchers--versus the PROGRESSIVE dissenters who favor whole language, authentic assessment, multiculturalism, individualized instruction, and maintaining the financial support for public schools.

4. We will examine the current educational system in the U.S., focusing on whether it provides equal educational opportunity or reproduces existing social and economic inequalities. As a result of this study, students will better able to formulate their own informed educational philosophies as a guide to assessing the current wave of educational "reform."
REQUIRED READING:

The two required textbooks for the course are:


CLASS POLICY:

Attendance Policy: Attendance at all classes is expected. Attendance includes punctuality, arriving at the start of class. Note: There is no class during the Spring break, March 13-March 18.

Timeliness in submitting Assignments: Course requirements must be submitted on the date stipulated in this syllabus. Late submissions will result in a grade deduction.

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Standards for Written Assignment: Papers must be double-spaced and be typewritten or computer-printed.

Class Participation: I encourage an open class in which students actively participate in dialogue.

Reading Assignments: Students are responsible for completing all reading assignments. Obviously, you will benefit a great deal more from lectures, as well as contribute more positively to class discussions, by reading assignments in advance of the appropriate class meeting.

PLAGIARISM

Plagiarism includes copying material (any more than 5 consecutive words) from outside texts or presenting outside information as if it were your own by not crediting authors through citations. It can be deliberate or unintentional. If you’re in doubt about the use of a source, cite it. Students caught plagiarizing information from other sources will receive a failing grade in the course. University policy states that students can be subject to multiple sanctions, from reprimand to expulsion as a consequence of academic dishonesty. To enforce this policy, all outside references must be submitted with assignments.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS:
The criteria for your final grade are:

1. Paper on Nasaw book Schooled to Order 45%
2. Paper on Kozol book Savage Inequalities 45%
3. Class participation 10%

NOTE: Students enrolled in the class for 3 hours of credits will also be required to submit a third paper on the educational philosophy of a major thinker who has influenced the course of American education. A sheet detailing the guidelines for writing this paper will be provided.

ASSIGNMENT ONE

Students will write a paper analyzing David Nasaw's book, Schooled to Order.

A. The paper is due on Tuesday, October 31, 2017.

B. The paper should be 6 pages or about 1,500 words in length.

C. The paper should contain the following three elements:

1. An examination of the major themes of the book. One approach is to view the three historical periods covered in the book that correspond to the common (elementary) school, high school, and public college development. Another framework might be the political, social, and economic functions of schools referenced below in item 3.

2. A critique or critical analysis of the book. This is an essential part of your assignment. What are the strengths and weaknesses of Schooled to Order? You might consider whether Nasaw's conclusions are exaggerated or valid and whether he presents sufficient evidence? Is the book's writing style effective or manipulative?

3. BRIEFLY discuss your own formal education to the present. Indicate if your education in elementary, high school, and college resembles Nasaw and Spring's explicit model, that the purposes of schooling are political (to maintain political stability), social (to reduce the tensions resulting from economic inequality), and economic (to sort out by social class for a future occupation).

ASSIGNMENT TWO

Students will write a paper analyzing Jonathan Kozol's book Savage Inequalities.

A. The paper is due on Tuesday, December 5, 2017.

B. The paper should be 6 pages or about 1,500 words in length.

C. The paper should contain the following four elements:
1. An examination of the major themes of the book.

2. A critique or critical analysis of the book. This is the single most important part of your assignment. Here you should investigate the strengths and weaknesses of Savage Inequalities. Some issues you might address are: Is the book's methodology sound or of questionable validity? Is the analysis of conditions in American schools accurate or exaggerated? Is Kozol's proposed solution of equal finding politically feasible and workable, or would it result in unacceptably low caps on what can be spent on public education? Is the book's writing style effective of manipulative?

3. Discuss BRIEFLY your own pre-college education. Indicate how your education more closely resembled Kozol's inner city or suburban model of schooling.

4. What specific proposals in terms of government policy would you recommend to rectify the Savage Equalities in public schools that Kozol describes?

COURSE OUTLINE AND READING ASSIGNMENTS:

1. An Overview of the History and Philosophy of American Education


Bernie Sanders, "Nation Can't Let Middle Class Fall" Detroit Free Press, September 10, 2003, p. 13A.


School

Nasaw, Schooled to Order, pp 3-84.

3. The High School Movement: Sorting and Social Control

Nasaw, pp. 87-158.

4. Education and National Policy: The Cold War and Higher Education


5. The Condition of Public Education in the New Millennium: External Social Factors


6. Education and Government Policies: The Consequences of Unequal Funding and Institutional Racism

Kozol, pp. 40-132.

7. Where Do We Go From Here? Toward Equal Educational Opportunity

Kozol, pp. 133-233


ENROLLMENT/WITHDRAWAL POLICY:

Beginning in Fall 2011, students must add classes no later than the end of the first week of classes. This includes online classes. Students may continue to drop classes (with full tuition cancellation) through the first two weeks of the term.

Students who withdraw from a course after the end of the 4th week of class will receive a grade of WP, WF, or WN.

WP will be awarded if the student is passing the course (based on work due to date) at the time the withdrawal is requested.

WF will be awarded if the student is failing the course (based on the work to date) at the time the withdrawal is requested.

WN will be awarded if no materials have been submitted, and so there is no basis for a grade.
Students must submit their withdrawal request on-line through Pipeline. The faculty member must approve the withdrawal request before it becomes final, and students should continue to attend class until they receive notification via email that the withdrawal has been approved. Beginning in Fall 2011, the last day to withdraw will be at the end of the 10th full week of classes. The withdrawal date for courses longer or shorter than the full 15-week terms will be adjusted proportionately.

Students are sent two communications each semester regarding course withdrawals and deadlines for withdrawing. The medical withdrawal process can be initiated for up to three months following the end of a term, and is not impacted by this change in withdrawal deadline. Exceptions for other reasons would be considered only when circumstances beyond a student’s control affect ability to complete course requirements, and occur after the end of the withdrawal period and prior to the beginning of the final examination period. In no case will a late withdrawal be approved after a student has taken the final exam, or received a final grade in the class. The appropriate remedy for a poor grade is normally to repeat the course. If questions exist about exceptions for course withdrawal after the deadline, please consult with the Office of the Registrar prior to advising a student to seek an exception.

ATTENTION STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES:

If you have a documented disability that requires accommodations, you will need to register with Student Disability Services (SDS) for coordination of your academic accommodations. The Student Disability Services (SDS) office is located at 1600 David Adamany Undergraduate Library in the Student Academic Success Services department. SDS telephone number is 313-577-1851 or 313-577-3365 (TDD only). Student Disability Services’ mission is to assist the university in increasing an accessible community where students with disabilities have an equal opportunity to fully participate in their educational experience at Wayne State University.

RELIGIOUS OBSERVANCE POLICY:

Because of the extraordinary variety of religious affiliations represented in the University student body and staff, the Wayne State University calendar makes no provisions for religious holidays. It is University policy, however, to respect the faith and religious obligations of the individual students who find that their classes or examinations involve conflicts with their religious observances. They are expected to notify their instructors well in advance so that alternate arrangements as suitable as possible may be worked out.