COURSE SYLLABUS

Division: Theoretical and Behavioral Foundations

Program Area: Educational History and Philosophy

Course Number: EHP3600

Course Title: Philosophy of Education

Section Number: 001 (#20340)

Term/Year: Winter 2015

Course Location: 123 STAT

Day: Wednesday  Time: 4:30-7:15

Office: Room 373, College of Education

Course Credits: 3 Credit Hours

Instructor: Dr. Moute Piliawsky

Mailbox Location: Third Floor, Education Building, Either TBF or AOS side

Office Hours: 3:00-4:15 Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday, or by appointment.

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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 devises 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 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 first study Jonathan Kozol's classic book, Savage Inequalities: Children in America's Schools. In arguing that public schools in the U.S. are "separate and unequal," Kozol documents the glaring discrepancies between inner-city schools and suburban schools in terms of educational resources, health and physical conditions of students, and the resulting psychological disarray experienced by urban youth.

4. An ultimate objective of this course is to explore the practice of American education to determine whether it conforms to a liberal or a conservative educational philosophy. Therefore, we will analyze contemporary educational issues, particularly so-called educational reform.
We will consider contrasting philosophical viewpoints—that is, liberal versus conservative—on current efforts to improve American education in the areas of structure, organization, governance, curriculum, instruction, assessment and accountability. These topics include constructivism, bilingual education, full inclusion, character education, desegregation computers, No Child Left Behind, vouchers, charter schools, and home schooling. We will study philosophical and historical dimensions.

5. Finally, through the study of the liberal and conservative interpretations of many contemporary educational issues, students will help to formulate their own educational philosophies.

**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.

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

**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 Kozol book Savage Inequalities 40%
2. Paper on current controversy in education 40%
3. Classroom debate 20%

**COURSE ASSIGNMENTS:** There are THREE course assignments:

**ASSIGNMENT ONE:**
Students will write a paper analyzing Jonathan Kozol’s book, Savage Inequalities.
A. The paper is due on Wednesday, March 11, 2015.
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 most important of your assignment and should be the longest part of the paper. You should investigate the strengths and weaknesses of Savage Inequalities. Some issues that you might address are: Is the book’s methodology sound or of questionable validity? Is the analysis of conditions in America’s schools accurate or exaggerated? Is Kozol’s proposed solution of equal funding 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 or manipulative?
   3. Discuss BRIEFLY your own pre-college education. Indicate how your education more closely resembled Kozol’s inner-city or suburban models of schooling.
   4. What specific proposals in terms of government policy would you recommend to rectify the Savage Inequalities in public schools that Kozol describes?

**ASSIGNMENT TWO:**

Students will write a research paper presenting BOTH SIDES, liberal and conservative, of a current controversy in education. The issue may be one discussed in class or covered in the Noll book. Other educational philosophical topics are acceptable if approved by the
instructor. Your analysis should include the following:

A. The paper is due on Wednesday, April 22, 2015.
B. The paper should be 6 pages or about 1,500 words in length.
C. The paper should contain the following three elements:
   1. Provide a brief historical background of the development of the issue.
   2. What are the pro’s and con’s relating to the issue? You should provide a detailed and critical analysis, using current information, including empirical data when available, of both positions. Try to show how the merit of the evidence is stronger on one side of the issue than the other, if possible.
   3. Offer a systematic presentation of your own views on the topic, where you stand on the issue, based on the material examined in topic 2 above.
   4. Your paper should be based on at least six research sources—articles and books. You ideally should use the APA style manual.

The following are a sample of possible topics for your paper:

   Ability Grouping
   Affirmative Action
   Afrocentric Curriculum/Ebonics
   Assertive Discipline/Character Education
   Automatic (Social) Promotion
   Bilingual Education
   Charter Schools
   Church-State Relations/Prayer Reading
   Class Size/School Size
   Constructivism
   Desegregation Remedies
   Full Inclusion/Mainstreaming
   Gender Bias in Schools
   High Stakes Assessment
   Home Schooling
   Homework
Magnet Schools
Merit Pay/Seniority
More Time in School
Multiculturalism
No Child Left Behind
Preschool
Privatization/ For Profit Schools
School Boards
School Uniforms
Sex Education
Single-Sex Schools
Social Promotion/Grade Retention
State Takeover of Public Schools
Alternative Teacher Education/Certification
Teacher Unions
Technology/Digital Divide
Tracking/Detracking
Violence Prevention/Zero Tolerance
Vouchers
Whole Language/Phonics

**ASSIGNMENT THREE:**
All students will make a short classroom presentation. The format will be a 2-person debate, with each student taking approximately 30 minutes. Students will present opposing positions (liberal versus conservative) on the same issue. These debates will take place during classes throughout the semester. You must receive permission from the instructor for your topic.

The topic of your debate may be the same as your research, so that this assignment does not represent much in the way of additional work. However, in this way, the entire class will benefit from your research in an exciting format.
COURSE OUTLINE AND READING ASSIGNMENTS:

1. An Overview of the History and Philosophy of American Education
   Peter Applebome, "Have Schools Failed? Revisionists Use Army of Statistics to Argue No,"

   David Tyack and Larry L. Cuban TINKERING toward UTOPIA: A CENTURY OF

   David Clay Johnston, "Gap between Rich and Poor Found Substantially Wider," THE NEW
   YORK TIMES, September 5, 1999, p. 16.

   September 10, 2013.

   Bernie Sanders, "Nation Can't Let Middle Class Fall " DETROIT FREE PRESS, September
   10, 2003, p. 13A.

   Robert B. Reich, “How to End the Great Recession,” THE NEW YORK TIMES, September
   2, 2010.


   3-29.

2. Current State of American Public Education
   Entire book, Jonathan Kozol, SAVAGE INEQUALITIES


3. Philosophical Foundations of Education

4. Equal Educational Opportunity


5. Education and the Corporate Agenda

6. Reform Proposals to Improve American Schools: No Child Left Behind

**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 work due 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 online 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 e-mail 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.

ATTENTION STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES:
If you have a documented disability that requires accommodation, 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). Once you have your accommodation in place, I will be glad to meet with you privately during my office hours to discuss your special needs. 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.

Please be aware that a delay in getting SDS accommodation letters for the current semester may hinder the availability or facilitation of those accommodations in a timely manner. Therefore, it is in your best interest to get your accommodation letters as early in the semester as possible.

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 are expected to notify their instructors well in advance so that alternate arrangements as suitable as possible may be worked out.