

Philosophy of Education

Phil 285 – Spring 2018

A. Glaser

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Course Meeting Times: MW 1:25PM – 2:40PM

Office Hours: MW 12:20PM – 1:20PM

Office: 206A Caldwell Hall

Required Texts:

Experience and Education, by John Dewey

Instead of Education, by John Holt

Pedagogy of the Oppressed, by Paulo Freire

Teaching to Transgress: Education as the Practice of Freedom, by bell hooks

Additional readings and materials are available through Sakai.

Course Description

Philosophy of education, of course, at the same time, *is* education. It's a course about itself, a rare opportunity to study the very system in which we, through our studies, partake. We will examine the education we receive at UNC, and education in a broader sense. What is its purpose? What ends does it aim to achieve, and in what ways does it succeed or fail at achieving these? How are schools designed, and why? And (how) could they be re-imagined to better meet contemporary needs and challenges? And what are these contemporary needs and challenges, anyway?

We will begin this class by looking at young people – as young as babies – and considering some themes that are standardly left out of K-12 education, including creativity, caring, and mindfulness. As the semester progresses, we will learn how *adultist* structures shape the education system, and we will explore a variety of radical approaches to teaching and learning. Dewey centers experience and purpose in learning, emphasizing the role of both our social and internal worlds, while Holt argues that “self-directed, purposeful, meaningful life and work” cannot take shape within the existing compulsory school system.

After spring break, we will turn to Freire and hooks who write of education as a form of liberation, of realizing our full humanity and freedom. Freire advocates a kind of radical awakening: *conscientização*, or critical consciousness. Education is a way to escape oppression and realize our power to better the world. hooks writes about Freire's impact on her own journey as a black feminist, and draws our attention to oppression based on race, class and gender. As we read these authors, we will explore and invent various educational structures and pedagogies, strategize solutions to pressing challenges within education, and examine our goals and roles within the education system.

Date	Reading (complete before class on the date listed)	Course Topics/Activities
Jan 10		Introduction to Course
Jan 15	Watch “Ella Baker & The 5th Element of Hip Hop” (video) and research Ella Baker.	No Class – MLK Day
Jan 17		TASK
Jan 22	“Babies and the Meaning of Life,” in <i>The Philosophical Baby</i> , by Gopnik	Learning Challenge Goals due through Sakai by noon
Jan 24	1) “Youth Liberation Program,” from Youth Liberation of Ann	

	Arbor, in <i>The Children's Rights Movement: Overcoming the Oppression of Young People</i> , Gross and Gross (ed.), and 2) <i>FPS</i> - You aren't required to read all of the issues, just take some time to look through them. Print out your favorite issue and bring it to class.	
Jan 29	1) "Ten Themes for Education," and 2) "On Wayfinding," by Thompson Both are on the Polynesian Voyaging Society website.	Trip to Wilson Park
Jan 31	"Moral Education," in <i>Caring: A Feminine Approach to Ethics and Moral Education</i> , by Noddings	Class Potluck Clip from <i>InnSæi</i>
Feb 5	1) "In Defense of Lecturing," by Burgan, in <i>Change</i> , and 2) "How Schools Subjugate Youth," by Friedenber, in <i>The Children's Rights Movement: Overcoming the Oppression of Young People</i> , Gross and Gross (ed.)	
Feb 7		Paper and Exam Planning
Feb 12	<i>Experience and Education</i> , Dewey	Paper and Exam Planning
Feb 14	<i>Experience and Education</i> , Dewey	
Feb 19	<i>Experience and Education</i> , Dewey	
Feb 21	<i>Experience and Education</i> , Dewey	
Feb 26	<i>Instead of Education</i> , Holt	
Feb 28	<i>Instead of Education</i> , Holt	
March 5		In-Class Movie: <i>Approaching the Elephant</i>
March 7		Term Paper due through Sakai by noon Homeschoolers of Color Group
March 12		No Class – Spring Break
March 14		No Class – Spring Break
March 19	<i>Pedagogy of the Oppressed</i> , Freire	
March 21	<i>Pedagogy of the Oppressed</i> , Freire	
March 26	<i>Pedagogy of the Oppressed</i> , Freire	UNC Board of Governors
March 28	<i>Pedagogy of the Oppressed</i> , Freire	Silent Sam Activity
April 2	<i>Pedagogy of the Oppressed</i> , Freire	DACA, School to Prison Pipeline, Queer Youth, and Modern School Segregation
April 4	<i>Pedagogy of the Oppressed</i> , Freire	Resource Fair and Strategizing Sessions
April 9	<i>Teaching to Transgress</i> , hooks	
April 11	<i>Teaching to Transgress</i> , hooks	
April 16	<i>Teaching to Transgress</i> , hooks	
April 18	<i>Teaching to Transgress</i> , hooks	
April 23		Review Day – Video Due through Sakai by noon
April 25		Video Presentations
May 3, 12:00PM	Final Exam	

Grading/Assessment

Daily Exercises and Participation 50%

A full half of your grade in this class will be based on your participation. This includes showing up for class, engaging in class activities, doing the readings, and keeping up with your growth throughout the course in a Learning Journal that I provide. Bring printed copies of required course readings and your Learning Journal to every class. Some class activities will include a written portion (please write clearly); some will not. Some will be due the day they are undertaken (such as Reading Check-Ins); some will be due at a later date. Some activities are already described in your Learning Journal. Most of these exercises will be graded on a “checkmark” basis. If you keep up with the readings and fully engage in whatever you’re asked to do, you should do very well on the participation portion of this class. I will collect Learning Journals a few times throughout the semester, sometimes without advanced notice, so please make sure you always bring them to class, and keep them up-to-date.

Because participation is so important in the course, attendance is essential. You are allowed up to two absences; your two lowest daily exercise grades will be dropped. Beyond that, absence from the class or failure to complete the daily exercises will cause your participation grade to suffer. If you are not in class the day an activity is completed or some portion of it turned in, you will not receive credit for that activity. I will not accept it at a different time.

If you miss a class, you should speak to a classmate about what you missed, and get any notes from them. If you miss an in-class activity that includes something due at a later date, you may still (in some cases) submit it on time, but you must get the assignment details from a classmate.

Video Project 20% - Youtube link due through Sakai by noon Apr 23

Next to participation, the most substantial portion of your grade this semester will be a video project. You will post a 5-minute Youtube video, in which you teach something valuable to your viewers. You should have a particular audience in mind and a clear vision for what you want them to gain from watching the video. You will adopt a particular pedagogical style, and will incorporate material from this course in the video. It should be interesting, impactful, engaging, and well done. We will watch the videos together in class on April 25 and May 3, where you will give a 2-minute introduction to your video before it is played. You will also write about the video in your Learning Journal.

Self-Directed Learning Challenge 8% - Learning Challenge Goals due through Sakai by noon Jan 22

You will take up a self-directed learning project and devote yourself to a weekly practice or study that contributes to your learning/doing it. You could learn a new musical instrument or language, take up a martial art, build a composting toilet, plant a garden, learn to rock climb, or anything else. Your challenge must be something that is new to you (not something you’ve earnestly done before), but it is up to you what you choose to do. You must participate on average at least one hour per week in your challenge. The challenge cannot be something you are assigned to do in another class.

You will keep track of your weekly progress in a Learning Journal. Grades will be based on your commitment to the experience and your personal growth over the semester. In order to assess your project, I will ask such questions as: how invested was the student in the project? How did the student grow as a result of the project? What were the goals of the project and did the student reach these goals? Was the project challenging? Meaningful? Worthwhile? Important? Was the student moved by the undertaking? Was I?

Silent, Sustained Reading (SSR) 2%

You will devote 20 minutes three times each week, or an average of one hour per week, to silent, sustained reading for pleasure. You can read anything you want, but it must be in print (i.e. not on a screen). You will keep track of your SSR in your Learning Journal.

Term Paper: 10% - Due through Sakai by noon Mar 7

This course requires a minimum of ten written pages, excluding in-class exams. Five of these pages will be completed as daily exercises. The other five will be in the form of a 5-page Term Paper. Your paper will answer the following questions: *Which valuable skills, themes, or information were missing from your K-12 education? Why and how should they be included?* We will develop the structure and grading rubric for this paper together on February 7 and 12.

Final Exam: 10% - May 3 at noon

We will plan this together on February 7 and 12.

Special Needs:

If you have special learning or accessibility needs, or have a disability, chronic medical condition, or any other reasonable cause for excessive absences, please speak to me. Accommodations are coordinated through the Accessibility Resources and Service Office. Please visit accessibility.unc.edu for more information.

Honor Code:

In every aspect of this course, you are expected to fully uphold the Carolina Honor Code, including the values of honesty and integrity. Adhering to the honor code means properly attributing credit to words and ideas that are not your own. If I suspect a violation of the Honor Code, I am required to report it to the Honor System, which means your conduct may be subject to an investigation and ultimately be referred to the Honor Court. You are expected to familiarize yourself with the Honor Code and to ask questions if anything remains unclear. You can find more information at: studentconduct.unc.edu.

Writing Center and Learning Center:

UNC provides support for your writing and learning through the Writing Center and the Learning Center. The UNC Writing Center offers face-to-face consultations, which can improve your writing on both papers and exams. Visit the Writing Center website to schedule an appointment: writingcenter.unc.edu. The UNC Learning Center can provide additional support through academic coaching, tutoring, workshops, and online resources: learningcenter.unc.edu. Taking advantage of these resources will help you succeed in this class.