

Revised: 9/18/01 – Please see revised assignment structure which appears as page 5 of this syllabus.

Syllabus for Education 790 *Fundamental Issues in Educational Studies*

Fall Term, 2001 - Section 001 - Tuesdays 1-4 - 4212 SEB

Instructor

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Description and purpose of the course

The aim of this course is to acquaint the student with a small number of theories and concepts that are especially important for the study of educational issues and problems. A secondary, though still central, aim is to assist the student in positioning himself or herself within this theoretical literature, thereby gaining a sense of where he or she stands in relation to the larger ideas and ideals that have characterized educational thought over the centuries.

Five central concepts or ideas form the base of inquiry. They are (1) the state, particularly the pluralist, democratic state; (2) liberal democracy and liberal learning; (3) the nature of knowledge and its hierarchical formation in schooling; (4) moral education; and (5) the formation of policy for the governance of education.

At the conclusion of the course, the student should be able to (1) discuss these five ideas with relative ease and fluency, (2) explore the relationships of these ideas to his or her specialty area, and (3) articulate a theoretically ground point of view on the nature of formal education in a democratic state.

Structure of the course

Class sessions are generally devoted to thorough explorations of the assigned readings, topical presentations by the instructor, and discussion of the written assignments.

Students are strongly encouraged to form study groups for the purpose of discussing the readings and laying the groundwork for the writing of the weekly hand-ins and papers. Small groups will be used in class to appraise the assigned papers.

Required texts

Hunter, James Davison. *The Death of Character*. New York: Basic Books, 2000. ISBN 0-465-03177-3 (paperback). Abbreviated **TDC**

Green, Thomas F. *The Formation of Conscience in an Age of Technology*. Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University School of Education, 1984. Abbreviated **FCA** Pamphlet to be distributed in class.

Levinson, Meira. *The Demands of Liberal Education*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1999. ISBN 0-19-829544-8 (hardcover). Abbreviated **DLE**

McDonnell, Lorraine M., P. Michael Timpane and Roger Benjamin, eds. *Rediscovering the Democratic Purposes of Education*. University Press of Kansas, 2000. ISBN 0-7006-1027-8 (paperback). Abbreviated **RDP**

Student duties and assignments

Students are expected to (1) attend all classes; (2) complete assigned readings and written work on schedule; (3) actively engage the content and ideas developed in the course, as well as engage fellow students and the instructor; (4) display respectful and thoughtful consideration for the views expressed by members of the class; and (5) comply with the University's and the profession's guidelines for sound scholarly practices.

Assigned and elected reading, weekly hand-ins and four papers constitute the "outside class" work for this course.

Reading

Assigned each week near the conclusion of each class. We will begin with **DLE** and **RDP**, then turn to by **TDC** and **FCA**, with an occasional article added by the instructor. Reading assignment for Sept. 18 is **DLE**, beginning of the book to end of chapter 2 (page 63), and **RDP**, chap. 1.

Weekly Hand-ins

The weekly hand-ins ("weeklies") describe the overarching ideas encountered in the assigned readings for the week, and include a limited number of thoughtful questions prompted by the reading. The weeklies will be graded Satisfactory or Unsatisfactory, depending upon the **clarity** of the writing and the depth of **engagement** with the ideas encountered. They are turned in to the instructor at the beginning of each class.

The weeklies should be typed, single-spaced, not more than two pages, with a wide left- or right-hand margin (the wide margin should be about 2", while the narrow margin is 1"). Place name and date *submitted* at the top right of the first page. Staple at upper left corner.

Papers

Four papers, each in the 3-5 page range, are required. The topics for these papers are:

1. Identify a key issue with which the democratic state must contend in devising systems of formal education for its children and youth, explain it, and indicate how this issue might be impacted by public and private forms of schooling.
2. How ought considerations of the nature of knowledge and morality bear on the education of the young?
3. How might the foundational concepts and ideas explored in this course bear on your specialty area or specific research interest? In answering this question, provide specific examples of how your specialty scholarship might be substantially impacted by the concepts and theories encountered in the course.

4. Take a position on one of the central ideas explored in the course, and provide a defense of that position. State the significance (importance) of resolving the issue(s) in the way you do. Describe the weaknesses and shortcomings of the position you take. Show why your position should be preferred. (Note: This assignment is a scholarly essay, such as the kind found on the back page of *Education Week*, or in such magazines as *The Economist*, *The National Review*, or *The New Republic*.)

Format: Excluding endnotes, bibliography or references cited, each paper should be between 3 and 5 double-spaced pages (750-1250 words). Allow 1" margins on three sides, and 1.5" on left or right side. Citations and references should be in APA or Chicago format. Number pages. Place name at top right of first page; begin paper on the first (top) page. Staple in upper left corner; no covers or binders. Use spell check; proofread; enter minor corrections in pen or pencil. Clarity, cogency, substance, and significance are the standards of quality

On the due dates, bring three copies (in addition to the copy you retain) of the paper to class. Two copies will be distributed to your discussion group for that paper (to be arranged by the instructor), and one copy goes to the instructor. The following week, the discussion group convenes to appraise the papers, and offer feedback for revision (written reactions to the other members of your discussion group would be appreciated). At the conclusion of the course, you select and submit two of the papers to the instructor for formal evaluation and grade.

Due dates for papers: Paper 1 due in class on October 2. Paper 2, on October 23. Paper 3, on November 13. Paper 4, on November 27. Final two papers submitted to instructor for formal evaluation on December 11.

Course grades

Course grades are determined as follows:

- 20%** for weeklies
- 30%** for each paper
- 20%** for seriousness of engagement with and contributions to the course, and for overall quality of work performed

Recommended Collateral Reading

What follows is a very limited number of books that you might want to acquire for your scholarly library or peruse in the University library, and several articles that are of considerable relevance to what we are studying in this course. This list is a very small sample of the writing on the topics that are dealt with in the course. The works cited here are accessible to the informed lay reader.

- Appiah, K. Anthony, and Amy Gutmann. *Color Conscious: The Political Morality of Race*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1996.
- Brantlinger, Ellen, Massoumeh Majd-Jabbari, and Samuel L. Guskin. "Self-interest and Liberal Educational Discourse: How Ideology Works for Middle-class Mothers." *American Educational Research Journal* 33 (1996): 571-597.
- Dahl, Robert. *On Democracy*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1998.
- Dewey, John. *Liberalism and Social Action*. Amherst, NY: Prometheus Books, 2000.
- Durkheim, Emile. *Moral Education: A Study in the Theory and Application of the Sociology of Education*. Translated by Everett K. Wilson and Herman Schnurer. New York: Free Press, 1961, 1973.
- Galston, William A. "Two Concepts of Liberalism." *Ethics* 105 (April, 1995): 516-534.
- Gless, Darryl J., and Brabrara Herrnstein Smith, eds. *The Politics of Liberal Education*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1992.
- Goodin, Robert E., and Philip Pettit, eds., *A Companion to Contemporary Political Philosophy*. Cambridge, MA: Blackwell Publishers, 1993, 1995. A very useful general reference for this course. Especially valuable are the essays in Part III, particularly those on Autonomy (Dworkin), Community (Kymlicka), Democracy (Gutmann), Discourse (Laclau), Federalism (Riker), Power (Ball), The state (Dunleavy), Toleration and fundamentalism (Macedo), and Virtue (Slote).
- Goodman, Joan F., and Howard Lesnick. *The Moral Stake in Education: Contested Premises and Practices*. New York: Longman, 2001.
- Kimball, Bruce A. *Orators and Philosophers: A History of the Idea of Liberal Education*. Expanded ed. New York: College Entrance Examination Board, 1995.
- Kimball, Bruce A. *The Condition of American Liberal Education*. Edited by Robert Orrill. New York: College Entrance Examination Board, 1995.
- Macedo, Stephen. "Liberal Civic Education and Religious Fundamentalism: The Case of God v. John Rawls?" *Ethics* 105 (April, 1995): 468-496.
- McDonough, Kevin. "Can the Liberal State Support Cultural Identity Schools?" *American Journal of Education* 106 (August, 1998): 463-499.
- Nussbaum, Martha C. *Cultivating Humanity: A Classical Defense of Reform in Liberal Education*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1997.
- Orrill, Robert, ed., *Education and Democracy: Re-imagining Liberal Learning in America*. New York: College Entrance Examination Board, 1997.
- Ryan, Alan. *Liberal Anxieties and Liberal Education*. New York: Hill and Wang, 1998.
- Searle, John R. "The Case for Traditional Liberal Education." *The Journal of Blacks in Higher Education* (Autumn, 1996): 91-98.
- Skinner, Quentin. *Liberty Before Liberalism*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1998.
- Taylor, Charles. *Multiculturalism and "The Politics of Recognition"*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1992. This work also appears with an additional essay by Jurgen Habermas, in Charles Taylor, and others. *Multiculturalism*. Edited by Amy Guttmann. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1994.

September 18, 2001

Revisions to EDUC 790 Syllabus for Fall, 2001

Gary D Fenstermacher

These revisions are made in an effort to account for the deferral of our first class meeting to 9/18/01, as a consequence of the terrorist tragedy that occurred on September 11.

Weekly hand-ins

There are no revisions to the weekly hand-ins. They are due at the beginning of class each Wednesday beginning 25 September and continuing through the last class on 11 December.

Papers

Delete fourth paper assignment. Only three papers required, on topics 1, 2, and 3 as specified in the syllabus.

The revised due dates for the papers are as follows:
16 October — 13 November — 04 December

By noon on 13 December, all three papers, in final form, are due to the instructor. Each paper should be preceded with a brief description of revisions made as a result of the criticism and advice received from your writing group.

You should indicate your rank order assessment of the three papers, based on your judgment of the worth of the problem considered, the strength of the argument presented, the quality of the evidence marshaled in that argument, and the significance of the overall inquiry.

In determining an overall grade for the papers, the instructor will consider the two best papers more heavily than the least ranked paper.

It is preferred that the three papers be assembled in a 3 ring binder. Alternatively they may be joined by a spring clip, or a heavy duty staple at the upper left corner. Please prominently display your last name on spine of binder, or on top page of bundled papers.