

# Teaching for Social Justice

PHIL 330—Fall 2016

Tuesdays and Thursday 4-5:15

2011 Swenson

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Office Hours: Mondays 9-12, Wednesday 12-2

## Course Description

Students will investigate what it means to be a teacher who is concerned with social justice. Central concerns will include: identifying and addressing inequalities of power within the classroom; making the classroom a liberating (rather than oppressive) place; the self-reflective classroom; and how to respond to students' (latent and manifest) sexism, racism, classism and homophobia. This course will be relevant to those with interests in philosophy, gender studies, and for those planning to work in education, social service, non-profits, or community activism.

## Learning Outcomes

- Understanding of the central concepts of teaching for social justice
- Ability to apply these concepts in one's chosen career
- Ability to reflect on one's own social location, privileges, and marginalization.
- Clearly express oneself in writing, discussion, and class presentations
- Improve skills for collaborative learning
- Think critically about structural inequality

## Required Texts (Available in the bookstore and on reserve in the library)

- 1) *The Meritocracy Myth*, 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition, Stephen McNamee
- 2) *Radical Philosophy: An Introduction*, Chad Kautzer
- 3) *On Critical Pedagogy*, Henry Giroux
- 4) *Inclusion and Democracy*, Iris Young
- 5) Readings available on D2L

## Optional Text

- 1) *Teaching for Diversity and Social Justice*, Adams



This syllabus is subject to change at any time. Notification of any changes will be made with a minimum of 24 hours' notice via UWS email. You will be held accountable for being aware of any changes.

# Policies

The University of Wisconsin-Superior is dedicated to a safe, supportive and nondiscriminatory learning environment. It is the responsibility of all undergraduate and graduate students to familiarize themselves with University policies regarding special accommodations, academic misconduct, religious beliefs accommodation, discrimination and absence for University-sponsored events. Additional policies can be found here:

[https://www.uwsuper.edu/deanfaculties/forms/upload/Syllabus-Attachment-for-2016-2017\\_20160705103206\\_820898.pdf](https://www.uwsuper.edu/deanfaculties/forms/upload/Syllabus-Attachment-for-2016-2017_20160705103206_820898.pdf)

For details of the Student Disciplinary Procedures:

Academic Misconduct Disciplinary Process (Chapter 14) can be found at

[http://docs.legis.wisconsin.gov/code/admin\\_code/uws/14.pdf](http://docs.legis.wisconsin.gov/code/admin_code/uws/14.pdf)

Student Nonacademic Disciplinary Procedures (UWS Chapter 17) can be found at

[http://docs.legis.wisconsin.gov/code/admin\\_code/uws/17.pdf](http://docs.legis.wisconsin.gov/code/admin_code/uws/17.pdf)

- **CLASSROOM CONDUCT**

Classroom is a public space for serious work. Everybody in the classroom is thus expected to behave as a mature, respectful, thoughtful, and responsible person. The instructor reserves the right to take appropriate measures should this rule be violated.

- **DISABILITIES**

Individuals who have any disabilities, either permanent or temporary, that might affect their ability to perform in this course are encouraged to inform the instructor at the beginning of the semester. (Contact also the Office for Disability Support Services.) Adaptations of methods, materials or testing may be made as requested to provide for equitable participation.

- **NO IN-CLASS ELECTRONIC DEVICE USE**

All cell phones and other electronic devices must be turned off or silenced AND stored out of sight. (Discuss with the instructor in advance if there is a reason to violate this rule.) *Any student using such a device in class will be considered absent for the day.*

- **TIMELY SUBMISSION OF ASSIGNMENTS**

Late papers or assignments will typically not be accepted. If you have a significant reason to do so, you may request an extension at least 24 hours before an assignment is due. In the case of illness or emergency, students should contact the instructor as soon as possible. It will be expected that you demonstrate proof of the illness or emergency. It is fully at the discretion of the instructor whether or not late assignments will be accepted.

- **RELIGIOUS HOLIDAYS**

The UW-System Board of the Regents rules that students' sincerely held religious beliefs shall be reasonably accommodated with respect to scheduling all examinations and other academic requirements. Students are responsible, however, for contacting the instructor in advance, so as to make an accommodation.

Communicating to the instructor any issue that may affect your learning is very important for your success. Visit the instructor during the office hours, e-mail the instructor with specific questions, or call the instructor particularly at the time of emergency. The instructor will do her best to accommodate the needs of the students. In the case of emergency, students should contact the instructor as soon as possible

- **ACADEMIC HONESTY**

All work for this course must be your own, *produced exclusively for this class.*

# Evaluation

*You can follow your progress on attendance, assignments, and response papers in the corresponding “attendance” register under the “communication” tab on the course D2L site. All grades will be posted in the D2L gradebook as they become available.*

Attendance Tracked and graded with participation

In order to be considered fully in attendance, *you must bring the reading with you* to class and have completely read it before class. You must demonstrate mental, as well as physical, presence. **Every student must attend at least 70% of classes in order to pass the course.**

Participation 10%

Good participation is not about who talks the most often; it is about quality dialogue with others. Sometimes the person who made the most meaningful contribution is the person who reflects quietly and shares one quality thought, who says they don't understand something, or asks someone else to clarify what they mean. Quality discussion has both subjective and shared aspects. For that reason you will be asked to complete a brief, weekly reflection on *what you brought to the discussion* with regard to one of the following:

- 1) Becoming aware of diversity and being inclusive
  - a. What views from outside the mainstream did you introduce?
  - b. How did you provide support to another student to express themselves?
- 2) Appreciating ambiguity and complexity
  - a. What questions did you ask that opened up the inquiry further (possibly leading to more questions)?
- 3) Hunting assumptions
  - a. What assumptions of your own or of others were you able to identify or clarify in the discussion?
- 4) Acknowledging continuing differences
  - a. What disagreements did you respectfully and openly acknowledge?
  - b. Did you listen to someone with an alternative perspective before coming to conclusions? Describe what happened.
- 5) Creating knowledge together/learning collaboratively
  - a. What connections did you make between your own ideas and those of another student?
  - b. What questions did you ask of others to further your own understanding?

***On your paper note:*** Did you miss any days? Did you bring the reading every day? You will be graded as either P (pass), ½, (half credit) or N (not passing).

Your grade will be based on successful demonstration of one of 1-5 above. If you miss a day of class, then you can receive ½ credit for participation for the week at most. When you are absent for a week you will not pass that week. If you do not bring your copy of the reading, you will not be able to participate fully and will therefore receive ½ credit at most.

Reading and discussion leadership 10%

For one class you will prepare a brief summary and discussion of one reading. For your presentation, you will **provide everyone in the class with a copy of your summary of the reading**. This can be in the form of bullets or narrative. The purpose is to anchor our initial discussion of one of the texts for that day.

- 1) You will go over the central points in the reading for **no more than 5-7 minutes. Do not simply read from your paper.**
- 2) Discuss how the reading helps to address at least two of the questions from our list created on the first day of class.
- 3) Then lead a discussion by proposing questions related to the reading.

Assignments 20%

Graded based on % pass or not pass  
See the course calendar and end of syllabus for details.

Response Papers 20%

Each student must complete reading responses for **2 chapters from each of the books** *The Meritocracy Myth*, *Radical Philosophy*, and *On Critical Pedagogy*. A response is required for **1 of the chapters** from *Inclusion and Democracy*. (**A total of 7 responses.**) The response is due on the same day as the reading. They cannot be turned in late. If you are missing class then you can email your paper before the start of the time of class.

***If there is an assignment due for a chapter, a response paper cannot be done for that chapter. Also do not do a reading response for the same chapter for which you lead a class session.***

For this assignment, at beginning of class you will turn in a **1-2 page** double spaced, typed response to one chapter or essay due on that day. Please proofread your paper for spelling, grammar, and clarity. Complete both A & B:

- A. Imagine that you are explaining to college student who is not taking the course and has not done this reading, what are the most significant aspects of the reading?
- B. Discuss how the reading helps to address at least two of the questions from our list created on the first day of class.

Teaching for Social Justice Presentation 15%

A group of students will work together to facilitate a class session on one section of the book *Teaching for Social Justice*. Use one of the chapters of *Radical Philosophy* to frame the issue. You will also be expected to lead a discussion of the readings relating our list of questions and concerns from the first day of class.

Event 15%

The class will work together to create an event regarding social justice. The grading criteria will be determined as a class.

Final 10%

See course calendar for instructions

# Course Calendar

*All Readings are to be completed by the day week they are listed. You must always bring a hard copy of the reading; electronic copies cannot be used in class.*

## WEEK 1

**9/6 Tuesday** Discussion: What do we want to know about social justice? What learning challenges can we expect in this course?

**9/8 Thursday** Reading due: *Radical Pedagogy*, Introduction pages 1-9 & 16-19

## WEEK 2

**9/13 Tuesday** Reading due: "Discomforting Truths" (D2L) and *On Critical Pedagogy*, Chapter 1 "Critical Pedagogy in Dark Times" **Assignment 1 due in class**

**9/15 Thursday** Reading due: *The Meritocracy Myth*, Chapters 1-2 **Assignment 2 due in class**

## WEEK 3

**9/20 Tuesday** Reading due: *The Meritocracy Myth*, Chapters 3-4

**9/22 Thursday** Reading due: *The Meritocracy Myth*, Chapter 5

## WEEK 4

**9/27 Tuesday** Reading due: *The Meritocracy Myth*, Chapter 8

In class Film: *If These Halls Could Talk*

**9/29 Thursday**: Reading due: none

Film continued

## WEEK 5

**10/4 Tuesday** Reading due: *The Meritocracy Myth*, Chapter 9

**10/6 Thursday** Reading due: *On Critical Pedagogy*, Chapter 2, "Schooling and the Culture of Positivism"

## WEEK 6

**10/11 Tuesday** *On Critical Pedagogy*, Chapter 5-6 "No Bailouts for Youth" & "Higher Education and the Politics and Pedagogy of Educated Hope"

Film in Class: *Ivory Tower*

**10/13 Thursday**

Reading due: None

Film in Class: *Ivory Tower* **Assignment 3 due** (completed in class)

## WEEK 7

**10/18 Tuesday** Reading due: *Radical Philosophy*, Chapter 1 "Critical Methodology"

**10/20 Thursday** Students begin research for group project (groups should schedule a meeting during the usual class time)

**PROFESSOR AWAY AT CONFERENCE OCTOBER 20-23.**

## WEEK 8

**10/25 Tuesday** Reading due: *Radical Philosophy*, Chapter 2 "Marxism and Class Critique"

*10/27 Thursday* Reading due: *Radical Philosophy*, Chapter 3 “Feminism and Queer Theory”

### WEEK 9

*11/1 Tuesday* Reading due: *Radical Philosophy*, Chapter 4 “Antiracism and the Whiteness Problem”

*11/3 Thursday* Presentation preparation in class

### WEEK 10

*11/8 Tuesday* Group Presentation

*11/10 Thursday* Group Presentation

### WEEK 11

*11/15 Tuesday* Group Presentation

\*\*Reminder: Assignment 5 is due soon\*\*

*11/17 Thursday* In class event planning

### WEEK 12

*11/22 Tuesday* Reading due: *Inclusion and Democracy* Chapter 1, "Democracy and Justice"

*11/24 Thursday* No Class

### WEEK 13

*11/29 Tuesday* Reading due: *Inclusion and Democracy* Chapter 2, "Inclusive Political Communication" (D2L) **Assignment 4 due in class**

*12/1 Thursday* Reading due: *Inclusion and Democracy* Chapter 3, "Social Difference as a Political Resource"

### WEEK 14

*12/6 Tuesday* In class event planning **Assignment 5 due in class**

Reading due: “Developing and Enlisting Support for Social Justice” and “Allies and Action” (D2L)

*12/8 Thursday*: Reading due: *On Critical Pedagogy*, Chapter 8 "Rethinking Education as a Practice of Freedom"

### WEEK 15

*12/13 Tuesday* Class event

*12/15 Thursday* Event Debrief & Course Evaluations **Assignment 6 due in class**

### FINALS WEEK:

No class meeting

Write a 5-6 page paper addressing the following: What is the purpose of education? Why does it have value? How can this purpose best be achieved? How should a person be changed by their education? What are the best ways to educate people? Are there any strategies or methods that you favor? Describe how your views have changed since the beginning of the semester (review your first assignment). Explicitly refer to at least four of the authors read in this course and respond to their views on education. Double spaced. Due on D2L December 22 at 6pm

# Assignments

*All assignments must be double spaced in Times New Roman 12 point font (double sided is great but not required). Spelling, grammar and clarity are always important.*

1. Write a 2-3 page reflection paper answering the following questions: What is *your* view on the purposes of education? Why does it have value? Does it primarily serve the individual, the community, or society? Why is it important for you to get an education? Does it primarily have to do with professional goals or are there other reasons? How should a person be changed by their education? What are the best ways to educate people? Are there any strategies or methods that you favor?
2. Bring in two examples from popular culture in which you can see the myth of meritocracy is perpetuated or reinforced. This might include examples of the American Dream, “the American formula for being made of the right stuff: talent, the right attitude, hard work, and moral character” (23). Be able to refer your example to explanations in *The Myth of Meritocracy* chapters 1-2.
3. This will be an in class assignment in which you are asked to answer questions relating the film *Ivory Tower* to the book *On Critical Pedagogy*
4. Reflect on each of the 5 subsections in the chapter “Inclusive Political Communication.” Analyze a course that you are currently taking according to each of these five aspects of inclusive communication to evaluate whether or not the course is inclusive. Refer to specific things from each of the five subsections that the author describes.
5. Attend an event that is geared toward improving some aspect of social justice. Write a 2-3 page paper reflecting on the following: What was the objective of this event? Do you believe that it was effective at achieving its goals? What made this event effective or ineffective? Consider, for example, promotion and outreach, the atmosphere, location, methods chosen to convey information (art, lectures, posters, music, etc). Think of at least one thing done well and one suggestion for improvement.
6. Reflect on the event organized by the class using the same questions as in assignment 5. In addition, are you satisfied with how the people in the class collaborated? Explain. Write 2-3 pages.