Philosophy of Education

Course Description
In this course, we will critically investigate some of the crucial issues that arise in our thinking about education. Through discussion and readings, we will develop/expand our views of these issues, and articulate our support for these views. Utilizing in-class discussions and written assignments, we will continue our growth as responsible, self-reflective, and aware educators. We will not be developing quick-fix solutions, nor will we be memorizing and regurgitating particular philosopher's ideas. Rather, we will "do" philosophy in a practical and on-going manner.

Learning Objectives

1. What does it mean to think philosophically in the classroom?
2. What are the historical philosophical frameworks that inform our thinking?
3. How has thinking in a philosophical manner shaped our society?
4. How does philosophy directly relate to what we teach and learn?
5. How might educational philosophy operate in a post-modern world?

Major Course Requirements
Assignments:
Reflective Journals 20%
Curriculum Theorists paper 35%
Application discussions ongoing 35%
General participation 10%

Reflective Journals
The purpose of this assignment is to engage you in reflective exploration of your practice, the curriculum orientation(s) under which you make decisions, and possible alternatives or directions for you to consider in your own practice. This is an evolving project which will require you to write a weekly reflection responding to questions raised and discussed in class, class readings, outside readings of theorists and curriculum books, and your own lived experience.

Follow the themes developed in class and include critical insight into your emerging understanding of your practice in relation to the themes. Do not simply summarize the content of the class.

Theorist paper
The purpose of this assignment is to build a more critical understanding of the major thinkers in the field of educational philosophy and their contributions to current
instructional development. Choose a theorist from those discussed in class and represent their position as you understand it. The next step is to take a critical view of this position from your practical position as an educator asking if and how these ideas could be incorporated in your classroom. This paper should be written in APA style and approximately 10-15 pages in length. You are required to hand in a draft of this paper at least two weeks prior to its final submission.

Application discussion
The purpose of this assignment is to offer you the opportunity to begin to construct your way of thinking critically about what you teach, why you teach, and how you teach. This set of ideas comprises a kind of paradigm out of which your aims and ideals emerge. You are being asked to reflect on your practice in relation to the history of philosophical thought. Grading for this assignment will be satisfactory/unsatisfactory and based on your willingness to participate and interact.

Required Texts:

Readings and video clips from tedtalks.com and authors @ Google will be assigned to supplement the texts.

Course Policies
Attendance/tardiness
Attendance is expected at all classes. There is a high positive correlation between consistent, punctual attendance and higher course grades. It is virtually impossible to receive an A in the course if there are absences and/or lateness.

Late work and Make-up Exams
NA

Extra Credit
NA

Cell Phone/Electronic Device Usage
Vigorously discouraged

Academic Integrity / Plagiarism
University students are expected to conduct themselves in accordance with the highest standards of academic honesty. Academic misconduct for which a student is subject to penalty includes all forms of cheating, such as illicit possession of examinations or examination materials, falsification, forgery, complicity or plagiarism. (Plagiarism is the presentation of the work of another as one’s own work.) In this class, academic misconduct or complicity in an act of academic misconduct on an assignment or test may result in failure.
Dropping a Class
I hope that you never find it necessary to drop this or any other class. However, events can sometimes occur that make dropping a course necessary or wise. Please consult with me before you decide to drop to be sure it is the best thing to do. Should dropping the course be the best course of action, you must initiate the process to drop the course by going to the Student Services Center and filling out a course drop form. Just stopping attendance and participation WILL NOT automatically result in your being dropped from the class. November 5th is the last day to drop a class with an automatic grade of “W” this term.

Preferred methods of scholarly citations
It is important that this paper be written in a formal manner. Sources should be cited throughout and a bibliography presented using APA guidelines. The paper will be marked, not only for content, discussion, and incisiveness, but also for correct grammar, sentence structure and presentation of its argument at a graduate level of competence.

Classroom/professional behavior
Throughout this exploration we will become acquainted with the predominant perspectives and paradigms in the field and the scholars who represent them. Each of us will attempt (in turn) to answer the question of worth for ourselves – a sobering but useful exercise! By the end of the semester, my hope is that we will have come to an appreciation of the complexity of educational experience. This calls for tolerance and understanding of difference.

All teachers are curriculum developers. Hence, given that everyone taking this course has expertise in developing curriculum in one’s own field, the move in this course will be from the theoretical to the practical. The primary purpose of the course, then, will be to make you to become aware of the framework under which you make curriculum decisions and then to frame other possibilities.

Grade Appeals
As stated in University Rule 13.02.99.C2, Student Grade Appeals, a student who believes that he or she has not been held to appropriate academic standards as outlined in the class syllabus, equitable evaluation procedures, or appropriate grading, may appeal the final grade given in the course. The burden of proof is upon the student to demonstrate the appropriateness of the appeal. A student with a complaint about a grade is encouraged to first discuss the matter with the instructor. For complete details, including the responsibilities of the parties involved in the process and the number of days allowed for completing the steps in the process, see University Rule 13.02.99.C2, Student Grade Appeals, and University Procedure 13.02.99.C2.01, Student Grade Appeal Procedures. These documents are accessible through the University Rules Web site at http://www.tamuccd.edu/provost/university_rules/index.html. For assistance and/or guidance in the grade appeal process, students may contact the Office of Student Affairs.

Disabilities Accommodations
The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other
things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you believe you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please call or visit Disability Services at (361) 825-5816 in Driftwood 101.

If you are a returning veteran and are experiencing cognitive and/or physical access issues in the classroom or on campus, please contact the Disability Services office for assistance at (361) 825-5816.

**Syllabus**
This is not a contract. Assignments may change to meet the interest and needs of the class.

Week 1. Intro to course.
Weeks 2-6. Assigned readings in Magee and tedtalks
Week 7. Present plan of paper in class
Weeks 8-12. Assigned Readings in Noddings and tedtalks
Week 9. Present overview of paper in class.
Weeks 13-15. Summarize and review. All work submitted