Philosophy of Education

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.

Flipping

By flipping the classroom I mean that I expect you to read the assigned pages, complete your web search and come to class to discuss critically and thoughtfully how all of this relates to our topic and your practice as an educator.

The first half of each class will be spent in the classroom. The second half will consist of assigned reading and research online. During the second half you will also collaborate with your group and send to me a one paragraph commentary about what you have found interesting and important to you and relevant to the broad field of teaching and learning. In addition to the above we will use peer reviewing of all written work on a site of your choice this semester. You are required to make weekly contact with your assigned group and interact with them as you progress with your paper and form your ideas.

As the class progresses we will narrow your topic. At this stage you will include me in your work as well as the group and we will work together to complete your paper.

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 your world?

Major Course Requirements

Assignments:
Reflective Journals 20%
(Rubric: completed for each class or not done)

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. I encourage you to make this assignment electronic. 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.

Curriculum Theorists paper 30%
(Rubric: critical content: 50%, written in APA style and without major errors: 25%, Ability to express personal views within context of course: 25%)

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 discussions ongoing 30%
(Rubric: Grading for this assignment will be satisfactory /unsatisfactory and based on your willingness to participate and interact on assignments: 100%)

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.

This exercise also requires you to set up a social media account, for example Linkedin, Twitter, and interact in a philosophical discussion. For example you might follow Nel Noddings and comment on a conversation. In this way you will be interacting with contemporary thinkers and bringing those ideas to class to share.

General participation 20%
(Rubric: factoring in attendance, attentiveness, and general effort)

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 / 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.tamucc.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.

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.

Schedule:
January 23  Intro to course.
January 30  Assigned readings in Magee and tedtalks
February 6  readings in Magee
February 13  readings in Magee
February 20  preliminary topic discussion
February 27  sourcing information
March 5  Present plan of paper in class
Spring Break – March 14 -18  no class Mar 12, no class Mar 19
March 26  Assigned Readings in Noddings and tedtalks
April 2  readings in Noddings
April 9  Present overview of paper in class.
April 23  Summarize and review
April 30  Last class - all work submitted